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B O O K   R E V I E W

SHOAH AND TEKUMA[1] – JEWISH MEMORY AND MORALITY BETWEEN HISTORY AND REDEMPTION

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Note: The text represents the inaugural address delivered at the Doctor Honoris Causa awarding ceremony, Babeş-Bolyai University Cluj-Napoca, June 16, 2009

Abstract

The article explores the Jewish contribution to the Western Tradition in the age of secularization, the clash of cultures and the search for a united Europe, based on the principles of human values and public policy. Following the path of Jewish though from the Biblical period through the Middle Ages up to Modernity, it emerges, that the Right to Life, the Right to Equality and Difference and the Right to Freedom, are the basic principles, which constitute the common heritage of Judaism and Europe.

Keywords: Holocaust, Judaism, Jewish though, Jewish history.

Honored Rector Magnificus of the Babes-Bolyai University, Professor Andrei Marga,
Vice-rectors, Deans,
Members of the University Senate and of the teaching staff,
Students, Ladies and Gentlemen,

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[1] In Hebrew, literally "Catastrophy and Rejuvenation", generally used to denote the destruction of European Jewry and the establishment of the state of Israel.

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A Psalm of Asaph.
God standeth in the congregation
  of God;
In the midst of the judges He
  judgeth:

'How long will ye judge unjustly,
And respect the persons of the
  wicked ?   Selah

Judge the poor and fatherless;

Do justice to the afflicted and
  destitute.

Rescue the poor and needy;
Deliver them out of the hand of
  the wicked.

They know not, neither do they
  understand;
They go about in darkness;
All the foundations of the earth
  are moved.

I said: Ye are godlike beings,
And all of you sons of the Most
  High.

Nevertheless ye shall die like men,
And fall like one of the princes.'

Arise, O God, judge the earth;
For Thou shalt possess all the
  nations.

מִזְמוֹר לְאָסָף
אֱלֹהִים נִצָּב בַּעֲדַת־אֵל
בְּקֶרֶב אֱלֹהִים יִשְׁפֹּט:
עַד־מָתַי תִּשְׁפְּטוּ־עָוֶל
וּפְנֵי רְשָׁעִים תִּשְׂאוּ־סֶלָה:
שִׁפְטוּ־דָל וְיָתוֹם
עָנִי וָרָשׁ הַצְדִּיקוּ:
פַּלְּטוּ־דָל וְאֶבְיוֹן
מִיַּד רְשָׁעִים הַצִּילוּ:
לֹא יָדְעוּ וְלֹא יָבִינוּ
בַּחֲשֵׁכָה יִתְהַלָּכוּ
יִמּוֹטוּ כָּל־מוֹסְדֵי אָרֶץ:
אֲנִי אָמַרְתִּי אֱלֹהִים אַתֶּם
וּבְנֵי עֶלְיוֹן כֻּלְּכֶם:
אָכֵן כְּאָדָם תְּמוּתוּן
וּכְאַחַד הַשָּׂרִים תִּפֹּלוּ:
קוּמָה אֱלֹהִים שָׁפְטָה הָאָרֶץ
כִּי־אַתָּה תִנְחַל בְּכָל־הַגּוֹיִם:

Psalm 82

HISTORY

"It is a well know fact, stressed time and again that since the outbreak of this war and even before, a conspiracy of silence has covered the sufferings and losses of the Jewish people. This fact that so much upsets me is only the immediate consequence of another circumstance that in itself is disastrous: the Jews as a people have no share whatsoever in this war, though war had been declared upon them six years earlier than upon the Czechs, seven years earlier than upon Poland, France and England, and almost nine years earlier than upon Russia and the

United States. Unfortunately, during the years between 1933, the year in which Hitler came to power, and 1940, only a small fraction of the Jewish people could grasp the fact that they were at war, and this small fraction was without influence, formed of scattered individuals who more often than not did not even know one another."

Hannah Arendt[2]

When Hannah Arendt wrote these words in February 1943, I was nine years old, living in Amsterdam with my family, "one of those scattered individuals " upon whom war had been declared five years earlier in the city of my birth, Vienna.

History and Memory are held together by invisible threads which become visible by present events that break the empty, continuous axis of time, opening it to redemption, a place where history and biography cross – a *Zeitbruch – Time break*.

Such a "Time break" occurred when I returned home to Jerusalem from Cluj, last October after attending the Maimonides Conference, organized by the Institute of Jewish Studies, and together with the official letter from the Senate of this university announcing its decision to bestow an Honorary Doctorate on me, my husband Moshe presented me with copies of two letters, which he happened to have found in the attic, written in Amsterdam and dating from May and July 1943, in which my father addressed the Rumanian consul in Berlin, explaining that he and his family originated from "not far from Cernovitz" and that our papers had been lost, expressing the wish to return to his homeland....1943 was the time of daily Razzias in Amsterdam. The letters obviously never received an answer and some weeks later we went into hiding where we survived the war.

Needless to say, that I was not aware of the existence of these letters. Moreover, they would not have been so significant had they been found earlier: *at this moment in time* they were to be found to explain to me the significance of this honour here in Cluj: a circle had been closed, a homecoming, where past and future meet in the present. I have brought the letters with me and am holding them here in my hands. These letters were

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[2] Hannah Arendt, "The Crisis of Zionism", in Jerome Kohn and Ron H. Feldman (eds.) *The Jewish writings*, New York: Schocken Books, 2007, p. 329.

written a month before and a month after my birthday, the 20th of June, a fateful day for Dutch Jewry. We were luckily saved by a faked declaration of infectious disease, I was supposedly suffering from.[3]

The duty to return an object to its right owner and to its proper place is a special obligation in Jewish tradition – *Hashavat Aveda* -: I have the privilege to fulfil this today, as a promise, that when all things will be in place again, exile will end. The world will be redeemed.

To illustrate the politics of history, memory and redemption in Jewish tradition let me continue this journey by relating an event of our time in hiding in Hilvesum, a small town not far from Amsterdam.

My father, an Orthodox, but at the same time modern, Jew, albeit with a Chassidic soul, had told a Gentile Dutch friend, who helped us survive the war, of the Jewish custom to eat on the New Year, in memory of the renewal of nature and spirit, a fruit from a new crop. It was in the fall of 1944, before one of the worst hunger winters of the war. Two weeks before the New Year, this man came on a broken bike, and brought us a bunch of grapes, he had managed to find in the neighbourhood at a farmer, who had grown them in his hothouse. My father was of course elated and made the following vow: The Blessing over the New Fruit on Rosh Hashana – Jewish New Year - he would from now on make over grapes. After I had moved to Israel, my father used to visit us many times during the summer months and though grapes are in abundance then in Israel, my children knew: before Rosh Hashana Saba – grandfather - does not eat grapes – because of what happened to him in the time of the Shoah.

This story shows clearly how the personal experience of a human being becomes part of his Jewish experience; how personal history and the history of the Jewish people are joined together through memory and how

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[3] "This was the "big offensive" of June 20 [1943], which did so much to carry off the great bulk of the Jews living in East and South Amsterdam. In his report of June 25 Otto Bene boasted of the remarkable way in which the preparations for this raid were kept secret, with the result that the Jews were taken completely by surprise. The *Merkblatt für die Räumungskommandos* (Memo to Evacuation Commandos) ordered that all the victims were to be taken to specified assembly points. Only those whose identity cards bore numbers in the series 10,000, 30,000 and 100,000, or red "J"s were to be spared. (from: Dr. J. Presser, *Ashes in the Wind. The Destruction of Dutch Jewry*, English Translation by Arnold Pomerans, Detroit: Wayne State University Press, 1988, p. 206.

religious symbols, like the eating of a new fruit, serve to preserve the past and make it meaningful for the present. Jewish law does not prescribe which fruit one should eat. My father, though, knew to connect his own memory with the memory of the Jewish people and thus became a living link in the chain of tradition.

Later on, I contributed my part to this story: before the children of Israel entered the Promised Land, they sent spies out, as we read in the Book of Numbers (Chapter 14), to look over the land. From their exploration they brought back a huge bunch of grapes[4]. The people were afraid of the immense dimensions described by the spies of everything they had seen on their journey and did not have the courage to enter the land. My father, I used to say, never ate from the fruit of the land; it was his fate to eat the fruits of the Diaspora. He remained in exile. When the rabbis tried to explain the meaning of the destruction of the Temple, they also remembered this story from Numbers, in which it is described in vivid terms how the entire people cried during that night when the spies returned with their message. In the words of Rabbi Yochanan:

"That night was the night of the ninth day in the month of Av. (*Tisha beAv*, the night of the destruction of the Temple), since God said: "That night you cried unnecessarily (that is, you should have trusted me and not feared to enter the Land); now, however, I will give you a reason to cry for generations."[5]

It was in the 9th of August, a hot summer's day in the year 1996 that I visited Auschwitz for the second time with Moshe, my husband.

It is afternoon, time for the Mincha-Prayer. On Tisha Be-Av, being in mourning, you don't put on tefillin – the phylacteries – until the afternoon. Moshe moves a little distance away: "I am going to pray."

And there, between the barracks, almost touching the barbed-wire fencing he puts on his tallit - prayer shawl - and tefillin and prays by himself, alone. No, there is a ten-fold, a hundred-fold, and a million-fold minyan – prayer quorum. Everyone is there, the men, women, and children, the old and the young – they are all there and utter the ancient words of the Sh'ma Israel – "Hear, O Israel". When one Jew prays "Hear, O Israel", Israel hears.

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[4] The memory of this event is canonized in the Ministry of Tourism in Israel.
[5] Babylonian Talmud, Tractate Ta'anit 29a.

All the souls come out of the graves and pray with him. That is the strength of the tradition: keep on praying obstinately, in spite of everything, and in full view of the destruction. The Mincha – Prayer contains the ancient words forever and for everyone. They are a vessel, a handhold for the joyous and for the grieving. It is a strength that has not found its match: simply standing there in tallit and tefillin and praising God in Auschwitz...

With Sh'ma Israel on their lips they went to their death and with the prayer of each and every Jew they are awakened from death. Thus we are alone here on earth, and yet together with everyone.

MEMORY

As we look back on the end of the Jewish world in Europe, especially in what was the Jewish space called *Ashkenaz* – united by the common use of the German language in all its cultural ramifications – we are no longer using the same discourse as before, neither from a religious, nor from a secular perspective: we are living in a time of man-made disasters and apocalyptic myth come-true in the tumbling towers of Manhattan for all to see in real-time, over and over again, by the power of the technology and global media. The Golem – as a *deus ex machina* – has taken a terrible revenge on its master and we are groping for words and images to describe the unimaginable, to bring our world-view and self-image into focus. [6]

Thus, the problem of Holocaust representation touches not only on the question of the biblical prohibition of making a graven image of the divine, as that, which should not be seen but only heard, but enlarges the horizon of our consciousness in a new way, enabling us to comprehend this prohibition from a human, that is a *moral point of view*, crossing the boundaries between aesthetics and ethics.[7]

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[6] "World-view and self-image are indissolubly intertwined with each other. The way man sees the world is the way he sees himself; the way he conceives himself is the way he conceives the world. Alterations in his view of the world lead to alteration in his view of himself and vice versa." (Christoph Wulf, "The Temporality of World-views and Self-images", in Dietmar Kemper and Christoph Wulf (eds.), *Looking Back on the End of the World*, translated from the German by David Amital, Semiotext(e) Foreign Agent Series, New York: Columbia University, 1989.

[7] See Robert Eaglestone, „From the Bars of Quotation Marks: Emmanuel Levinas's (Non)-Representation of the Holocaust", in: Andrew Leak and George Paizis (eds.), *The Holocaust*

Although one would not deny the extraordinary character of the Holocaust as an *historical* event, there exists a considerable debate concerning the uses and misuses of memory regarding its moral implications, its "moral space of figurative discourse"[8] with its more radical one: silence.

The problem is however not only inherent in the context of Holocaust writing, but even more so in reading Holocaust narrative. When dealing with the relationship between how narratives are told (their aesthetics) and how they mean (their "hermeneutics"), Daniel Schwartz notes, "I see telling as a crucial act, all the more crucial because of the trauma of the originating cause. Because we can never trust memory fully, in narrative effects (how a teller presents himself or herself) sometimes *precede cause* (the explanation for why a narrator is the person he or she is).[9]

The very act of telling the story creates a discontinuity with the historical past: the narrator chooses to place him – or herself in the situation of those, who did not live to tell their story to us, as survivors burdened with the task of creating continuity in time.[10]

The question posed by Auschwitz is therefore: what are the ethical implications of breaking the silence of Auschwitz, of speaking, not only the unspeakable, but speaking the language of those whose voices were not heard then and which cannot be recaptured to-day. "The disaster always takes place after having taken place", Maurice Blanchot remarks and so the remarkable fact of the holocaust representation confronts us in the first place with our own lives, with the way we look, directly and indirectly, through the very blurred vision of consciousness, trying at all costs to recapture something of the recognition of origin and thus originality, to try and fill the gap caused by a general feeling of "world-loss" to avoid falling in the abyss of meaninglessness.

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and the Text: Speaking the Unspeakable, Basingstoke: Macmillan/ New York: St. Martin's Press, 1999, pp. 97-109.

[8] Berel Lang, *Act and Idea in the Nazi Genocide,* Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1990, pp. 160-161.

[9] Daniel R. Schwartz, *Imagining the Holocaust,* New York: St. Martin's Press, 1999, p. 35.

[10] Compare the biblical injunction to remember the Exodus from Egypt: "*Vehigadeta lebincha bazom hahu lemor* – And you shall tell your son on that day, saying" (Ex.13:8).

Being part of human history and yet outside of human experience as we are used to imagine unlived events, the Holocaust directs us to face the "Unavoidable", a point of no return, where the Real breaks the boundaries of the Imaginary, shattering our hopes and illusions, the very foundations of human culture and civilization. "Perhaps we should say that Holocaust narratives have become a genre with its own archetypes and its own cultural continuity."[11]

It means starting at the very beginning: questioning language.

The question of language has come back again. You thought is seemed as if you had solved it; and you discover that, where language is concerned, you are in exile again.

Not that you lack a language, rather the question of your mother tongue, the German language, is back again.

Are you able to speak in this language or was it extinguished in Auschwitz?[12]

These are the opening sentences of my book *Ark of the Innocence* a kind of intellectual pilgrimage written after my first visit to Auschwitz, some 10 years ago, with East German students from the Martin Luther University Halle-Wittenberg, where I established the first department of Jewish Studies after the reunification of Germany.

Re-visiting the *Ark of the Innocence* means entering into the literary representation of the human construct of the world as the concrete world of immediate experience.

"The world of literature is human in shape, a world where the sun rises in the east and sets in the west over the edge of a flat earth in three dimensions, where the primary realities are not atoms or electrons but bodies and the primary forces not energy or gravitations, but love and death and passion and joy."[13]

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[11] Daniel R. Schwartz, *op.cit.*, p. 35.

[12] All passages taken from my book *Arche der Unschuld. Versuch einer Kulturkritik nach Auschwitz,* Vienna: Passagen-Verlag, 2006, are set in italics throughout his article. Cited from "Ark of Innocence. A Critique of Reason after Auschwitz", in Martin L. Davies and Claus-Christian W. Szejnmann, *How the Holocaust Looks Now. International Perspectives,* Palgrave Macmillan, 2006, p. 5.

[13] Northrop Frye, *The Eduacted Imagination,* Bloomington: Indiana Universtiy Press, 1964, p. 28.

In the world of literature and imagination anything can be imagined: "The limit of imagination is a totally human world."[14] In *Ark of the Innocence* experience and imagination are seeking each other; broken apart by the stark reality of death and destruction, devoid of memory, as all traces of life have been erased, no bridge to our world, the world of the living seems possible: where the train-tracks end, life ends.

> *"Where is the train going? The little girl asks her mother.*
> *It's going to ....it's taking us to Lodsz. It's a long, long journey. Patience my child, you'll have to be patient. Lodsz is a long way away; the city is beyond our reach. We'll only know what it is like by the journey it takes us to get there, where we are going - a journey that has no end. The rails take us on further and further to where they end, through the gateway, through the gateway to heaven that is always open, but leads to death. The end of the railway line, that's where life ends."[15]*

Here, the imagination does not go beyond the point of death, there is no Heaven and Hell, no story of a lost Paradise: an abyss opens itself between us as readers of the conversation between mother and child, with the child asking and the mother, from experience, answering. There is no memory of this conversation, no written account to verify its truth. It is only by identifiying ourselves with the questions and the answers that we overcome the dichotomy of fact and fiction, but more so between fact and value.[16]

As the author of *Ark of Innocence,* I realised, that I was the child and the mother in conversation in real time *in the past,* but also the grandmother in the present, so to speak, in conversation – being with mother and daughter on the train. It meant a breaking not only with the aesthetic conventions of western tradition, but also seeking to bridge the gap between art and knowledge, touching upon the question of *concern* versus *indifference* when dealing with detachment and objectivity as a scholarly virtue. The search for truth as the solid ground for knowledge became fractured, revealing the deep fissures caused by the very fact that

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[14] *Ibidem.,* p. 29.

[15] Eveline Goodman-Thau, *Ark of the Innocence,* p. 8.

[16] Hilary Putnam, *The Collapse of the Fact/Value Dichotomy and Other Essays,* Cambridge, Mass: Harvard University Press, 2002.

Auschwitz really happened. Remembering this historical fact thus poses a moral burden, which is normally hidden from the eye when dealing with historical knowledge.

In an essay on the goal of humanities and the morality of scholarship, Northrop Frye notes:

"The scholarly virtue of detachment, we said, is a moral virtue and not merely an intellectual one: what is intellectual about it is its context. It turns into the vice of indifference as soon as its context becomes social instead of intellectual. Indifference to what? Indifference, let us say, to what we may call, with the existentialists, concern. *By concern, I mean something, which includes the sense of importance of preserving the integrity of the total human community.* Detachment becomes indifference when the scholar ceases to think himself as participating in the life of society, and of his scholarship as possesing a social context."[17]

In *Ark of Innocence* I have tried to find this language of concern. I have tried to give it a voice in the midst of silence, making the invisible visible. There are a number of these conversations in *Ark of the Innocence:*

"Where has the train come from and where is it going to?
Where has it come from? From Paradise. Where is it going to? It is going to Hell. And the only way, the only way human beings come to know about paradise was when the trees were still blooming, when the flowers were there still for picking, when children were still playing and laughing, When lovers were still in love. Only after escaping from Hell, from the flames, you get to know this, my child, of humankind."[18]

Here the dialogue turns into a trialogue: a vantage point becomes visible from which beginnning and end can be perceived. Paradise and Hell, a short distance, a train-ride away from each other. The child and the mother can speculate about this, but you have to escape from the flames to know, to know as grandmother knows *her* child, and the child of her child. But, too few grandmothers survived to bear witness and to live on the threshold of Life and Death, on the dividing line, the *Rakia* (Hebr. Horizon)[19] between

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[17] Northrop Frye, "The Knowledge of Good and Evil", in Max Black (ed.), *The Morality of Scholarship*, Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1967, pp. 9-10 (italics are mine).
[18] Eveline Goodman-Thau, *Ark of the Innocence*, p. 9 (German: *mein Menschenkind*).
[19] Gen.1:6, where *Rakia* denotes the dividing line between heaven and earth.

experience and perception, trying to bridge the gap between *history*, *memory* and *reality*.

For this first time, I dared to break the barriers of amnesia in myself, confronting history with memory, questioning historical evidence with life: my life as child, mother and grandmother and thus the lives of so many other children, who would now have a similar story to tell, but whose voices remained unheard. It was not sufficient for me to live vicariously through the stories of others, to rely on their images. I had to break through to the original story, *my story.* To break time by my presence in history, describing the present, not in the light of a projected future, but of a *transformed past.* A past, which according to historical logic, cannot be changed, but which can be transformed by memory, expressed in a language of concern, which does not bring the dead back into life, but which opens the "Way to Life" for us.[20]

By *displacing* oneself, it is indeed possible to unmask the disguises of detachment and the trappings in society, to gain the solid ground of morality steeped in the knowledge of having touched, however slightly, the veil of human freedom and truth.

In *Ark of Innocence* I experieced displacement, in an existential manner – it made me understand many of the decisions of my life, but more important the thrust of my scholarship.

"Where is train is going? It is heading for the void, my child, bound for the beginning. For you and for me, my child. But for the others, for those who'll survive, where is the train taking them?

Perhaps on holiday, as it used to, to the mountains, to the lakes, to the seaside, to the islands, or into the city. I don't know, my child, I don't know what life with Auschwitz will look like. I just don't know."[21]

"I don't know what life with Auschwitz will look like" is the challenge that we – nolens volens – face: Auschwitz is not a different planet; it is here on earth, a place one hour from Krakow. In the winter ice-cold - as in January 27, 2005 when we stood in the snow at 16 degrees below zero listening to the speeches of the Kings and Queens, Presidents and Ministers, Rabbis and Pastors from all parts of Europe, watching them as

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[20] Cf. Eveline Goodman-Thau, *Ark of the Innocence,* Part 3: A Shipwreck with no Spectators.

[21] *ibidem*, pp. 5-6.

they lit memorial-candles to the sound of drums -, in the summer burning hot, as I visited the camp for the first time with my German students.

Auschwitz is sheer experience. This is so, because the only way of knowing about it, is through experience, through encountering one's real original after having forgotten the imagined original - the re-presentation of what Auschwitz "looks like" in memory.[22] The point of amnesia allows the encounter with reality itself that from this moment onward affects all reality. The bond between *perception, imagination* and *reality* has been broken and must be mended in order to see. This "*mending of the world*" (Emil Fackenheim)[23] is at the heart of our concern for history and memory sixty years after Auschwitz.[24] We will return to this at the end of this address. It means dealing with the question of human conscience, which is indeed fragile, because knowledge breaks down in the face of each individual and becomes relevant where the "personal" meets the "general", the "religious" meets the "profane".

Our debate on the future of Judaism on the brink of morality without institutions however can not avoid the larger question of the nexus between *power* and *memory*.[25] Dealing with the Jewish Question after Auschwitz is not only a mere personal or political issue, a form of restitution or reparation, but rather about the intellectual survival of society as a whole and about the necessary consideration of the renewed role of the humanities in countries experiencing the late consequences of a rupture of civilisation, especially in those countries where Jews are no longer a present force to help carry the burden of values. It means addressing the question of the *relevance of traditional texts*[26] - be they religious or secular - which, to

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[22] *Ibidem*.

[23] Emil L. Fackenheim, *To Mend the World. Foundations of Post-Holocaust Jewish Thought*, New York: Schocken Books, 1982.

[24] Eveline Goodman-Thau, Fania Oz-Salzbegrer (eds.), *Das Jüdische Erbe Europas. Krise der Kultur im Spannungsfeld von Tradition, Geschichte und Identität*, Berlin: Philo Verlag, 2005, pp. 13-39 and Eveline Goodman-Thau, *Erbe und Erneuerung. Kulturphilosophie aus den Quellen des Judentums*, Wien: Picus, 2004.

[25] cf. Jan-Werner Mueller (ed.), *Memory and Power in Post-War Europe. Studies in the Presence of the Past*, New York: Cambridge University Press, 2002.

[26] Jürgen Habermas, "Die verkleidete Tora. Rede zum 80. Geburtstag von Gershom Scholem", in Jürgen Habermas, *Politik, Kunst, Religion*, Stuttgart, 1978, p. 133.

paraphrase William James,[27] reveal the impact of the *varieties of historical experience*, and offering an opportunity to study and research the tradition-founding elements in the various traditions, that have shaped European identities, and their cultural connection with Judaism. This would be a common task for all, to make a new beginning out of destruction, to confront the historic hour and therefore history. It would allow us to delve into the *Archives of Memory* rather than *History* to extract the deep layers of amnesia and strategies of denial inherent in human nature, to free the spirit from the burdens of forgetting, as an act of resistance to any form of totalitarism: "The struggle against power is the struggle of memory against forgetting".[28]

It means a coming to terms, not merely with the historical fact of the annihilation of European Jewry, the conscious killing of six million innocent men, women and children under the cloak of war, but also with the way we look at life and history, judge our actions and those of others, practice political activism and social critique, in short, it poses the question of the *politics of history and memory,,* and urges us to reflect on the means and ways to move towards what I would call, a *political hermeneutics of culture*.

Thus, when considering memory and morality after Auschwitz the question the position of European Jewry after the Enlightenment becomes important: Jews were murdered in the 'Third Reich', not because they were criminals or deviants – not even solely for their riches in Germany and other parts of Europe – but for the simple reason that they were *Jews:* Europe had to be made "*judenrein*" for the establishment of the Third Reich – *Das heilige Römische Reich Deutscher Nation* – on the shreshold of the Third Millennium.

So, beyond the question of good and evil representation finds its answer in the reflection not on the premises of legal and philosophical concepts or pseude-conventions such as 'etiquette' and 'political correctness' also not in an attempt to hide behind learned discussions about

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[27] William James, *The Varieties of Religious Experience. A Study in Human Nature*, London, 1921.
[28] Milan Kundéra, *The Book of Laughter and Forgetting,* New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1980.

the correct facts and figures, also not in language borrowed from the lexicon of religious canon, such as 'martyrdom', 'victim' or 'suffering'. (It is for this reason that I find the word Holocaust – Greek: burnt-offering – so problematic since *Jews were not given a choice* in Auschwitz to die for *Kiddush Hashem*, the Sanctification of God's name: they were murdered in the name of duty for 'Fuehrer und Vaterland').[29] Representation entails a serious reflection on accepting the onus to rethink not only the Shoah,[30] *but the very project of the Humanities as a discipline, in the light of history, language and the self*,[31] directed towards finding a critical cultural paradigm which breaks down our preconceived notions of reason, reality and normality, and critiques our normative values and standards: - "The universe of dying that was Auschwitz yearns for a language purified of the taint of normality"[32] writes Lawrence Langer, but was it a "universe of dying" and can this universe "yearn for a language purified of the taint of normality"? Can a universe yearn at all, when those who were murdered cannot speak, but still move *our* lips? Our mourning and yearning for them is much stronger than any act of memory that can possibly heal the universe by way of language. - "Manchmal freilich stirbt der Himmel unseren Scherben voraus" (Paul Celan)[33] - Looking up to Heaven thus makes no sense and is to no avail. We are left to gather the pieces which have rained down on us from the broken sky: the flight into an outdated metaphysics - or theology - is no longer possible.

So when assuming the moral responsibility of becoming a witness to the Shoah, we are indeed, each one of us, telling our own story, showing who we are, and adding not only a missing link to our biography, but to

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[29] Cf. Heinrich Himmler's famous 1943 Posen speech to the upper-Ievel SS-officers revealing the importance and function of the annihilation of the Jews in shaping the German psyche: "... In our history, this is an unwritten, never-to-be-written page of glory... All in all, we may say that we have accomplished the most difficult task out of love for our people. And we have not sustained any damage to our inner self, our soul and our character." (Lucy Dawidowicz (ed.), *A Holocaust Reader*, West Orange, NJ: Berman House, 1976, pp. 132-133).

[30] Yehuda Bauer, *Rethinking the Holocaust,* New Haven: Yale University Press, 2002.

[31] Eveline Goodman-Thau, *Aufstand der Wasser. Jüdische Hermeneutik zwischen Tradition und Moderne,* Berlin/Wien: Philo 2002, pp. 9-10 and 15-31.

[32] Lawrence Langer, *Admitting the Holocaust: Collected Essays,* New York: Oxford University Press, 1995, p. 93.

[33] „Surely, Heaven sometimes dies ahead of our shards."

history itself, which is the sum total of the actions of mankind.[34]

"Acting in the world involves and construes my identity continuously, and my identity is a narrative. In the very same sense in which telling my narrative is a speech act, my actions, my involvement with the world, are an act of speech, a building up of a continuous story. 'Ich wünschte, ich wäre eine Beethovensche Symphonie oder sonst etwas, was geschrieben ist', said the young Rosenzweig in one of his letters;[35] das Geschriebenwerden tut weh".[36]

Where history and biography cross is the place where true historiography, the painful process of *writing history* and *being written by history* begins: the historian becomes a witness to history not only by relating mere facts and collecting relevant documents, but by asking pertinent and probing questions in regard to their meaning *for the present*. The ethical demand inherent in this task cannot be overestimated, since it touches the very core of the search for meaning after Auschwitz, picking up the thread of life after destruction, creating historical continuity.

It means indeed a refutation of the reality in Auschwitz, where there was no diversion, no memory, no sense of a future life. "Memory," Primo Levi writes, "is a curious instrument: ever since I have been in the camp, two lines written by a friend of mine a long time ago have been running through my mind: ' ... Until one day there will be no more sense in saying: tomorrow.' It is like that here. Do you know how one says 'never' in camp slang? 'Morgen frueh', tomorrow morning... ".[37] For Primo Levi, memory

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[34] In her book *The Human Condition* Hannah Arendt shows how through *acting* and *speaking* men reveal their unique personal identities, 'who' they are in the web of human relationships, retaining their agent -revealing capacity even in objective matters of the world of things. Turning to the question of history, she observes, that the condition of history is the fact that each and every individual human life is a story, with history being the storybook of mankind, "with many actors and speakers and yet, without any authors", since both are the outcome of action." (Hannah Arendt, *The Human Condition,* Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1958, p. 184)

[35] Franz Rosenzweig, *Briefe,* ed. Edith Rosenzweig, Berlin: Schocken, 1935, p. 19.

[36] Amos Funkenstein, "History, Counterhistory and Narrative", in Saul Friedlander (ed.) *Probing the Limits of Representation. Nazism and the "Final Solution"*, Harvard University Press 1992, pp. 66-67.

[37] Primo Levi, *Survival in Auschwitz,* quoted from: Touchstone Edition, New York, 1996, p. 133.

meant constantly facing the break of time where every new day meant bridging the abyss between today and tomorrow, as "Connections and coherence are distorted by the Holocaust experience: tomorrow is suffused with the possibility of 'death', whilst to be 'alive' means to be 'alone'. In some way, those who survived stand in the place of the dead."[38]

REDEMPTION

The discontinuity in time caused by the experience of the Shoah brings us to the question of the connection between history, memory and redemption in Jewish thought and has therefore been a recurrent theme in both religious and secular modern scholarship, it entails a kind of *inversion of time:* To quote Amos Funkenstein:

"This perhaps is the cardinal difference between an indistinct, more or less always present, collective memory, and a historical consciousness: the latter is an answer to definite questions asked. Being such an answer, it cannot merely enumerate events, but must weave them into a *meaningful narrative, to be interpreted and reinterpreted."[39]*

Jewish history is the sum total of the varieties of historical experience of the Jews throughout the ages. It is intimately connected with the notion of tradition, that is, of the way ideas of the past are playing a role in consciousness. In all periods of history we encounter in Jewish historical consciousness history not as a reconstruction of the past, but as a living force, affecting every area of life, on the communal as well as on the individual level. In modernity, this fact gains importance in the wake of the 19th century historicism as witnessed by the dialectics of tradition and

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[38] Gillian Banner, *Holocaust Literature. Schultz, Levi, Spiegelman and the Memory of the Offence*, Vallentine Mitchell, London 2000, pp. 33-34. Gillian Banner quotes Ruth Feldman in a BBC-documentary on Levi, speaking of a letter, signed 'de profundis' , she received one month before Levi's death, in which he writes "that he was 'living through a period that was the worst since Auschwitz, but worse still in a way, even worse than Auschwitz, which is unthinkable' " (p. 32).

[39] Amos Funkenstein, *Perceptions of Jewish History*, Berkeley: University of California Press 1993, p. 2.

reality.[40]

Gershom Scholem, in his foreword to a collection of essays on Jewish spirituality bearing the title of his famous treatise, "The Messianic Idea in Judaism", offers a rare personal glimpse of this when he writes:

"It is often said that this generation is not interested in history and tradition. I find it hard to believe this. At any rate, this book... is addressed to people who have not merely some moderate and far-away interest in the question of Judaism and its past, but a passionate one. The connection between the renascence of the Jewish people and its historical consciousness is obvious, and has resulted in a new awareness of the dynamics and dialectics of Jewish history ... This book is written by a *man who believes Judaism to be a living phenomenon,* which although developing under the impact of a great idea, has changed considerably over the long periods of its history and *has not yet exhausted its potentialities*. As long as it is alive, it will cast off forms and will take on new ones, and who are we to predict in what guise they will present themselves."[41]

In spite of being an agnostic and generally using the methods of 19th century historical criticism, Gershom Scholem, the great scholar of Jewish mysticism, knew the power of tradition in regard to the shaping of history and historical consciousness. A personal search for identity is evident in these lines, as in the lines of many of his fellow scholars in the *Wissenschaft des Judentums.*

The idea of reading history as an open-ended book originates in the Bible and lies at the root of Jewish monotheism throughout the ages. It has kept the connection between the *original version* and its *fulfillment in the course of history* alive. The exodus from Egypt, as a liberation myth, is not to be told as a tale of the past, but from the very beginning is to be a personal tale of redemption of each and every individual.

In the words of Moses:

"Remember this day, on which you went free from Egypt, the house of

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[40] Cf. Nathan Rotenstreich, *Tradition and Reality: The Impact of History on Modern Jewish Thought,* New York: Random House, 1972.

[41] Gershom Scho1em, *The Messianic Idea in Judaism and other Essays on Jewish Spirituality*, New York: Schocken Books 1971, p. viii (italics are mine).

bondage, how God freed you from it with a mighty hand ... And you shall tell your son on that day, 'It is because of what God did to me when I went free from Egypt'." (Ex. 13:3-9)

History is redeemed by passing it on from generation to generation as a personal story of liberation from the house of bondage. It means liberation from the bondage of history itself. In this way, the personal and the communal are united in a vision of history, which will at the end of time be redeemed, and which bears the continued tension of the immediacy of this redemption. In Walter Benjamin's philosophy of history, we find an echo of this:

"The past carries with it a temporal index by which it is referred to redemption. There is a secret agreement between past generations and the present one. Our coming was expected on earth. Like every generation that preceded us, we have been endowed with a weak Messianie power, a power to which the past has a claim. That claim cannot be settled cheaply ... We know that the Jews were prohibited from investigating the future. The Torah and prayers instructed them in remembrance, however; this stripped the future of its magic, to which all those who succumb turn to the soothsayers for enlightenment. This does not imply, however, that for the Jews the future turned into homogeneous, empty time. For every second of time was the strait gate through which the Messiah might enter."[42]

The entire chain of tradition is held together by the invisible thread of messianic hope, and yields, what I have termed a unique form of writing history, namely *historiography as messianic hermeneutics*[43].

The establishment of the State of Israel – the word "Israel" denotes the individual, the people and the nation-state – born as a phoenix out of the ashes, is the embodiment of *Shoah* and *Tekuma*.

In his above quoted seminal study "Perceptions of Jewish History", Amos Funkenstein states:

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[42] Walter Benjamin, *Illuminations, op.cit.*, pp. 253-264.

[43] Cf. Eveline Goodman – Thau, *Zeitbruch – Zur messianischen Grunderfahrung in der jüdischen Tradition*.

"…Jewish historical consciousness articulated in endless variations, the perception of the distinctness of Israel. Polemical and apologetically exigencies, together with the awareness of new cultures, sharpened this perception. A more secularized age, then translated it from a divine, transcendent premise into an immanent-historical vocabulary………. historical consciousness and collective memory were never completely alien to each other, not even in the nineteenth and twentieth century."[44]

The historical hour in each and every epoch is measured against immediacy and every situation becomes an hour of decision. In the phrase *Hakol zafui vehareshut netuna* – "Everything is foreseen, but the choice is given" – the rabbis expressed the paradox between God's omnipotence and absolute knowledge concerning the future, and man's free choice in time. Religious determinism needs human freedom. In Jewish tradition, *messianic hermeneutics* as *historiography* derives its strength from this tension. The openness and varieties of interpretation on the *textual level* open time for *eternity.*

The experience of time in its function as time *and* eternity, which is one of the main characteristics of the Jewish notion of time, enables the emergence of a collective memory in which historiography *becomes* messianic hermeneutics. Thus, in Jewish memory, the origin loses its function of an aim, and becomes a *source of renewal.*

The entire history of the Jewish people is being lived anew in every historical event, at any time, and this gains symbolic meaning for the future. The history of Israel is namely not considered to be a chronological account of the past; it is (traditionally speaking) a way of experiencing God in the present. Each and every event, be it a saving or a catastrophe, offers an opportunity to explain in clear and rational language what was learned from it, in order to constitute the future. In this way, a historical continuum was created. When in the normal course of history a traumatic break occurs, this break was termed by the rabbis *churban bayit* - destruction of the house - (meaning the Temple). In other words, when the entire existence of the community and thus of the individual is threatened, and life has lost all meaning (as on the night of the Destruction of the Temple), Jews internalize the experience and form the symbols which are to become the building blocks of the future. We are here reminded of the famous

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[44] Amos Funkenstein, *Perceptions of Jewish History*, p. 11.

words of Rabbi Elazar and Rabbi Hanina in Mishna Berachot, commenting on Isaiah's words: "Do not read 'your sons' (*banim*) but rather 'your builders' (*bonim*)" (cf. Isaiah 54:13*)*. Crisis is a fruitful soil for a new beginning, for a new way of interpreting history, born out of an act of remembering the past. Thus, when considering the link between history, memory and redemption in Judaism, it has been less a question of the identity of the Messiah (who was, according to rabbinic legend, born on the night of the destruction of the Temple, and named Menachem, the Comforter) which shaped religious thoughts throughout the ages, but rather the reflection *on the nature of the messianic process in the light of historical consciousness.*

The God of Israel is on the one hand the agent of history, and on the other hand, there exists on the part of the community and the individual the constant need to interpret – that is, remember – historical events in the light of the expectation of redemption, based on former experiences. The promise that God will, at a certain moment in time, put an end to history as we know it, redeem it, so to speak, opens the way to see history as both an unfinished project and retain its metahistorical dimension. This view, which connects the horizontal and the vertical, enables one to experience God's presence in the world and time differently: neither linear, as progress, nor circular, as the eternal return of origin, but as a redemptive process.

There is a story by Ellie Wiesel about Rabbi Menachem Mendel of Kotsk:

"A parable: The Midrash tells the episode of a traveler who loses his way in the forest. He sees a castle in flames. It is an empty, thinks the traveler. Suddenly he hears a voice crying 'Help, help me. I am the owner of the castle!' And the Rebbe repeats: The castle is ablaze, the forest is burning and the owner cries for help; what does it mean? That the castle is not empty and there there is an owner!"

Indeed, Jewish history and Jewish memory were at all times intertwined, as a reaction to historical experiences. They represent an account of "an incessant astonishment at one's own existence."[45] The constant reflection on the meaning of history gave the life of the community and of the individual its particular meaning and positioned them in the larger scheme of things.

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[45] Amos Funkenstein, *Perceptions of Jewish History.*

Jewish identity is thus the expression of a 'process of negotiation' between history and memory, opening the way to the notion of redemption as an experience *in real time* of the *end of time*, when all contradictions will be resolved: historical reality is mirrored in multiple narratives of time and eternity.

The road to Zion is long and arduous. Since the destruction of the Second Temple and the beginning of what was to become a 2000-year exile, Jews never ceased to yearn for a Return to Zion, as expressed in the famous saying of the poet Jehuda HaLevi in Medieval Spain: "My heart is in the East, while I am far away in the West." So, too in the prayer recited three times a day "May our eyes see Your return to Zion in compassion". According to Jewish tradition, God himself joins the people of Israel in exile[46] and will return with the faithful not 'At the end of Days', but 'Soon in our Days', turning time into "Jetztzeit – a time filled with the presence of the now" (Walter Benjamin).

The age-old yearning for a return to Zion thus receive symbolic meaning, not only for the convergence of history and memory, to give meaning to history, but as a symbol of a reconciliation between God and the people of Israel, as both are consoled for the loss of Zion.[47]

In the light of this, Franz Rosenzweig could, in the climate of German *Kulturprotestantismus* express his dilemma regarding modern Zionism as follows:

"That I do have faith in the future I owe to the Prayer Book. I cannot exclude Zion from this faith. Just how great, how Jewish, how 'modern' a Palestine will be grouped around it, I do not know. But when the time comes, I am sure I shall not be disturbed by the fact, that this Zion – not a heavenly, but messianic and hence earthy Zion – will be surrounded by in all likelihood, what is called 'modern' in the sense of the time: no more than I am disturbed by the paraphernalia of the 'History of Civilizations' which is grouped around my mental image of biblical antiquity but also no more that I begrudge the Palestine of today its factories and automobiles and roads. It belongs!

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[46] Symbolically personified by the Shechina.

[47] The Hebrew word 'Teshuva' – repentance, also mean answer. Both are derived from the verb sh-u-v – to return.

Belongs to what? To men and these men are what I can see even today. And if my impressions are reliable, there are better Jews among the Zionists than among us – regardless of theory."[48]

Before and after the Shoah and the establishment of the State of Israel, as up to the present day, we witness a lively debate on Israel and the Diaspora relations. Thus, Gershom Scholem writes already in the 70s:

"Throughout my life I was tossed hither and yon by expectations and disappointments; expectations from the Jewish people in general, and, in particular, from us who were at work in the land of Israel. I have come to know many phases of this process from highest expectations to deepest disappointment, indeed despair. And I have gone through them myself."[49]

He reflects on the fact that the hope for a reconstruction of the destroyed center did not only draw its strength from the belief in the intercession of a divine power, but "from the experience of exile, which was the experience of Israel's homelessness in the world of history."

In recent generations, the religious categories in which this experience is described, according to Scholem, have undergone tremendous changes:" But even the most secular forms……still vibrate in resonance with a secret tone of the religious."[50]

Scholem refers to the Jewish socialists and fighters for social justice while undoubtedly also hinting at the Zionists:

"This falling apart of, and indeed conflict between, conceptions that are on the one hand religious and tradition-orientated, and on the other hand secularized, and directed at a metamorphosis of Judaism in rejuvenated forms………"[51]

The modern State of Israel carries the hopes and aspirations of all Jews, and in the first place of all its citizens - the secular and the religious.

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[48] Letter to Benno Jacobs, 10.5.1927, in Franz Rosenzweig, *Briefe und Tagebücher* , hg. von Rachel Rosenzweig und Edith Rosenzweig-Scheinmann unter Mitwirkung von Bernhard Casper, 2. Band 1918-1929. Den Haag: Martinus Nyhoff, 1979, p. 1141.

[49] Gershom Scholem, "Israel and the Diaspora" in Werner J. Dannhauser (ed.), *On Jews and Judaism in Crisis. Selected Essays*, New York: Schocken, 1976; p. 244

[50] *Ibidem*, p. 245

[51] *Ibidem*, p. 246

Chronologically it follows the destruction of European Jewry, but it opens at the same time an horizon of history hitherto unknown, but imagined. The convergence of these two experiences rooted in human consciousness, enables us not only to re-count the historical past, but to re-member and to bear witness as part of humanity in an act of *Tikkun Olam* – a 'Mending of the World'.

Thus, when reflecting on the task of Jews in Israel and in the Diaspora to remain a witness unto the nations after Auschwitz, the philosopher Emil Fackenheim speaks of *Longing, Defiance* and *Endurance.* These can indeed be described as three pillars of the universal significance of memory, on which the destiny of contemporary Jewry and perhaps the world of today itself rests. The "Commanding Voice of Auschwitz" is a constant reminder to Fackenheim that the world is in crisis.

"The world, which is a desperate place for the Jew after Auschwitz is becoming increasingly desperate for all men. Hope is being overwhelmed by despair; love by hate; commandment by loss of direction; and never far below consciousness is the specter of nuclear holocaust – the universal Auschwitz. This is an age in which former believers seek refuge in secularity, even as formerly self-confident secularists seek old and new gods. The only universal seems to be an apparent unwillingness or capacity to *endure* through the present world-crisis; to cherish and nurture what needs to be saved as the foundations are shaking; to work and hope with unyielding stubbornness for a time when our present crisis may have passed, and a new, possibly 'post-religious' and 'post-secular' age may come in sight."[52]

Between the year 1938 and the year 1948 lie a mere ten years: *Shoah and Tekuma* as the two founding facts of modern Jewish history, serve as an inspiration for Jews worldwide, and as a symbol of human freedom. The question remains how to translate this miracle into the Realpolitik of the year 2009, doing justice to the *prophetic and humanistic* aspirations of Jews throughout the ages.

In the words of the prophet Isaiah on Jerusalem: "And I will restore your judges as at the first and your counsellors as at the beginning: then you shall be called, 'The City of Righteousness', a faithful city. Zion shall be

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[52] Emil L. Fackenheim, *God's Presence in History: Jewish Affirmation and Philosophical Reflections*, New York 1972, p. 95.

redeemed with judgment and those that return to her with righteousness" (Isaiah 1:26-27).

As we celebrate the fifteenth anniversary of European Studies and as this great honour is bestowed upon me by the Babes-Bolyai University here in Cluj, which has witnessed all the ravages of war, but also the tremendous efforts of rebuilding, and rejuvenation, my feeling today is that the Jewish people are no longer alone. We stand united with all peoples struggling to shape a better world.

Here is the place and now is the time to create out of the experiences out of the past a vision for the future.

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„Against All the Others!". A Study of Marginal Constestation in Romania Based on Discourse Theory

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Abstract

Because of the burden of totalitarian communism, the Romanian extremist movements have rarely contested the democratic system as a whole and have adopted some strategies of accommodation. In this way, they left a virgin space of variable dimensions for the anti-system movements that emerged at the margins of mainstream society. In this study, I will use the theoretical framework of discourse theory and the empirical framework of a comparative international research project to show that, albeit being marginal by its nature, radical contestation in Romania may have unexpected consequences over the stability and legitimacy of the political and institutional system.

Key-words: contestation, radicalism, discourse theory, identity, marginality

Ignored for a long period of time, the phenomenon of contestation has made its return among the main research interests on the occasion of the celebration of the May 1968 upsurge. But between 1968 and 2008, contestation has changed its nature and its appearance. The place of the mass movements who openly contested power has been taken by the quasi-sectarian units or the informal pressure groups whose actions are generally a strange combination between violent sabotages and meticulous constructions of parallel worlds.

This contribution attempts to evaluate the explicative added value of discourse theory to the study of the Romanian *rebellious* movements.[1] In

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[1] In order to avoid some possible misunderstandings, I will use different quotation marks for the metaphors that I will use and for the words used by the subjects of my interviews. Thus, I will respectively use *italics* for my metaphors and 'single quotation marks' for those used by the interviewed.

the first part, I will briefly expose the framework of the research project *L'Europe rebelle* (a joint project of the Universities Paris-Est Marne-la-Vallée, France, and Babes-Bolyai, Cluj, Romania).[2] I will concentrate on the Romanian component of this project and try to highlight the specific aspects of the individuals and of the movements who belong more or less to the world of the anti-system contestation. Then, I will investigate the framework of discourse theory in order to filter the elements that will be applied in the case studies of the Romanian *rebels*. In the third section, I will evaluate the contribution of the above-selected theoretical elements to the understanding of the phenomenon of contestation in nowadays Romania. In this sense, I will try to show how the main assumptions of discourse theory could be applied in the analysis of the Romanian contestation phenomenon and I will provide significant examples: far left and far right, Anarchists, revolutionaries, ultra-orthodox militants etc. Finally, I will draw the main conclusions concerning the merits and the limits of discourse theory in approaching the Romanian contestation movements.

L'Europe rebelle – *an international research project*

The research project *L'Europe rebelle* is the result of a collective reflection of an international group of experts gathered within the Laboratory « Espaces Ethiques et Politiques » of the University Paris-Est Marne-la-Vallée.[3] The main objective of this project is to identify the reasons behind rebellious activism in three European countries having different cultural traditions – France, Poland and Romania.

During the first stage of the project, the team established the criteria for selecting the *rebellious* population that will be studied. At the beginning, the team has chosen about twenty *rebellious* political movements which seemed to be relevant for this approach. Finally, the area of the only political movements was enlarged to the ethnic, social and religious groups, provided that at least one of the activities of those groups was the

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[2] The title chosen for the project was meant to be both descriptive and teasing. In this article, I will use the words *rebel* and *rebellious* in a rather metaphoric sense and in connection with the title of this project and not necessarily to describe an imminent upsurge.

[3] The General Manager of the project *L'Europe rebelle* (*The Rebellious Europe*) is Professor Chantal Delsol, whereas the Research Manager for Romania is Doctor Sergiu Miscoiu.

contestation of the actual political system or at least of one of its elements. As for the methods, and, implicitly, as for the expected results, the team opted for the semi-directed interviews and for the analytical monographic studies.

The team has also decided that the interest of this project was to provide a multidisciplinary understanding of the reasons behind the political involvement of the anti-system activists. The subjects' selection was made by following three criteria. First, the subjects have to be *contemporary rebels*, meaning individuals whose actions aimed to question, to radically change or to suppress the present political realities. Thus, the former rebels, and especially the antifascist *resistants* and the anticommunist dissidents, are excluded from this project. Even if the former dissidents could have constituted an important resource for the case-studies on Romania and Poland, the team considered that the coherence of the project resided especially in the transversal analysis of the phenomenon of rebellion against nowadays democratic systems. In this way, we have excluded all the individuals who contested a totalitarian system or a certain political system prior to the democratic transition in Central and Eastern Europe.

The second criterion concerned the quality of the subjects as activists within their groups, associations, parties or networks. As we considered that researchers have already extensively studied the leaders of the radical or extremist political movements, we decided that one of the most original aspects of this project would be its focus on the *basic* activists. Thus, our studies concentrated on the paths of the *simple* militants who constitute the fundamental structures of the *rebellious* movements and not on the carriers of their leaders.

The last criterion was diversity. As a quantitative research based upon a precise sampling procedure was not the purpose of this project, the only means that could have ensured the extension of the range of cases was the variety of the subjects' typologies. According to this third criterion, the chosen militants and, consequently, the movements held for this research, should be nationally unique. So, we have approached a single neo-fascist Polish militant, a single Romanian ultra-orthodox activist, a single French Anarchist, and so on.

From the methodological point of view, this research supposes the following rationale: the inquirer makes a half-guided interview with the chosen militant and, based on the interview, he or she writes the monographic study. The interviews cover the ensemble of details that could clarify the reasons and the modalities of the subjects' involvement in the activity of *rebellion*: aspects related to the familial life, to the professional evolution, to the friend circles, to the various reports with the political and social spheres, to the paths of the value systems construction. The essential part of the monographic study has to concentrate on the analysis of the subject's militant activity and on the perspectives of his or her political involvement. Finally, if necessary, the inquirer could add a chapter with some precisions concerning the nature, the history, the ideology and the activity of the respective movement.

L'Europe rebelle started in May 2007 and ends in December 2009. By the end of this project, a collective volume about the phenomenon of rebellion in Europe will be published.

Discourse Theory and Politics

The shakings that took place in the seventies within the scientific community allowed the emergence of the postmodern and of the poststructuralist approaches. Discourse theory belongs to the family of these alternative approaches, meaning that it contributed, in successive stages, to the dismantlement of the great convictions held by the pre-existing scientific framework.

If the starting point of discourse theory was the work of Michel Foucault[4] and Jacques Derrida[5], literature discusses about the existence of three generations of this school of thought. The first two generations were rather tributary to the genuine visions and concentrated on the linguistic, semantic and vaguely ideological aspects of discourse.[6]

[4] For a synthesis of Foucault's view on discourse, see Michel Foucault, "L'Ordre du Discours" in Michel Foucault, *Philosophie. Anthologie*, (Anthologie établie et présentée par Arnold I. Davidson et Frédéric Gros), Paris: Gallimard, 1999, pp. 61-79.

[5] Jacques Derrida, *L'écriture et la différence*, Paris: Seuil, 1967, especially the chapter « L'écriture, le signe et le jeu dans le discours des sciences humaines », pp. 409-428.

[6] Norman Fairclough, the founder of Critical Discourse Analysis, is one of the most salient representatives of the second generation. His main concern was related to the ideological

On a contrary, prompted by the weakening of the classical ideologies after the end of the Cold War, the approach of the third generation has been intimately related with the apprehension of politics. Two of the most salient representatives of this generation, Ernesto Laclau and Chantal Mouffe[7], have concentrated on the study of the discursive representation of the power relations, mainly on the constitution, confrontation, destruction and restructuring of the dominant networks of power through the dynamics of the discursive placements, displacements and replacements.

Grosso modo, discourse theory is based on an anti-essentialist ontology and anti-foundationalist epistemology.[8] In the first place, the adepts of discourse theory consider that there is no pre-existing and self-determining essence of the world. Religion, capitalism, class struggle, rationality or, more recently, the global warming theory are as many false essences that pretend to offer a final explanation of mankind destiny. Following Foucault and Lyotard, the discourse theorists see behind the efforts deployed to achieve a unique and final representation of the world the desire to establish a political hegemony. The purpose of discourse theory is to search for the deepest consequences of the absence of a *Centre* capable to structure and to manage the world.

Secondly, the epistemology of discourse theory is rather relativist. Its starting point seems to be Richard Rorty's idea according to which the existence of reality does not guarantee the existence of truth.[9] Truth seems to be conditioned by a truth regime, which, as Foucault put it, is co-extensive with power itself. The claim of an absolute truth has to be abandoned once and for all. Discourse theorists show that truth is elastic and ephemeral and depends of the truth regime that holds the rules for assessing the truth claim of a certain sentence. That is why we cannot have the necessary means to declare that a statement is true *per se*, but we can

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framework of the discursively inscribed social actions and representations. See Norman Fairclough, *Critical Discourse Analysis*, London, Longman: 1995.

[7] See, especially, Ernesto Laclau, *Grammaire de l'émancipation*, Paris: La Découverte, 2000 and Chantal Mouffe (ed.), *Deconstruction and Pragmatism*, New York: Routledge, 1996.

[8] See David Howarth, Jacob Torfing (ed.), *Discourse Theory in European Politics. Identity, Policy and Governance*, Palgrave Macmillan, 2005, p. 13.

[9] See Richard Rorty, *Contingency, Irony and Solidarity*, Cambridge: University Press, 1989.

only have the possibility to measure its alleged truth consistency in relation to a certain context and to our own perception of the outer world.

For discourse theorists, the application of these two premises necessarily results into a polymorphous system of relations, within which the identities of the actors are always established via interaction. Thus, identity construction through the discursively analyzable social interactions becomes the essential object of discourse theorists. The central idea of discourse theory is that identity is constituted by subject's self-determination in relation to its non-identities, or, in other words, to the identities of the others. This operation is quasi-discursive, meaning that we produce (and we consciously or unconsciously reproduce) descriptions and analyses which allow us to identify ourselves in relation to the outer world. This way, discourse is both the *creator* and the *alterator* of identity, as, trough the mechanisms of representation, it invisibly and temporarily establishes the social positions and places occupied by individuals and groups. The domain of politics is the first to be concerned by this discursive constraint, as its way of functioning is based on the permanent negotiation of the principles of government.

Discourse theorists have been trying to apply their hypotheses in various fields of political science and politics. However, it seems that they succeeded only in a limited area of subfields, including the study of extremist and radical politics. The reasons of this explicative predilection of discourse theory towards radical politics are numerous.

In the first place, the resurgence of the European far-left and far-right parties coincided with the emergence of the third generation of discourse – at the beginning of the 1990s. The new waves of political extremism – revolutionary Trotskyism, French, Italian and Dutch far-right parties, anti-globalization movements, etc – were taken by the researchers of this third generation as case studies for their ongoing theoretical works. Then, discourse theory looks for explanations that are exterior to the area of the mechanic determinations of the social world, whereas the most of the analyses based on social determinism have failed to offer a satisfactory explanation for the emergence, the evolution and the decay of radical and extremist movements. And, finally, discourse theory was able to include and to make understandable the multidimensional aspects of extremism and radicalism, by combining linguistic and semantic approaches, insights

from social psychology and from behaviourist sociology and methods inspired from political anthropology.[10]

Discourse Theory and **L'Europe rebelle**

To summarize, it is convenient to use the idea of Jacob Torfing[11], according to whom the approach of discourse theory may be synthesized in five key-points. In the next pages, I will try to investigate the way in which these five key-points have been used both as research hypotheses and as analytical tools within the framework of the project *L'Europe rebelle.* For each of these points, I will offer relevant examples extracted from the empirical studies conducted under our research project, in order to assess the degree of pertinence of the discursive approach in evaluating the phenomenon of contestation in Romania.

1. The first point is that social practices take place in an environment dominated by specific discourses that have themselves their own historical background. What it is said today bears the burden of what was said yesterday and determines what will be said tomorrow. The evolution from one dominant discourse to another takes place through the liberation of signifiers; as they become free, these signifiers are to be chained in a series of new logical continuums. In this context, some of the free signifiers become nodal points, gathering the various representations of reality in a coherent ensemble, but bearing the legacy of their prior meaning and configurations.

In the case of our research project, the identification of the discursive environment in which the subject formation took place was one of the essential concerns of the team. Moreover, we were interested in finding the free signifiers that have allowed the constitution or the

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[10] An example of the discursive approach of radical politics is Ernesto Laclau's, *On Populist Reason*, London: Verso, 1997.

[11] Jacob Torfing, "Discourse Theory: Achievements, Arguments, and Challenges" in David Howarth, Jacob Torfing (ed.), *Discourse Theory in European Politics. Identity, Policy and Governance*, Palgrave Macmillan, 2005, pp. 14-17.

reconstitution of the nodal points capable to support the emergence of a new discursive framework for social action.

Here, the case of *L.F.* is probably an appropriate example. Briefly, *L.F.* is a researcher from Timisoara who participated to the upsurges that resulted into the violent regime change of December 1989, but who was banished from the leadership of the new regime in the first months of 1990. He is the co-founder of an NGO that fights 'against the enslavement of Romania and of the whole world by the forces of Evil, the extraterrestrials and their allies, the Franc-Masons and the Jews'.[12] He spends his energy in co-financing TV shows, in organizing reunions and in printing books, leaflets and some sporadic journals.

In his case, studying the initial discursive environment in which he was educated contributed to the understanding of the fact that his attitude towards the social world has been the consequence of his family legacy (both his father and his grand-father were fascists). When, after 1989, the chaos of transition was producing a whole vacuum of values and models, *L.F.* progressively replaced various elements of this legacy in the core of his convictions. Some free signifiers – such as 'divine justice', 'national cause' or 'moral revolution' – proliferated in a society that seemed to have turned once and forever the page of communism without having been able to build its own system of values. *L.F.* captured step-by-step these empty signifiers, correlated them with significant excerpts of the fascist familial legacy and denounced a hypocritically religious society, meaning a society where the political system was totally corrupted and 'infiltrated by the twilight forces'. The result was the gradual emergence of a half-paranoid character, dominated by the will to establish an ideal order through a crusade that he would lead as one of the archangels.

The central idea of this first argument of discourse theory – the existence of a discursive burden in the present but also of an equally heavy burden of the past – proved to be useful in determining the reasons of *L.F.*'s actions only if one can assess to what extent the freeing of certain signifiers was the cause of this character's antisocial reaction and not the actual events (such as the divorce, the failure of his inventor brevets, or the banishment from public life). The conjunction of these two types of

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[12] I conducted the interview with *L.F.* in August 2007, in Timisoara.

explanation (discursive and mechanic) seems to be more appropriate for approaching the case of *L.F.*

2. The second point of discourse theory holds that discourse is constituted via *hegemonic struggles* for imposing a political leadership and for articulating the meaning and the identities. Hegemonic combats are far from taking place in neutral, conscious and isolated battlefields. Rather they are the results of an everlasting series of sequential and chaotic efforts. The success of these efforts depends of the individuals' propensity to opt for those identity yardsticks that are sufficiently strong to maintain and reinforce some articulations of meaning and, above all, the temporarily dominant articulation. Discourse theory posits that the articulations that succeed in offering a believable reading key for the interpretation of major events become hegemonic. For creating and maintaining such articulations, we use the *ideological totalisation*, a process through which discourse is structured in several nodal points.

Within the frame of *L'Europe rebelle* research project, this idea was applied in analysing rebellious activism as an endless search for an articulation capable to fix the social world in a unique and final discourse. The ideological totalisation showed itself through the progressive constitution of the *world of the rebel*, a world that is generally 'good', 'just' and 'fair' and contrasted in this way with the real world.

To illustrate this idea, it is appropriate to study the case of *M.D.*, a painter from Bucharest and a cofounder of an informal NGO that activates for 'the development of the Lesbian identity'. She acts against 'the marginalisation and the submission of women' and preaches a world where 'men become dispensable'.[13] *M.D.* claims to have a 'full Lesbian identity' and participates to the actions of 'combat against disinformation by the establishment'. Nevertheless, she is against Feminism and against the GLBT[14] movements that she considers 'soft and responsible for an altered image of the human essence'. She left her family and broke with all her former friends for living with her 'girlfriends' in a marginal neighbourhood in Bucharest.

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[13] Interview taken in February 2008, in Cluj.
[14] Gay-Lesbian-Bi-Trans.

In the case of *M.D.*, the hegemonic struggles took place between Ultra-Orthodoxy, Anarchism and radical Lesbianism. Radical Orthodoxy lost when *M.D.* became aware that there was a 'tremendous gap between theory and practice' within this religion. Between Anarchism and radical Lesbianism, she chose the latter, as its integrative discourse 'suited [her] very well'. Lesbian radicalism presented at least two majors advantages. The first was that it concentrated on a component that made the difference between *M.D.* and the others, namely sexual orientation. And the second was that it gathered in a compact ideological ensemble nodal points that were essential for the young *rebel*: the denunciation of women's marginalisation, the social identification based on the sexual orientation and the struggle for 'gendered justice'.

In brief, discourse theory explains that *M.D.* translated the free signifiers partly recomposed in a discursive articulation in her own *language* and chose, according to her own capacities, the version which seemed the most adequate. She got in this way to the idea of the 'Lesbian identity', that she constructed herself by using the nodal points which were *victorious* in the struggle with the other signifiers. However, one may ask himself if there has really been a combat between discourses having hegemonic claims or if rather *M.D.* has not invented herself the idea of a hesitation between several currents, as such an idea would have legitimised her final choice. Moreover, it is probable that her status of a sexual minority member in a homophobic society left her little room for selecting the main criteria for joining a radical movement. But this objection would be valid only if we would assume that her sexual orientation itself has not been the result of the adoption of a certain identity-based discourse, but the determinant of that very discourse.

3. Thirdly, discourse theory explains that hegemonic articulations of meanings and identities are based on the emergence of *social antagonisms*. All the doctrines based on the ideological totalisation suppose the idea of the existence of the *Other*, as a yardstick for structuring the identity and the principles of the *inner* group. Thus, *alteration* (or, in other words, the invention of the *Other*) supposes by itself the identification of a non-*Us* which, in the context of social and political competition, becomes an adversary whose nature and dimensions are representable through

discourse. In order to give a sense to our own identity, the *Other* is excluded and, within social antagonism, confronted. His identity structures our identity but at the same time opens the way for the dismantlement of *Our*-selves, as it offers an alternative to our identity.

The determination of what is contained and what is not contained in our identity becomes in this way essential for our perspective of the world and for our manner to perceive the political. This determination becomes understandable through the imaginary construction of political frontiers, which are merely or not at all trans-passable in the case of the extremist and radical collective identities.

For *L'Europe rebelle*, the reasons of the action of contestation are based on the belonging to the groups that associate the 'non-rebels' with the 'evil order' and to its consequences. The 'rebels' create untranscendable frontiers between their own group and the establishment; these frontiers define the two types of identity by placing them in a context of antagonism that is perceived to be natural.

Let us see a concrete example that illustrates this third proposition of discourse theory. *G.A.* is a former apparatchik of the fourth echelon of the Communist Party in the Mehedinti county.[15] He fought against the 'coup d'Etat' in 1989 and, paying the bill of his attitude, held his convictions all over the transitional period. First, he joined the Socialist Party of the Workers, presided by an ex-minister of Ceausescu. In 1995, he left this party in order to join the Romanian Socialist Party, a small and radical clique dominated by former Communist cadres. In spite of his age (75 in 2008), *G.A.* does not hesitate to 'continue the combat' by publishing articles in Neo-Communist newspapers, by distributing leaflets, by participating to the annual commemorations of Nicolae Ceausescu's birthday and by organising reunions with the 'comrades' of his neighbourhood. Within this latter activity, he came with the idea to gather a 'small brigade of comrades' that issued in 2007 a *Proclamation of the Communist State*, a 'samizdat' manifesto, published in such a way that 'the CIA wouldn't notice'.

In the case of *G.A.*, social antagonism was fed by the refreshment of a Neo-Stalinist ideological discourse that was strong enough to overwhelm all the other possibilities to read the prior and the post-1989 events. The

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[15] Interview taken in September 2007, in Drobeta-Turnu-Severin.

identification of the *Other* has already been perpetrated during the Communist regime, when the revenge against the 'bourgeois' and then the permanent agitation of the danger of 'restoration' have provided the main object for the ideological struggle. After 1989, the balance of power between *Us* and *Them* has been reversed. The discursive inscription of the 'New Regime' as a follower of the *Other* made possible the reconstitution of the political frontiers, this time with more passion and virulence. The associations operated by the National-Communist press of the time (Capitalism-transition-Liberalism-poverty-betrayal-corruption) redrew the imaginary links with the past and prompted the reactivation of *G.A.* as a militant. In his case, as the militant action was less and less effective, political frontiers merged with the material boundaries: the discursive linkage between the ideal Communist order and the very limit of the small neighbourhood he was living in engendered a materialisation of 'people's power' projection, and the latter led to the *Proclamation of the Communist State*.

However, in addition to the explanations offered by discourse theory, it is obvious that the determinants of *G.A.*'s socialisation are also responsible for the radicalisation of his discourse and for his decision to undertake some rather spectacular actions. Among these determinants, the conservation of the network of former local Communist activists played a crucial role in the preservation of the *old* ideological line. But such conservation would have had few chances to resist in the absence of a discursive totalisation operated by important segments of the radical press, especially in the early 1990s, a period when a sizeable number of former Communists have regrouped around Ion Iliescu and bent to the 'social market economy', namely to business. It was the high degree of radicalism of the discourse based on the antagonism between the passed idealised order and the present denounced one that nourished *G.A.*'s opinions and actions.

4. The fourth assertion of discourse theory regards the dismantlement of the discursive orders. A discursive system dislocates when it unsuccessfully tries to bring credible explanations to the new developments that happen in the actual world. Dislocation takes place under the 'destructive' action of the other discursive systems which aspire

to hegemony by attempting to capture the signifiers freed by the formerly dominant system while agonising. The apprehension of a set of publicly vocal free signifiers and their coherent ideological totalisation give to a certain discursive system decisive chances to win over the others.

In our case, competition among many virtually hegemonic discursive systems is an essential trait of transition. In the light of this idea, rebellion is the result of the violent integration of a set of principles and values abandoned after the fall of the Communist discursive macro-system. Thus, our team was interested in studying the ways in which the fall of the dominant discursive systems was related to the integration of our subjects in the *rebellious* movements.

M.I. offers a good illustration of this idea. Born in Iasi, in a family of intellectuals, he was first a *spoiled child* and then a real 'burden' for his family: during high school, he started to drink and to take drugs and, as a student, he failed his exams and had to repeat the first year.[16] Since 2005, *M.I.* has joined an Anarchist movement and participated to the activities of two NGOs 'animated by some sages whose names have to remain unknown' and financed 'from abroad'. In addition to the activity of 'ideological dissemination' of Bakunin's works, the Anarchist movement of Iasi made a salient public appearance when it attempted to boycott the NATO Summit, organised in Bucharest, in April 2008. *M.I.* took part to this event in order to fight against 'State persecutions and police terror'.

M.I. decided to join the Anarchist movement when he realised that the entire political system was based on 'lies meant to conceal its real totalitarian nature'. Failing to explain to *M.I.* why the passage from Communism to democracy required a transitional period, the democratic discursive system lost in his view its hegemony and was replaced by a virulent anti-paternalist discourse having an Anarchist flavour. For *M.I.*, free signifiers, such as 'freedom', 'individualism', 'self-management' or 'emancipation' became more coherent if they were integrated in the radical and *rebel* discourse than if they were drowned in the ocean of the signifiers produced by the official discourse. In his own words,

"At first, I believed the promises of freedom and peace. But everything fell down when I realised that neither transition, nor the

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[16] Interview taken in May 2008, in Iasi.

so-called *Europeanization* were leading to an entirely free society. It was the other way around!"

In this case, discourse theory explains that the fall of a holistic and supported by a repressive apparatus discourse opened the way for a merciless war between the discursive systems that had hegemonic tendencies. The Post-Communist hegemonic discourse, based on the democratic rhetorical repertoire, did not succeed to maintain the encapsulation of numerous signifiers, partly captured by the rival discourses, including the Anarchist one. Allegedly, *M.I.* followed, more or less consciously, the plot presented here-above, by discarding the official discourse and by adhering to radical Anarchism.

One may criticize the credit that this approach gives to the self-determination capacity of subjects when they choose their *preferred* discursive universes. Once again, we can imagine that *M.I.* has joint Anarchism to openly defy his family rather than to compensate the absence of a coherent system of values. Moreover, behind his militant involvement, there are perhaps the seduction of the game of contestation and the need for integration, and not the incorporation in a certain discursive universe. However, the last point of discourse theory, presented here-below, will provide some supplementary counter-arguments to this objection.

5. Finally, discourse theory holds that the dislocation of a certain discursive horizon is strongly connected with the emergence of the *split subject*. As a consequence of subject's failure to achieve a fully integrated identity, he or she is always in a process of search for an identification that offers the illusion of the complete integration. Politics is a field where the promises concerning the realisation of a common welfare may be widely understood as a perspective for acquiring a full identity. According to Slavoj Žižek, the failure of the *final identification* generates the dramatisation of the search for identity.[17] It may lead to a choice in favour of some of the most radical discourses, which promise the immediate achievement of a full identity. But as these radical discursive systems fail at their turn to accomplish this promise, they feed the *dislocation of responsibility*: the *Others*

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[17] See Slavoj Žižek, "Invisible Ideology: Political Violence Between Fiction and Fantasy" in *Journal of Political Ideologies*, Vol. 1, Issue 1, February 1996, pp. 16-18.

are always responsible for the failure of a full identity's achievement. This way, the perpetual creation and recreation of discourses in which the excluded from the inner group are guilty for the absence of a fully integrated identity become indispensable.

For our research project, it was useful to determine the *lacking identity* or the *lacking identities* of the subjects, to understand the discursive mechanisms through which the *rebels* joined the groups that promised the reconstitution of their identities and to depict the processes of *responsibility dislocation* and the objects of these processes, the *Others*. In the most of the cases, the act of *rebellious* integration was by itself a form of guiltiness' deviation, as the search for a remedy for the particular situation of each subject passed through the identification with a group that was more capable to find convenient scapegoats.

It was precisely what happened in the case of *D.P.* [18] Born in 1965, in a formerly Greek-Catholic family in Oradea, he was the first to be baptised in the Orthodox religion, in a time when the Greek-Catholic church was dissolved by the Communist regime. The two identities of his family – the Catholic and the Orthodox – have peacefully cohabited under the Communism, but have violently clashed after 1989, when the issues of the restitutions that the Orthodox Church had to make to the Greek-Catholic one openly emerged. The young technician, who has been three times unsuccessful in his efforts to be admitted at the Polytechnic University in Cluj, found himself thrown in the middle of religious and political quarrels. Since 1993, he has paid a lot of attention to the inter-religious debates and collected, at the beginning, the arguments that were favorable to the Catholics. He ended up by converting to Greco-Catholicism and by actively fighting what he called the 'Orthodox Church-Party-State'. But he had a hard time to get accepted by the traditional Greek-Catholic communities in Oradea, who feared, in his own words, 'the infiltration of spies'. As a result of the frequent scandals that took place in his parish council especially during the periods when he was temporarily unemployed, *D.P.* started to distance himself from the Greek-Catholic circles. Moreover, he started to frequent a radical orthodox association and reconverted to his native religion in 1998. Since then, he has remained a simple militant of this group; the main objective of this association is 'to return to the traditions

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[18] Interview taken in July 2008, in Oradea.

and to purge the Church of the Communists and of the Secret Service agents'. Since 2003, this association has militated for the instauration of a 'National Orthodox State', governed by a diarchy composed of a lay President and of the Orthodox Patriarch. In 2008, *D.P.* and his comrades acted against the election of the new Patriarch of the Orthodox Church: his association has openly criticized the main three candidates, but did not propose an alternative to them.

D.P.'s hesitations with respect to his confession and the ultra-radical manner in which he joined a marginalised Orthodox sect are consonant with the psychoanalytical theory of the *split subject*. Traumatised by his professional failures and by the inter-religious conflict that destroyed his family, *D.P.* firstly tried to identify himself with a religious, moral and political discourse that preached, in a nutshell, the restitution of the pre-1945 realities. But, as he has not been accepted by a Greek-Catholic community whose collective habits and personal requirements were too hard to cope with, *D.P.* recovered his Orthodox identity and blamed his 'Catholic heresy' for its situation in which he found himself. Within the radical Orthodox movement, he identified himself with a faction that started to attack the high Orthodox hierarchy. For *D.P.*, the fault for the ensemble of his failures always comes to the *Others*. Consequently, he took the care to build a protective fence against *Them.* As a final example, the failure of his last marriage attempt was due to the manner in which his former would-be wife has been indoctrinated by the 'Papists and the *Ortho-Papists*'.

Discourse theory seems to be capable to explain the social and political behaviour of this character, provided that the thesis of the split subject (which rather comes from social psychology) is fully integrated in its theoretical framework. For the moment, the inclusion of this thesis within the ensemble of discourse theory remains problematic, because the search for the completed identity does not necessarily take place in the interior of a certain discursive universe and rather depends of a series of factors that is endogenous to the immediate social relations. However, one may argue that the social and the discursive are themselves co-substantial…

Conclusions

If the research question posed at the beginning of this article was if discourse theory brought a certain contribution to the understanding of the phenomenon of contestation, the answer could not be negative. There is no doubt that discourse theory provides a remarkable analytic tool and that it offers a valuable alternative to the monist traditional approaches. However, on a more accurate level, is discourse theory sufficient to analyse the reasons of the political involvement and of the militant actions of those *common* individuals who chose to join some Romanian *rebel* movements?

At a first glance, the response to this second question would rather be negative. An overarching argument in this sense would be that, as opposed to the contestation phenomena in the other two countries held for this research – France and Poland – the *rebellious action* of the Romanians is far more individualised and thus less susceptible to be schematised within some clear political patterns and profiles.

Nevertheless, if we take into consideration the fact that discourse theory is far from claiming that it is by itself alone capable to approach general political phenomena, this negative answer could be challenged. In fact, discourse theory takes the discursive paradigm as a framework that gives the possibility to integrate open and multidisciplinary explanations. It is precisely its conclusion on the disappearance of a regulatory centre of the social sphere that opens the way to the negotiations between several readings of the world which require the corroboration of data and interpretations proposed by all the social sciences.

The contestation of the democratic order remains, in the case of Romania, a marginal phenomenon. However, the end of the post-transitional period, marked by Romania's accession to the European Union, allowed for a certain relaxation of censorship and self-censorship over the voices that opposed the actual political system and its principles. Moreover, the multiplication of the European networks which contest the *establishment* has provided a supplementary impetus to the similar organisations of the former Communist countries.

In this context, discourse theory could bring its contribution to the analysis of the mechanisms that allowed the naturalisation of the anti-system action at the level of the European public spaces. But this

contribution should not ignore the motivations of the basic militants' direct actions and the fact that this demarche requires some interdisciplinary approaches. The research project *L'Europe rebelle* could contribute to the complex results that are obtained in these types of scientific laboratories.

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PENSEE AUTRE MONDIALITE ET HUMANITE AUTRE L'UNIVERSALITE DE MORIN ET DE SON ŒUVRE

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Abstract

This text applies itself to answer the question to know in what the thinker Edgar Morin and her work they are universal so that they can refer to the one and to other one to construct surgical knowledge. The universality of Edgar Morin and his work are in the contents of tries which carry his signature. It succeeded in constructing a monumental work, transdisciplinarity, which offers a "thought other one" for the Global World and for a "humanity other one". Edgar Morin is less a thinker of globalization than a thinker of the "mondiality" and therefore one of the big thinkers of a "humanity other one", got rid of the ballast by the ethnocentrist inheritance of the thoughts of Light.

Keywords: complexity, humanism, Edgar Morin, mondiality, epistemology, social sciences, sociology

Le présent texte² s'emploie à répondre à la question de savoir en quoi le penseur Edgar Morin et son œuvre sont-ils universels ? L'universalité de cette œuvre s'explique-t-elle par sa traduction en plusieurs langues ? Edgar Morin est-il universel pour avoir reçu des distinctions honorifiques de plusieurs universités ou parce qu'il existe des institutions universitaires et de recherche scientifique dédiées à son nom ?

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² Pour des raisons de conformité aux exigences de la publication dans la revue *Europaea. Studia Universitas Babes-Bolyai*, le présent texte a subi des modifications qui le rend légèrement différent de la version du texte que j'ai rédigé en juillet 2009, et que Nicolas Malinowski et Carlos Delgado ont aimablement traduit en espagnol sous le titre de « *Pensar otro*, mundialidad y *humanidad otra*. La Universalidad de Morin y de su obra » pour une publication à la Multiversidad Mundo Real (Hermosillo, Mexique) dans le cadre de la plateforme : **DIPLOMADO TRANSFORMACIÓN EDUCATIVA** « *Una Formación a los Saberes Globales y Fundamentales de la Docencia* ».

L'universalité d'Edgar Morin et de son œuvre se trouvent dans le contenu même des essais qui portent sa signature. Il a réussi à construire une œuvre monumentale, transdisciplinaire, qui propose une pensée autre pour la mondialité et pour une humanité autre. Edgar Morin est moins un penseur de la mondialisation qu'un penseur de la mondialité (le terme « mondialité » est bel et bien présent dans son œuvre[3]) et donc un des grands penseurs d'une humanité autre, délestée de l'héritage ethnocentriste des pensées des Lumières.

> « L'échec de la révolution du XXe siècle est irrémédiable. Etait-ce ou non fatal, est une autre question (…) L'important est qu'il y eut une première et grandiose tentative pour poser, sur d'autres bases, et l'organisation de toute société, et le problème de l'humanité. Je lui demeure fidèle à jamais ».[4]

N'est-ce pas que son œuvre naît de multiples crises du XXe siècle, s'en nourrit, les pense, en pensant la science classique et son paradigme de simplicité, quitte à montrer que c'est le destin de l'identité humaine, et par-delà celle-ci, le destin de l'humanité qui se joue dans ces crises ? Ces crises sont planétaires, tant elles affectent toutes les sociétés, tous les continents, tous les hommes.

De la lecture de cette œuvre et de mes participations aux conférences d'Edgar Morin, j'ai tiré trois leçons. Il s'agit des leçons d'ordre épistémologique, méthodologique et anthropo-sociologique. Dans l'espace de ce texte, je m'en tiendrai aux première et troisième leçons. Je mettrai en relief non seulement le lien qui les unit, mais aussi leurs conséquences pour « les connaissances subalternées » ou, mieux, les *postcolonial studies*, dans le cadre de la redéfinition de la géopolitique de la connaissance et de l'avènement de la mondialité.

Né en 1921, en France, Edgar Morin a écrit des ouvrages qui ressortissent à la sociologie, à l'anthropologie, au cinéma, à l'histoire, à la politique, à la biologie, à la philosophie, aux sciences de l'information et de la communication, etc. Articulée en six volumes, son œuvre majeure est sur-titrée *La Méthode*. Les commentateurs affirment que *La Méthode* est une

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[3] Cf. Edgar Morin, *Sociologie*, Paris : Fayard, 1994, p. 437.
[4] Id., *Où va le monde ?*, Paris : Herne, 2007, p. 63.

œuvre d'épistémologie et de théorisation de la complexité, du paradigme de complexité, paradigme alternatif à celui de simplicité jugé inapte à saisir et à élucider les complexités de la réalité. A coup sûr, cette œuvre ressortit à ce que je préfère pour ma part nommer l'*épistémologie rétroprospective.* Par cette expression, je désigne une épistémologie qui, outre son aspect critique *a posteriori* de la science, concourt à la construction du nouveau, la science nouvelle (« *scienza nuova* ») qui peut contribuer à une nouvelle compréhension de l'univers, de l'homme et des sociétés humaines, et, ce faisant, à la promotion de la mondialité. Il ne s'agit donc pas d'une épistémologie qui se contente de mener l'étude critique de la science déjà faite, mais aussi et surtout s'emploie à construire d'autres bases pour la science, voire pour une pensée autre – « la pensée complexe » –, construisant une humanité autre dans le contexte de la mondialité.

Comme je l'ai indiqué ailleurs,[5] le terme « mondialité » n'est pas totalement réductible à ceux de mondialisation ou de globalisation qui recouvrent davantage le « *monde-marché* » ou le « *marché-monde* ». Parallèlement au concept de globalisation ou de mondialisation, on assiste à la promotion et à l'usage de la notion de mondialité aussi bien en littérature, en sciences humaines et sociales qu'en philosophie. Cette notion recouvre l'idée de quelque chose qui englobe et dépasse l'économique et le politique : l'appartenance des hommes à une même origine commune dans cette intégrale donnée de bifurcations issues du grand récit qu'est la nature, et, en tant que tels, leur appartenance à une même communauté de destin. L'adossement à cette grande mémoire les condamne, en fait, à la responsabilité dans la gestion du monde et de la diversité humaine et culturelle, sur fond d'une nouvelle vision de l'universel, de l'humanité. Autant dire que si, comme le pense Jean Baudrillard, il n'y a plus de différence entre le mondial et l'universel, la mondialité constitue, à mon humble avis, le nouveau nom de l'universel postcolonial.

Le philosophe et écrivain Edouard Glissant[6] définit la mondialité comme la quantité infinie et la réalisation de l'infini détail du réel. Il affirme que contre l'universel (moderne) qui cherche à dépasser tous les

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[5] Cf. Emmanuel M. Banywesize, « Mondialité, la France et ses Africains. Quel avenir pour le multiculturalisme ? », in Sergiu Mişcoiu, Chantal Delsol, Bernard Alliot (dir.), *Identités politiques et dynamiques partisanes en France,* Cluj-Napoca : Efes, 2009, pp. 44-77.
[6] Cf. Edouard Glissant, *Philosophie de la relation. Poésie en étendue,* Paris : Gallimard, 2009.

particuliers, la mondialité, en tant que système de relation, récuse tout dépassement, toute uniformisation, tout gommage des particuliers. Elle favorise la mise en contact des particuliers, leurs fécondations et leurs enrichissements réciproques. Elle rend caduque les murs des imaginaires, les murs linguistiques, culturels, identitaires pour faire éclater une identité relationnelle dans un monde complexe, c'est-à-dire dans un monde où il y a multiples rencontres, interactions et entrelacements des éléments hétérogènes pour produire de l'inattendu, de la nouveauté, de l'*unitas multiplex*. Aussi Patrick Chamoiseau et Edouard Glissant[7] considèrent-ils que dans la mondialité – qui est là tout autant qu'elle est à fonder –, les hommes n'appartiennent pas en exclusivité à des « patries », à des « nations », et pas du tout à des « territoires », mais à des « Lieux », à des intempéries linguistiques, à des dieux libres qui ne réclament pas d'être adorés, à des terres natales qu'ils auront décidées, à des langues qu'ils auront désirées, ces géographies tissées de terres et de visions qu'ils auront forgées. Devenus incontournables, ces « Lieux » entrent en relation avec tous les Lieux du monde. C'est le chatoiement de tous ces Lieux qui ouvre à l'insurrection infinie des imaginaires libres et d'un vivre-ensemble-autre fondé sur l'assomption de l'altérisation qui opèrent sur la base des dyades créatrices, au sein des sociétés, d'un groupe de citoyens inclus appelés « Nous » et d'un groupe de citoyens marginalisés, exclus, les « sans-parts » appelés « Eux ».

Il va sans dire que la mondialité doit être entendue comme conscience d'appartenance de tous les hommes à l'« Humanité-monde » et prise de conscience de ce qu'implique cette appartenance. Comme telle, elle bouleverse la conception géographique traditionnelle du monde et les rapports entre les continents. Elle dessine une nouvelle carte du monde. Pourtant certains pays continuent à se barricader comme s'ils voulaient que le monde change pour que tout reste à l'état. Il est plus facile de retourner les huitres que de changer les habitudes, les préjugés, mais rien n'arrête la marche d'une réalité dont le temps est déjà venu. De plus, il n'est pas facile de s'avouer la vérité, mais il y a un devenir spiralesque du monde dont la conséquence est telle que la cessation de l'évidence d'une idée sur laquelle s'était fondée une culture donnée s'accompagne toujours d'une nouvelle

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[7] Edouard Glissant et Patrick Chamoiseau, *Quand les murs tombent. L'identité nationale hors-la-loi*, Paris : Galaade, 2007.

constellation intégratrice des éléments de ce qui a été et donatrice de sens à ce qui a été nié, bafoué, minoré ou ignoré. Que les murs subsistent entre les pays ou entre les continents, cela est un signe : le refus délibéré de quelque culture ou quelque civilisation à penser véritablement et sans préjugés les Autres, à se penser avec les Autres, à penser l'Autre en Soi.

Une certaine géographie qui confondait spatialisation et racialisation enseignait que l'Europe, l'Asie, l'Afrique et les Amériques étaient respectivement les terres du Blanc, du Jaune, du Noir et du Rouge. De plus, et sur fond mythologique, on disait que l'Occident était le contient auquel *Europé*, cette femme qui aurait été enlevée en Orient (en Asie) par Zeus, a donné le nom. L'époque contemporaine sait suffisamment, avec Friedrich Nietzsche, que l'Orient et l'Occident sont des cercles de craie que l'on dessine pour berner la timidité humaine. Car il est vrai, et Edgar Morin le rappelle, dans *Penser l'Europe*, que l'Occident ou l'Europe n'est pas seulement une notion géographique sans frontières strictes avec l'Asie (l'Orient), mais aussi une entité historique aux frontières mouvantes. Aujourd'hui, l'Afrique n'est plus uniquement une notion géographique, mais également historique et culturelle. Au fil de l'histoire, les Africains ne sont plus exclusivement des Noirs, mais aussi des Blancs, des Métis, des Afrikaners. L'Européen n'est plus exclusivement le Blanc, mais aussi le Noir et le Beur. Il n'en est pas autrement des Amériques, qui sont, comme l'Afrique et l'Europe, des foyers de complexités des trajectoires, déroulant des histoires multiples et différentielles dont celles des Indiens, des Mayas, des conquérants ou marchands venus d'Europe, des esclaves ramenés d'Afrique, des migrants européens, asiatiques et africains ayant, à l'époque contemporaine et pour diverses raisons, traversé l'Atlantique ou le Pacifique.

Comme conscience d'appartenance de tous les hommes à l'humanité-monde et prise de conscience de ce qu'implique cette appartenance, la mondialité bouleverse en plus la conception philosophique et anthropologique traditionnelle entre le *Même* et l'*Autre* dans le monde. Par « monde », il faut entendre à la fois l'humanité-monde, prise comme globalité, comme maison de tous, dont l'équilibre passe par l'équilibre de tous, et ensemble du mouvement de la nature terrestre dont les hommes sont une partie. Par monde, il faut donc entendre la « Terre-Patrie ». La leçon qui se donne dans la critique de la culture occidentale par l'homme

occidental, au cours du XXᵉ siècle et surtout à la faveur des événements majeurs du XXᵉ siècle, dont la décolonisation des empires coloniaux, les rencontres et croissements anthropo-sociaux, et les réunifications politiques, c'est l'émergence d'une société autre. Dans cette société autre, le concept d'humanité peut enfin, en le disant avec Philippe Zarifian[8], devenir concret pour tous, et ce après avoir été, pendant plusieurs siècles, utilisé pour exprimer des généralités abstraites, dont la fonction essentielle était d'opprimer de vastes ensembles déclarés sauvages, soumis et subalternés, généralités dont l'universalisme kantien aura été l'expression à la fois la plus pure et la plus achevée. Désormais, il est possible de faire l'éloge de l'humanité concrète, d'une commune appartenance, faite de convergences entre cultures différentes, réunies autour des mêmes problèmes, des mêmes urgences, des mêmes idéaux, de la même éthique active de la générosité et de la liberté.

C'est que l'humanité n'est plus seulement une notion idéale dont la philosophie des Lumières avait réduit le champ d'extension à l'Occident et à l'Homme occidental, y excluant particulièrement l'Homme africain, considéré alors comme la pure figure de la barbarie et de la sauvagerie. L'humanité devient aussi, comme le note à juste titre Edgar Morin[9], une communauté de destin, forgée dans et par deux grandes guerres du XXᵉ siècle, par l'effet Hiroshima et, j'ajoute, par l'expérience postcoloniale. Car ce sont, d'une part, la menace d'anéantissement et, d'autre part, le changement du regard du Même par rapport aux Autres qui a vertu génésique pour l'humanité. Ils transforment l'idée abstraite en réalité concrète. Aussi importe-t-il de relever avec Edgar Morin que cette concrétude s'enveloppe d'une autre concrétude planétaire, dont les sciences de la nature font prendre conscience, à savoir : la biosphère, ensemble auto-éco-organisateur constitué d'inter-rétroactions entre tous les êtres vivants, dont les humains, sur la planète Terre.

On sait que le devenir de la biosphère est de plus en plus au centre des débats politiques mondiaux, tant il est désormais connu que de la protection de la nature qui nous porte, dépend notre devenir en tant que vivants dans le monde. Il y a de multiples interactions entre la nature et nous, contrairement à la leçon d'une certaine pensée moderne qui

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[8] Philippe Zarifian, *L'émergence d'un Peuple-monde*, Paris : PUF, 1999.
[9] Cf. Edgar Morin, *Pour sortir du XXè siècle*, Paris : Seuil, 1984.

consacrait une rupture radicale entre la nature et l'homme conçu alors comme un être étranger dans la nature, mais dont la mission est de connaître les secrets de celle-ci pour s'en rendre maitre et possesseur. En s'étendant à la pensée sociale du XIXᵉ siècle, cette idéologie a servi de soubassement au projet d'érection des valeurs occidentales en valeurs universelles et d'invention, dût-il être au prix de curialisation et de domestication violentes de mœurs, d'une société se réfléchissant dans *La Cité de Dieu* de saint Augustin : la société parfaite, dont les caractéristiques auront été l'hygiénisme (ou le risque zéro), la morale et le « nickel ». On sait désormais qu'une telle société n'a jamais été réalisée, et on peut parier que les chances d'y parvenir soient très minces. Les sociétés contemporaines se révèlent être des macro-systèmes, produits des interactions entre les avancées et innovations technoscientifiques, des mythologies et des héritages archaïques hétérogènes.

Comme je l'ai écrit dans mon livre consacré à l'œuvre d'Edgar Morin, ce penseur récuse la thèse de l'existence d'un homme purement rationnel, qui aurait succédé à un homme archaïque, barbare, théologien ou mythologue. Certes, le monde et l'homme ont connu tant de transformations que l'humanité chemine, peut-être, vers la naissance de ce que Joël de Rosnay[10] appelle le « cybionte », organisme nouveau à dimension planétaire, à la fois biologique, mécanique et électronique, dont nous sommes les Enzymes et les acteurs. Cependant, l'homme ne s'est pas dépouillé de la dimension religieuse, mythologique et barbare. L'*homo-sapiens-demens* est UN, à la fois producteur de mythologies et d'autres savoirs, dont la science. Pour Edgar Morin, la barbarie n'accompagne pas seulement les civilisations, elle leur est inhérente. Les producteurs des civilisations ne sont pas seulement *homo sapiens*, mais aussi *homo ludens*, *homo demens* et *homo muthos*.

Dans les essais sur la mort, sur les stars et leur magnétisme, Edgar Morin[11] réfléchit sur les métamorphoses du double pour montrer que s'il est vrai qu'au stade actuel des sociétés humaines notre double s'est atrophié, la psychologie des stars exige, en revanche, « *une incursion préalable dans la psychologie de dédoublement* ». Autrement dit, l'étude sociologique du phénomène des stars trouve sa dimension dans une

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[10] Joël de Rosnay, *L'homme symbiotique. Regard sur le troisième millénaire*, Paris : Seuil, 2002.
[11] Edgar Morin, *L'homme et la mort*, Paris : Seuil, 1976, p. 149.

perspective anthropologique qui s'amarre au « *moment premier de l'évolution humaine, où le double correspond à une expérience vécue fondamentale* ».[12] Il y a bien un commerce entre l'homme prétendument rationnel, maître se soi, et ses images, ses mythologies, etc. Le livre *Les Stars* renseigne alors sur la dialectique entre l'imaginaire et le réel qui forme et transforme l'homme, au long de l'évolution des civilisations. De plus, ce livre permet d'établir le lien entre la réalité humaine, voire sociologique, et l'imaginaire. Toute réalité humaine, dont la société, se nourrit, dira Edgar Morin, d'imaginaire au point d'être semi-imaginaire.

Sur le plan géopolitique, la mondialité implique que chaque nation est désormais transnationale et diasporique, et les murs en bétons ou en aciers, les murs liquides ou législatifs n'y changent rien. L'histoire n'est pas avare d'exemples à ce sujet : il n'est de frontière que l'homme n'outrepasse. Les hommes ont voyagé, voyagent et voyageront toujours légalement ou illégalement pour diverses raisons (famine, changements climatiques, quête du mieux-vivre, diffusion des savoirs ou de culture, etc.). L'ignorance ou plutôt le mépris face aux faits et à la réalité ne change pas la vérité dont les nations doivent apprendre à tirer les conséquences : le creuset dans lequel se forge chaque nation se trouve à l'intérieur et à l'extérieur de ses frontières territoriales, riche de toute son histoire et de son inscription dans la trame historique d'un monde aux multiples expériences culturelles. Cela entraîne le croisement de l'ailleurs, du lointain et de *l'ici*.

En relisant *Penser l'Europe, Pour sortir du XXè siècle, Où va le monde ?* et la mine des connaissances qu'est *La Méthode*, je me suis confirmé dans l'évidence qu'Edgar Morin n'est pas seulement un sociologue-épistémologue, mais surtout un robuste penseur-constructeur de la mondialité. Son œuvre épistémologique et méthodologique concourt à construire et à fonder la mondialité. C'est ce qui fait fondamentalement l'universalité de l'homme et de son œuvre. Homme de tous les lieux sur la *Terre-Patrie*, il est un protagoniste pour une humanité autre, dans un monde autre. Aussi termine-t-il *Penser l'Europe* par ces phrases lourdes de sens :

> « Nous commençons à comprendre que le meilleur moyen de combattre les pires fondamentalismes est de sauvegarder et valoriser toutes les religions et les messages spirituels, et de laisser à leur

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[12] Id., *Les stars*, Paris: Seuil, 1972, p. 63.

dialogue le soin de révéler la trame profonde qui les connecte. Nous commençons à comprendre que la culture planétaire ne nécessite nulle homogénéisation et qu'elle requiert au contraire le libre épanouissement des cultures à travers des formes complexes d'échanges dialogiques. Abandonnant pour toujours l'ambition à se poser en point de vue unique et rationalisateur, l'Europe peut jouer à l'égard des autres cultures le rôle du point de vue autre et inattendu, qui aide à se connaître et à se développer par soi-même. Abandonnant pour toujours le rôle de centre privilégié du monde, l'Europe peut devenir un centre de réflexions et d'innovations pour pacifier les humains, instaurer ou restaurer les convivialités, civiliser notre Terre-Patrie ».[13]

La grande leçon qui se donne aux hommes après l'horreur nazie, l'éclatement de l'empire communiste, la décolonisation tardive de l'Afrique, c'est qu'il faut construire un humanisme postcolonial, un monde postcolonial. L'œuvre d'Edgar Morin offre des viatiques et des balises aux constructeurs. Nos sociétés existent certes comme tissus d'intérêts multiples (économiques, politiques, culturels) et de processus techniques qui opposent et associent leurs membres. Mais elles existent également comme systèmes portés par des mythes, entendus au sens des structures articulés du visible et de l'invisible, d'ici et de l'au-delà. Le mythe rend possible de reliances entre individus qui, ce faisant, forment une communauté. Ainsi dans les sociétés modernes, on peut remarquer que la fraternité y est complètement mythique. Les gens s'appellent frères, soit parce qu'ils croient, pour le cas des chrétiens, être des rachetés du péché par le sang du Christ, soit parce qu'ils croient appartenir à une même communauté de destin, soit encore parce qu'ils partagent les mêmes idéaux, passions ou émotions collectives (sport, musique, etc.). Cette croyance engendre une communauté, une humanité qui, plutôt que d'être exclusive, par xénophobie, est symbionomique, née des confluences, des synergies et des symbioses des héritages et acquis multiples, passionnels, culturels et technoscientifiques. Les reliances se substituent dès lors aux disjonctions pour en appeler à ce que Morin nomme la « symbiosophie », la symbiose des sagesses, et à la sagesse de vivre ensemble.

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[13] Id., *Penser l'Europe*, Paris : Gallimard, 1990, pp. 259-260.

A l'époque contemporaine, les sciences ont apporté des connaissances qui ont permis d'établir une continuité entre la sphère physico-biologique et la sphère anthropo-sociale. Ces connaissances autorisent la ré-visitation de la nature humaine pour l'enraciner dans la sphère physico-chimique, établir sa complexité et affirmer l'appartenance des humains à une même origine et à une même communauté de destin dans l'univers. Les hommes sont issus du développement de la vie dont la terre a été matrice et nourrice. Ils vivent désormais les mêmes problèmes fondamentaux de la vie et de la mort. Ils sont exposés aux mêmes menaces, aux mêmes catastrophes. Le problème du réchauffement climatique condamne par exemple tous les pays de conjuguer ensemble leurs efforts et de définir en commun des stratégies mondiales. La misère n'a plus de limites : elle est universelle. Elle est la nouvelle barbarie qui menace les sociétés humaines.

Les connaissances scientifiques concrétisent les mythologies qui, plutôt que de consacrer une coupure entre le physique, le biologique, l'anthropologique et le sociale, articulent les uns sur les autres, enchâssent les uns dans les autres. Tel est le cas des mythologies chinoises, africaines, mayas, voire gréco-romaines, que la science et la philosophie héritées de la modernité occidentale ont considérées comme rationalité inférieure et qu'elles ont banalisées ou exclues du champ des savoirs dignes de contribuer à la compréhension du monde et de l'homme dans le monde. Ce faisant, les connaissances scientifiques contemporaines portent un coup aux philosophies qui rejetaient certains hommes hors de l'humanité, sous prétexte qu'ils n'avaient pas de pensée et surtout qu'ils ne s'étaient jamais détachés ou presque de la nature pour l'apprivoiser. Elles portent un coup à la pensée disjonctive et exclusive portée par la métaphysique moniste, la logique d'identité et la méthode réductionniste. Aujourd'hui, les avancées scientifiques en astronomie, en astrophysique confirment ou croisent les savoirs élaborés par des anciens peuples dont les Mayas du Mexique ou les Bambaras d'Afrique de l'ouest. Pourtant il a été dit et enseigné que ces êtres n'étaient pas humains ou, à tout le moins, étaient des sous-humains. En s'appuyant sur ces avancées, Edgar Morin affirme pour sa part que :

> « (…) tous les êtres humains manifestent en commun les traits qui font l'humanité de l'humanité : une individualité et une intelligence de

type nouveau, une qualité cérébrale qui permet l'apparition de l'esprit (…) et qui permet l'apparition de la conscience ».[14]

C'est à partir du XVIIIe siècle que l'univers philosophique prend à bras le corps la question de l'identité ou de l'humanité de l'Africain. Les sciences sociales lui emboiteront les pas au XIXe siècle et surtout au début du XXe siècle. Les penseurs des Lumières définissent l'humanité par la possession d'une identité générique, d'essence universelle. Il est affirmé que de cette identité procède un ensemble de droits et de valeurs partageables par tous les hommes. Une nature commune unit tous les hommes pour autant qu'ils soient pourvus de raison, cette chose qui, proclame René Descartes, est la mieux partagée du monde. C'est de l'exercice de cette faculté que procèdent non seulement la liberté et l'autonomie, mais également la capacité de conduire la vie individuelle selon des principes moraux et selon l'idée du bien. Cela étant admis, la question consistait à savoir si l'Africain se situait à l'intérieur ou hors de l'humanité. Il s'agissait de savoir si on pouvait déceler en lui, c'est-à-dire dans son corps, dans son langage et dans son travail, le signe de la raison, de la conscience de liberté, donnée par Friedrich Hegel comme la condition nécessaire de la philosophie. Au cas où cette raison, cette conscience de liberté serait identique à celle de l'Occidental, alors seulement l'Africain serait considéré comme un sujet semblable à celui-ci, donc comme son *alter ego*.

Cette question de l'identité ou de l'humanité de l'Africain surgit à l'orée d'une époque qui voit s'opérer un changement majeur au sein de l'*épistémè* occidentale : l'érection de l'homme par lui-même en premier et seul véritable *subjectum*. Par cette mutation, l'homme devenait, en tant qu'étendu-devant-soi, ce qu'il fallait penser et ce qu'il y avait à savoir ; ce à partir de quoi tout questionnement et toute vérité devenaient possibles. Autrement dit, les sciences sociales n'ont commencé à prendre corps qu'au moment où l'homme s'est objectivé, s'est placé devant soi pour savoir ce qu'il était, et, s'étant ainsi auto-fixé, ayant ainsi pris le pari de fixer tout ce qui relevait de lui, tout ce en quoi il consistait, s'est maintenu constamment dans cette représentation. Il va sans dire que la représentation est le socle à partir desquels les sciences sociales sont devenues possibles. Elle est leur

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[14] Id. *La méthode 5. L'humanité de l'humanité. L'identité humaine*, Paris : Seuil, 2001, p. 54.

champ propre, dans la mesure où, comme l'a révélé Foucault,[15] leur puissance ne réside pas dans la manipulation des nombres, mais dans cette étrange capacité de pouvoir se représenter l'homme en tant qu'être qui vit, parle et travaille.

En effet, contrairement aux périodes précédentes, les Temps Modernes sont marqués par deux processus : le monde devient une image conçue et l'homme devient un sujet. Ces deux processus entraineront des transformations majeures dans l'économie générale du savoir et le basculement dans une ère de savoir partiellement distincte des toutes les précédentes, dans la mesure où elle reste fécondée par les principes paradigmatiques hérités de l'Antiquité grecque. Deux systèmes de positivités s'en trouvent affectés : d'une part, l'intelligence de la vérité et de son statut et, d'autre part, la conception du mode d'être des êtres et des choses. Avant les Temps Modernes, faire l'expérience de la vérité, c'est faire l'expérience de la maîtrise et de la retenue de soi. Savoir gouverner ses passions, ses désirs et ses plaisirs charnels, constitue alors la voie d'accès à la vérité. Ainsi le rapport de l'individu à la vérité se décline comme un exercice moral qui lui permet de se gouverner. De plus, l'ordre qui préside à la connaissance des choses, à ce qu'il faut faire et à la façon dont il faut le faire, c'est celui de la croyance et du témoignage. Les Ecritures et les dogmes de l'Eglise constituent alors les sources d'autorité indiscutable, les deux registres à partir desquels le savoir se constitue dans son évidence immédiate, dans la mesure où en eux, la vérité et la foi se confondent. Posséder la vérité, c'est croire que les révélations de la Bible et les dogmes de l'Eglise sont toutes vraies. Dès lors, la théologie est la modalité suprême d'accès à la vérité.

C'est la transformation de ces deux systèmes de positivités qui a ouvert la voie à la constitution des sciences sociales. Celles-ci vont prendre l'homme dans son empiricité, quitte à fournir à son tour des éléments de réponse à la question de l'identité, de l'humanité de l'Africain posée par les pensées des Lumières. Une lecture africaine a présenté les trois types de réponses fournis par les penseurs des Lumières et, plus tard, par les sciences sociales occidentales en rapport avec cette question de l'humanité

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[15] Lire notamment Michel Foucault, *Les mots et les choses*, Paris : Gallimard, 1969.

de l'Africain. C'est en suivant Achille Mbembe[16] que je synthétise ces trois types de réponses.

Une première constellation de réponses préconise une différence radicale entre l'Occidental et l'Africain, quitte à induire une conséquence majeure : l'exclusion de l'Africain de la sphère de l'humanité. Car dans leur versant obscur, les Lumières considèrent que le signe africain aurait quelque chose de distinct, de singulier, qui le séparerait de tous les autres signes humains. La preuve de cette spécificité serait le corps même de l'Africain, ses formes et sa couleur. Dieu n'aurait logé aucune âme dans le corps de l'Africain. En corollaire, celui-ci serait dépourvu de raison, la faculté de penser. Cette centralité du corps dans le calcul de la sujétion et de l'affranchissement politique expliquera le développement, au cours du XIXe siècle, des théories de la régénération physique, morale et politique des Nègres et, plus tard, des Juifs. Même quand on admettra que l'Africain a développé des conceptions de la société et du monde, on prendra le soin de préciser que ces conceptions sont fort bien singulières, qu'elles ne témoignent en rien du pouvoir d'invention et de l'universalité propre à la raison. C'est en vertu de cette radicale différence que se justifiait l'exclusion des Africains, en fait et en droit, de la sphère de la citoyenneté humaine.

Un deuxième type de réponses, c'est celui qui pose l'articulation entre le souci de l'autodétermination et la nécessité de la mission civilisatrice. Au seuil de l'entreprise coloniale, un léger changement s'opère à l'intérieur de l'ancienne logique de l'altérité. Si l'Africain est considéré comme un être à part, c'est qu'il a des choses qui lui appartiennent en propre. Il a une identité et celle-ci repose sur la coutume. Il ne s'agit, ni d'abolir, ni de détruire la coutume. Il s'agit plutôt d'inscrire la différence dans un ordre institutionnel distinct tout en contraignant cet ordre à opérer dans un cadre fondamentalement inégalitaire et hiérarchisé. Autrement dit, la différence n'est reconnue que pour consacrer des inégalités au demeurant tenues pour naturelles.

C'est fort de ce type de réponses que la politique de la ville coloniale, par exemple, consacrait la division de l'espace en deux zones distinctes : la « Cité européenne », pour les colonisateurs/civilisateurs, et la « Cité indigène », pour les autochtones, les « sauvages » à civiliser. Un espace

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[16] Achille Mbembe, « A propos des écritures africaines de soi », *Politique africaine. Philosophie africaine et politique en Afrique*, 2000.

vierge (ou une avenue) séparait ces deux cités pour en certifier la différence. Les constructions dans les deux cités étaient également différentes, de même que l'organisation de la vie sociale et économique, comme l'a par ailleurs indiqué Valentin Yves Mudimbe[17] citant ainsi Kapolowe, bourgade congolaise située au bord du chemin de fer entre les villes de Lubumbashi (Elisabethville) et Likasi (Jadothville).

Le troisième type de réponses relève de la politique d'assimilation. Il est posé que l'Africain peut devenir un homme comme l'Occidental, mais à condition d'être assimilé, d'être intégré à la mémoire occidentale. S'agissant de l'Africain, cette assimilation passe par l'abandon de ses coutumes, de ses particularités, dont la langue, voire le nom (il devra alors prendre le nom de son patron ou de son maître, comme on peut s'en rendre compte dans beaucoup de pays d'Amérique latine, voire aux USA et en Europe), suivi de l'insertion progressive, à la faveur de l'instruction scolaire et de l'enseignement du christianisme, dans un autre corps culturel. Pour Achille Mbembe, l'idée de l'assimilation repose, dans son principe même, sur la possibilité d'une expérience du monde qui serait commune à tous les humains ou, mieux, sur l'expérience d'une universelle humanité fondée sur une essentielle similitude entre les humains. Ce monde commun à tous les humains, cette similitude ne seraient cependant pas donnés d'emblée, notamment à l'indigène. Ce dernier devrait y être converti. Cette conversion serait la condition nécessaire pour qu'il soit perçu et reconnu comme le semblable de l'Occidental et pour que son humanité cesse d'être infigurable et insaisissable. Dès lors, l'assimilation consiste en la reconnaissance d'une individualité africaine différente de la singularité du groupe en tant que tel. L'Africain peut détenir des droits et en jouir, non pas en vertu de son appartenance au régime de la coutume, mais en raison de son statut d'individu autonome, capable de se délester de son héritage, de penser par lui-même et d'exercer cette faculté proprement humaine qu'est la raison, selon les principes et les normes du nouveau corps culturel qui l'a accueilli. Il en résulte que l'essence de la politique d'assimilation est de dé-substantialiser la différence, à tout le moins pour une catégorie d'indigènes ainsi cooptés dans l'espace de la modernité parce que

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[17] Valentin Yves Mudimbe, *Le corps glorieux des mots et des êtres. Esquisse d'un jardin africain à la bénédictine*, Paris-Montréal : Présence Afrique/Humanitas, 1994.

« convertis » et « cultivés », « occidentalisés », c'est-à-dire aptes à la citoyenneté.

Il résulte de ce qui précède que l'humanisme des Lumières est en réalité un pseudo-humanisme. Il était faussement universel. Il a le défaut d'avoir rapetissé l'idée de l'Homme et, en corollaire, les droits de l'homme ; il a promu une conception étroite et parcellaire, partielle et partiale de l'identité humaine et, en somme, une conception raciste de l'Homme. Il a induit l'idéologie selon laquelle il n'y a d'*homme véritable* qu'Occidental et de couleur blanche, le degré d'humanité ou de progrès en humanité des autres humains étant à l'arbitraire de celui-là.

L'œuvre d'Edgar Morin offre une pensée qui délivre de ces myopies, de ces réductionnismes amarrés au paradigme de simplicité, qui, s'il trouve ses fondements dans l'Antiquité grecque, aura sûrement été radicalisé, à l'époque moderne, par distinction cartésienne entre la *res cogitans* et la *res extensa*. L'œuvre d'Edgar Morin propose des viatiques pour la construction d'un humanisme autre dans un monde complexe. Elle propose des balises pour une autre éducation et une autre compréhension interculturelle et humaine.

En s'inscrivant résolument dans la perspective de l'épistémologie non-cartésienne dont la méthode non-cartésienne est un corrélat, *La Méthode* est une œuvre qui, pour le dire avec les mots repris de Gaston Bachelard[18] fait « *passer la raison du "pourquoi" au "pourquoi pas"* ». L'épistémologie critique de la science classique fonctionnant sous le contrôle du paradigme de simplicité y concourt à la construction de la science des complexités, ou mieux de « la pensée complexe » qui nécessite un nouveau paradigme et une nouvelle méthode : le paradigme et la méthode de la complexité. Elle est ainsi un nouveau discours de la méthode qui s'emploie à conjoindre les disjoints et à rendre compte des phénomènes complexes sans négliger, ni offusquer leurs dimensions tout à la fois contradictoires et complémentaires. Elle réhabilite des tiers exclus de la rationalité et de la science classiques (on rappellera qu'en latin, le terme « *classis* » renvoie entre autres à armée, corps d'armée). Comme telle, elle n'est pas une réécriture du *Discours de la méthode* de René Descartes. Car pour Edgar Morin, il ne s'agit pas d'être cartésien ou anticartésien, pour ou contre Descartes, mais l'un et l'autre. Autrement dit, il s'agit d'être *non-*

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[18] Gaston Bachelard, *Le nouvel esprit scientifique*, Paris : PUF, 1986.

cartésien. Le *non* n'exprime pas ici la négation absolue, l'opposition, la rupture radicale, mais l'idée de complétude, tant il est vrai que dire *non* depuis Bachelard, c'est rectifier pour compléter et complexifier. Inscrite dans la tradition de *La philosophie du non*, qui est une philosophie du *pourquoi pas*, *La Méthode* est un discours de la méthode pour l'intelligibilité de la complexité : ce qui est tissé ensemble, tout d'éléments hétérogènes organisés par inclusion des uns dans les autres de sorte que sa puissance est à la fois supérieure à la somme des éléments constitutifs et toute différente.

Dans le cadre de la science classique, la complexité a été entendue tantôt comme un mur à abattre, en appliquant à la lettre le deuxième précepte de la méthode cartésienne, et tantôt comme un obstacle à contourner en tant que réalité non-totalement algorithmable : « *intelligible* imprévisibilité *essentielle* » qui oblige à ne plus minimiser l'incertitude au seul bénéfice de la certitude. Encore est-il que le XXᵉ siècle est pour Edgar Morin un siècle de crises et un siècle en crises qui, ce faisant, appelle une pensée audacieuse qui plutôt que de disjoindre, d'opposer, d'exclure, réalise des conjonctions, des ponts, des reliances, des imbrications des uns dans les autres des éléments hétérogènes, voire contradictoires. Une telle pensée présuppose un changement de méthode.

Dans la préface à mon livre, Edgar Morin écrit :

> « La science classique demande de comprendre le monde, la vie et les sociétés par des principes engendrés du paradigme de disjonction et de réduction et par les règles de la logique déductive-identitaire. Ces principes ont eu pour effet de dissoudre la complexité. Ils ont certes suscité des connaissances dont les bienfaits sont incontestables, mais dont les inconvénients s'accroissent avec l'accroissement des problèmes fondamentaux et globaux. Il nous faut reconnaître et traiter le jeu complexe : Ordre/Désordre/Interaction/Organisation. Une nouvelle compréhension nécessite d'utiliser des principes de connaissance jusqu'alors négligés et non perçus : le principe récursif, le principe dialogique et le principe hologrammique ».[19]

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[19] Edgar Morin « Préface » à Emmanuel M. Banywesize, *Le complexe. Contribution à l'avènement de l'organisaction chez Edgar Morin*, Paris : L'Harmattan, 2007, p. 5.

Ce qui est en effet au cœur de l'œuvre épistémologique morinienne, c'est la recherche d'une méthode qui puisse relier ce qui est isolé, complexifier ce qui est simplifié, détecter et non pas occulter les liaisons, les articulations, les solidarités, les implications, les imbrications, les organisations, les complexions. Il s'agit d'une méthode pour l'intelligibilité des complexions, c'est-à-dire des systèmes, des organisations actives. Car, du point de vue d'Edgar Morin,[20] « le système est une complexion », et donc une « *unité globale organisée d'interrelations entre éléments, actions, ou individus* ».

Mais lorsqu'on aura appris à désapprendre et à apprendre autrement pour connaître ou comprendre la complexité des choses, il en résultera une autre compréhension du monde, de l'identité humaine, de l'homme dans le monde. Il en résultera une autre façon d'envisager le rapport à l'altérité. Dès lors, l'œuvre, au-delà de ses limitations inhérentes à quelques pesanteurs socioculturelles, ne s'adresse pas uniquement aux penseurs ou scientifiques qui voient et traitent toutes choses en vertu du prisme circonscrit par le triangle Athènes-Rome-Paris. Elle s'adresse surtout à tous ceux, fils de la Terre-Patrie, qui ressentent aujourd'hui la nécessité de s'évader du paradigme de simplicité pour un autre paradigme qui façonne une autre façon de penser, de connaitre, de comprendre, d'agir, d'aimer, de vivre ensemble. Ce nouveau paradigme – le paradigme de complexité –, rend possible la coexistence des plusieurs cosmologies qui s'offrent à la pensée et à la science comme des outils pour une meilleure intelligence du monde. Il rend possible un nouveau espace discursif où les binarismes, les disjonctions propres au paradigme de simplicité trouvent leurs limites et sont de plus en plus abandonnés au profit des reliances, des conjonctions, des imbrications qui engendrent d'autres connaissances sur fond d'autres interrogations. Il va sans dire que dans ce contexte, l'histoire de la pensée, des sciences et l'épistémologie ne tiennent plus dans une histoire linéaire allant d'Athènes à Princeton, en passant par Rome, Paris, Berlin, Vienne. Pour le dire en suivant Walter Mignolo[21], elles doivent se spatialiser, s'historiciser, en faisant jouer « *la différence coloniale* », quitte à montrer que

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[20] Id., *La méthode 1. La nature de la nature,* Paris : Seuil, 1979, p. 145 et p. 102.
[21] Walter Mignolo, « The Geopolitics of Knowledge and the Colonial Difference », in *The South Atlantic Quaterly* 101: 1 (Winter), 2002, p. 67 et *The Idea of Latin America,* Oxford: Blackwell Publishing, 2005, pp. 155-156.

celle-ci rend possible une autre façon de connaître, de comprendre, d'agir et d'aimer qui déborde les cadres de l'histoire linéaire amarrée à ce qu'Edgar Morin appelle le « *Grand paradigme de l'Occident* »[22] : le paradigme de disjonction et d'exclusion, autrement nommé paradigme de simplicité.

Il y a en effet d'autres interrogations à poser et d'autres connaissances possibles partant de ce que nos prédécesseurs ont ignoré, mal connu, banalisé, exclu ou réduit pendant longtemps au silence. Tel est le pari que font les penseurs venus des aires anciennement conquises et dominées par l'Occident, aires dont les savoirs ont été soit niés, soit banalisés, soit réduits aux objets exotiques livrés à la curiosité ou à la condescendance des touristes et autres quêteurs d'exotiques. Il suffit pour s'en rendre compte de lire les penseurs tels que Valentin Yves Mudimbe, Edouard Glissant, Edouard Saïd, Walter Mignolo, Escobar Arturo et Achille Mbembe qui sont de fervents protagonistes, chacun à leur manière, des *postcolonial studies*.

En questionnement autrement les réalités socio-anthropologiques autrefois étudiées par les sciences humaines amarrées au paradigme de simplicité, et en en proposant une autre compréhension des dynamiques sociales, culturelles, politiques et économiques, les *postcolonial studies* récusent l'autodéfinition de l'Occident en tant que :

> "The only geo-historical location that is both part of the classification of the World and the only perspective that has the privilege of possessing dominant categories of thoughts from which and where the rest of the world can be described, classified, understood, and «improved»".[23]

En revanche, elles promeuvent ce que Walter Mignolo appellent la géopolitique de la connaissance. Il considère celle-ci comme :

> "(…) the necessary perspective to dispel the Eurocentric assumption that valid and legitimate knowledge shall be sanctioned by Western standards, in ways similar to those in which the World Bank and the IMF sanction the legitimacy of economic projects around the world".[24]

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[22] Edgar Morin, *La méthode 1*, p. 23.

[23] Fernado Coronil, cité par Walter Mignolo, *The Idea of Latin America*, p. 36.

[24] Walter Mignolo, *op. cit.*, p. 43.

Car elle ne fait pas d'impasse sur la façon dont les différents peuples, dans différentes aires culturelles ont questionné la nature et l'homme dans la nature afin de produire des connaissances qui légitiment leurs actions et leurs façons de vivre ensemble avec les autres êtres. La géopolitique de la connaissance ne fait pas l'impasse sur les penseurs ou scientifiques des aires anciennement conquis et dominés à l'aide notamment de la violente et de la science classique. Les penseurs, les scientifiques échangent les idées, des expériences, croisent les théories, les concepts et les méthodes.

N'en déplaise à ceux qui croient encore à la philosophie hégélienne de l'histoire, l'Occident qui cesse d'être le seul centre du monde, apprend autant de l'Orient qui tient à garder son identité culturelle tout en s'occidentalisant. Le Nord qui a développé le calcul et la technique réapprend du Sud à cultiver les qualités de la vie et la solidarité humaine. L'Afrique du Sud postapartheid donne au monde l'exemple d'un pays qui rompt avec l'identité carcérale pour embrasser l'identité relationnelle. Quasi-totalement situés dans le circuit planétaire de la misère où leurs paysans subissent les contrecoups du marché mondial, les pays du Sud développent d'autres récits existentiels et d'autres alternatives pour faire accéder leurs citoyens à la vie de bien-être dont les films et les télévisions des Etats Unis d'Amérique et de l'Union Européenne font rêver. Il en découle que des dialogiques et des hologrammies complémentarisent l'Orient et l'Occident, le Nord et le Sud, faisant du monde un tout polycentré. Aussi Edgar Morin écrit-il à ce sujet :

> « Chaque partie du monde fait de plus en plus partie du monde, et le monde, en tant que tout, est de plus en plus présent en chacune de ses parties. Cela se vérifie non seulement pour les nations et les peuples mais aussi pour les individus. (…) pour le meilleur et le pire, chaque humain, riche ou pauvre, du Sud ou du Nord, de l'Est ou de l'Ouest, porte en lui, sans le savoir, la planète tout entière ».[25]

En méditant donc sur la science pour son propre compte, l'épistémologie rétroprospective dans l'œuvre d'Edgar Morin est incontestablement au service de la société, ou mieux, de l'humanité, de la fraternité planétaire. En effet, portée par le pari de promouvoir une science nouvelle [« Si la science

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[25] Edgar Morin, *Les sept savoirs nécessaires à l'éducation du futur*, Paris : Seuil, 2000.

actuelle ne rend pas compte du sujet (…), alors il nous reste à chercher la *scienza nuova* »[26]], procédant par une méthode non disjonctive, non mutilante capable de distinguer et de relier en même temps les réalités disjointes et d'en fournir une connaissance complexe, cette œuvre débusque les avatars des piliers épistémologiques, logiques et méthodologiques de la science classique. Elle relève les mutilations et les désenchantements qu'elle a contribué à engendrer, quitte à proposer des balises pour un autre paradigme, préalable à la constitution de la science nouvelle et, par delà tout, de la pensée complexe. Il en découle qu'une telle épistémologie échappe à la classification qui tente de l'enfermer dans ce que Jean Piaget appelle, dans *Logique et connaissance scientifique*, les épistémologies internes.

Par définition, l'épistémologie interne, c'est celle qui, pour une science, mène l'examen critique de ses propres fondements et méthodes. Elle consiste en ce qu'une science se prenne comme son propre objet, quitte à réfléchir sur ses méthodes d'investigation de phénomènes de la réalité et sur ses fondements qui peuvent être de plusieurs types. En prenant en compte le fait que *La Méthode* mène un examen critique sur les sciences, dont les sciences humaines, pour les réformer, en les mettant en cycle, en les reliant les unes aux autres, en les incluant les unes dans les autres, on peut être porté à admettre qu'elle campe une épistémologie qui ressortit au domaine de l'épistémologie interne. Or cet ouvrage prolonge et achève *Le paradigme perdu*, qui fait passer Edgar Morin pour un anthropologue, un sociologue, un épistémologue et un théoricien. Conséquemment, l'épistémologie qu'elle offre, transcende le champ des sciences humaines et sociales, tant elle se veut *encyclopédisante*. Elle voyage et fait voyager d'un site à l'autre et à tous les autres, dans les pays de l'encyclopédie qu'elle interconnecte. Elle est communication, au sens que Michel Serres suggère dans son livre majeur écrit sous le patronyme d'*Hermès*. Communiquer, c'est voyager, traduire, échanger, s'inscrire dans l'itinérance, passer d'un site à un autre et à tous les autres, en assurant sa parole comme aversion, moins subversive que transverse ; c'est faire commerce réciproque des objets gagés.

Par son épistémologie, Edgar Morin fait de la communication au sens ci-dessus donné. Il s'emploie à édifier le belvédère gnoséologique par

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[26] Id., *Sociologie*, p. 378.

échafaudages multiples, inséparables du mouvement de la réflexivité dans un savoir qui, non seulement se fait, mais aussi se sait se faisant en voyageant. Il s'agit d'un savoir qui organise les disjoints en s'organisant, et ce en observant le précepte du poète Machado : « Marcheur, il n'y a pas de chemin ; le chemin se construit en marchant ». Cette épistémologie comporte donc un caractère multiforme, multidimensionnel, rotatif, tout en restant *Un*. Ce caractère Un et Multiple qui révèle sa complexité n'est pas dans l'apparente encyclopédie qui conduit à passer des sciences anthropo-sociales aux sciences biologiques, de celles-ci aux sciences physiques, et inversement. Encore est-il que les sciences physiques ne sont pas purs reflets du monde physique. Elles sont des productions culturelles, intellectuelles, noologiques dont les développements dépendent de ceux d'une société et des techniques d'observation/expérimentation produites par cette société. La complexité de cette épistémologie est inscrite dans le mouvement spiral qui traverse et explore les territoires de la physique, de la biologie et de l'anthropo-sociologie afin de faire communiquer ce qui ne communique pas, de dégager ce qui bloque et obstrue les canaux de la pensée, laquelle, soutient Morin dans *La Méthode2*, lorsqu'elle devient fragmentaire, pense alors le fragment comme un tout et devient de l'anti-pensée.

On l'aura compris, cette épistémologie s'inscrit dans une « itinérance » à laquelle préside Hermès. Traduction grecque du dieu égyptien Thot, Hermès, est le dieu des carrefours, des voyageurs, de la communication et de la réconciliation. Elle ne concourt pas à la pérennisation de la science prométhéenne (la science classique) qui a pris son essor à l'époque moderne, et dont l'ambition était de dévoiler les secrets des phénomènes de la nature afin de soumettre le monde à la domination humaine. Au contraire, elle assume à bras le corps cette science, la médite, en interrogeant ses fondements et ses méthodes, pour comprendre ce qui l'a rendue possible, ce qui a contribué à son « *archipélisation* ». Elle cherche à surprendre l'ambivalence de cette science, libératrice, génératrice des bienfaits, et, à même temps, *thanatocratique*, génératrice de la mort, des barbaries.

Après Michel Foucault et Gilbert Durand, Michel Maffesoli[27] m'a rendu attentif sur le fait que cette science prométhéenne a renforcé la pratique de la « *curialisation* » et de la « *domestication des mœurs* », qui ont donné lieu à la constitution d'un être-ensemble social mécanisé, artificiel, en quête vaine de la perfection, du risque zéro, où sont favorisés la « *mise en travail* » et l'engendrement de grandes institutions d'éducation, de surveillance, d'enferment et de punition. Amarrée au paradigme de la simplicité dont la logique du même et la méthode réductionniste constituent les piliers majeurs, cette science a induit une « *logique de la domination* » dont le dessein est de dessiner une société de contrôle, où les politiques, tout comme certains scientifiques, espèrent voir disparaître le désordre, le mal absolu qui serait originairement lié à la nature humaine (le péché adamique). Aussi Michel Maffesoli a-t-il pu noter que c'est sur une telle logique de la domination que s'est élaboré le mythe du progrès.

L'étude des conditions de possibilité de la science ressortit, d'après Jean Piaget, à l'épistémologie dérivée. Ce qui conduit à mettre une science en relation avec d'autres, et à soulever les questions épistémologiques générales des apports du sujet et des objets dans le mécanisme des connaissances. L'épistémologie morinienne transcende l'épistémologie interne et l'épistémologie dérivée, tant elle revendique une excentricité qui la révèle complexe. Elle concourt ainsi à la refondation de la pensée complexe et, en sus, de la science nouvelle, la science du complexe (science de la complexité) qui peut, par des principes logiques non-aristotéliciens et surtout des principes méthodologiques non-cartésiens, proposer une compréhension non-réductionniste des phénomènes de la réalité, dont la réalité anthropo-sociale, gage, me semble-t-il, de l'émergence d'une nouvelle société-monde : de la mondialité, antidote à la menace de l'épuisement de nos civilisations.[28]

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[27] Michel Maffesoli, *Après la modernité ? La logique de la domination, la violence totalitaire, la conquête du présent*, Paris : CNRS, 2008.

[28] A propos de la menace d'épuisement des civilisations contemporaines, je renvoie à la lecture de l'essai d'Amin Maalouf, *Le dérèglement du monde. Quand nos civilisations s'épuisent*, Paris : Grasset, 2009. Contre les différentes formes de fondamentalismes et de barbaries, l'auteur pense qu'il faut cultiver « *une solidarité universelle, subtile, réfléchie, indépendante des religions sans être aucunement antireligieuse, une solidarité qui puisse transcender les nations, les communautés, les ethnies sans abolir le foisonnement des cultures* ».

C'est en cela que réside, à mon humble avis, l'universalité de Morin-penseur et de son œuvre féconde et fécondante.

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MULTICULTURAL WORLD AND ITS CHALLENGES

Milan Mesić[*]

Abstract

The recent emergence of multiculturalism (and interculturalism) can be explained as a (theoretical, political, ideological) respond to multiculturality of contemporary societies, on the one hand, and as a reaction to centuries long dominance of a worldview that may be denoted as monoculturalism. However, there is no simple, widely shared definition of multiculturalism. It is a vague and at the same time fiercely contested term. There are deep both political and theoretical divisions not only between its advocates and critics, but even between the two theoretical and ideological camps. The author concludes that the challenges of multicultural world are here to stay for some time in the future.

Key words: multiculturality; multiculturalism, interculturalism, culture, diversities

Contrary to predictions of modernization theories since 19th century until recently - that the development of pre-modern into modern industrial societies entails demise of traditional particularistic, especially ethnic, identities – contemporary societies, primarily the most advanced ones, are faced with ethnic revival and other forms of social diversities seeking their public recognition.[1] The general public awareness is growing that contemporary societies become more and not less culturally diverse than they used to be.

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[1] Peter Kivisto, *Multiculturalism in a Global Society*, Oxford and Malden, MA: Blackwell, 2002, p. 20.

It becomes more obvious within this framework that the ethno-cultural factors will play a crucially important role in shaping the social life of these nation-states well into the future.

There are two major ways in which the saliency of ethnicity manifests itself today.[2] First, it does so as a consequence of the mass international migration flows that have transferred huge contingents of people from the less developed nations to the core nations of the capitalist world system. Secondly, it is the result of the resurgence of 'ethnonacionalism' (Connor) among people who define themselves as being members of 'nations without states' (Guibernau).

Clearly, any understanding of cultural diversity or multiculturality depends greatly on the notion of culture employed. There are many different definitions of culture. In the schools still prevail traditional anthropological views on culture as static and unchanging entity. One of the consequences of such perceptions and descriptions is the perpetuation of stereotypes about different ethnic, cultural, religious, and racial groups. There is, however, increasing scientific evidence that cultures are dynamic, complex, and changing. Most social scientists today view culture as consisting primarily of the symbolic, ideational, and intangible aspects of human societies. Even when they include artifacts and material objects as being a part of culture, most social scientists regard culture as the way people interpret, use, and perceive them. It is the values, symbols, interpretations, and perspectives that distinguish one people from another in modernized societies and not artifacts, material objects, and other tangible aspects of human societies.[3]

Generally speaking, liberal and communitarian scholars share an institutional view of culture, whereas postmodernists see it in a relational perspective. According to the first position, we can also say to narrow (or anthropologically thick) notion of culture, leaving here aside the essential differences among their proponents in other respects, stems from the endorsement of "social thesis". Namely, from the belief that individual identity is shaped by and provided through membership of groups, of

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[2] *Ibidem*, p. 187.

[3] James Banks, *A Cultural Diversity and Education, Foundations, Curriculum, and Teaching*, Boston, MA: Pearson Education, 2006, pp. 70-71.

which cultural groups are perhaps the most important ones. It is for this reason that denial of a culture may hurt individual bearers of that culture. In short, from this perspective a culture is seen as a constituent part of our identities, and therefore it is a real context from which we approach the given opportunities.

For a postmodern relational thinker a group exists and is defined as a specific group only in social and interactive relations to others. Group identity is not a set of objective facts, but the product of experienced meanings. The broad (relational) conception of cultural diversity, in contrast to narrow one, takes into account groups that do not form a societal (institutional) culture. The members of the latter are supposed to share some characteristics that define them as different from members of majority culture(s) with respect to values, lifestyles, and interests. Considered in this view cultural diversity includes not only the relations between members of different societal cultures but also the relations between the subcultures in a given societal culture. More specifically, it pertains also to differences deriving from gender, age, physical and mental ability and sexual orientations.

It is a common understanding now, that phenomena of cultural diversities and group differences are features of almost all but the most insulated political societies.[4] All modern states face the problems of cultural diversities even if they are far from endorsing multiculturalism or interculturalism as a policy agenda of their official ideology. They do so because they encounter the challenging claims to recognition and equality of various minority and deprivilaged communities, trying to preserve and affirm their own identities.

The relevant question is not whether contemporary societies want to be multicultural or not (since it is a fact regardless whether it is being recognized or not) but how to respond to their diversities. Traditional option is cultural homogenization. Today, it would involve forcible assimilation of cultural minorities, various political, economical and technological restrictions, and last but note least - media control. Such a policy, however, could not be legitimate any more in democratic states.

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[4] Paul Kelly, *Multiculturalism Reconsidered, Culture and Equality* and its *Critics*, Cambridge: Polity Press, 2002, p. 1.

Actually, the only acceptable choice for them is to learn how to come to terms and manage with their diverse cultural groups, using at the same time creative potential of theirs.

In his talk to Harvard students 1995 on the theme of global civilization spreading around the world, Vaclav Havel noted the irony that it was accompanied by new forms of resistance and struggle and demands for "the right to worship… ancient Gods and obey divine injunctions". According to him, a world civilization would not be worthy of its name if it not do justice to the "individuality of different spheres of culture and civilization". The new global civilization had to understand itself "as multicultural and multipolar one".[5]

There is a considerable variation among the advanced (post)industrial nations, both in terms of the level and the source of diversity. What all of them share in common is the recent experience of significant influx of immigrants from the less-developed nations. Yet, new immigrant communities, seen by some researchers as new ethnic minorities, are not equally central point of multicultural or intercultural discourse in these societies. Brett Klopp points out that unlike Garman *Multikulturelle Geselschaft*, multiculturalism in the United States is only indirectly related to the recent immigration waves of non-European origins.[6] Instead, the primary source of multiculturalism there is America's unresolved race problem – failure in full social integration of the Blacks or Afro-Americans (and the Hispanics in the second place). In Canada and Australia multiculturalism is seen positively as an issue of national identity and equal rights for their increasingly diverse populations. However, these countries differ in their understanding of multiculturalist policies. Canada's multiculturalism law proclaims: "The recognition and strengthening of multiculturalism as an expression of the cultural and ethnic diversity of Canadian society and as confirmation of the freedom of all members of Canadian society to preserve, strengthen, and share their cultural inheritance." On the other hand, the Australian Government's

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[5] Seyla Benhabib, *The Claims of Culture, Equality and Diversity in the Global Era*, Princeton and Oxford: Princeton Univeristy Press, 2002, p. vii.

[6] Brett Klopp, *German Multiculturalism – Immigrant Integration and the Transformation of Citizenship*, Westport, Connecticut, London: Praeger, 2002, pp. 23-24.

National Agenda policy states that "multiculturalism is not defined in terms of cultural pluralism or minority rights, but in terms of the cultural, social and economic rights of all citizens in a democratic state".

The emergence of multiculturalism and interculturalism is to be explained as a respond to multiculturality of contemporary societies, on the one hand, and as a reaction to centuries long dominance of a worldview that can be denoted as monoculturalism. From ancient Greek philosophy, through Medieval Christianity and liberalism, till our days western thought and worldview have been dominated by moral monism or monocultural understanding of human beings and their societies.[7] A bit simplified moral monism assumes that only one way of life is truly human, and all others are more or less defective in moral human sense. In other words monoculturalists have believed that one or some cultures (their own apparently) are superior to others, and therefore the latter can rightly be suppressed or even destroyed.

When Western European great powers conquered and colonized large parts of other continents, they needed ideological justification for their rule. Social science (in 18th and 19th century), heavily relied on biology, readily responded to the spirit of the time and produced the vision of hierarchy of races and cultures. Of course the Western European white race and culture(s) was imagined on the top and the black race and the African cultures at the bottom of the ostensible (evolutionary) cultural pyramid. Thinking of themselves as a superior race and culture Europeans rationalized and legitimized their imperialism as a historical mission of civilizing the backward races and cultures. This version of moral monism later became known as Eurocentrism – ethnocentrism on the European scale. Eurocentrism is probably best epitomized by literal critic Matthew Arnold (1937) in his famed saying about European cultural achievements – "the best that has been said and thought in the world".

It should be emphasized that the critique of Eurocentrism is addressed not to Europeans as individuals but rather to European

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[7] Bhikhu Parekh, *Rethinking Multiculturalism, Cultural Diversity and Political Theory*, New York: Palgrave, 2000, p. 16.

oppressive cultural hegemony.[8] Nor it implies suggestion that non-European peoples and their cultures are somehow 'better' than Europeans ones. Eurocentrism is a historical and social construction and not a genetic inheritance and therefore Europeans can be (and many of them are) anti-Eurocentric, just as non-Europeans can be Eurocentric, or Afrocentric, for instance.

Finally, with the rise and consolidation of the nation-state as the model of modern society, cultural homogenization within a state, i.e. (forcible) assimilation of minority and deprivileged cultures, became an ideal standard of a national constitution. The assimilationist vision of public education has played an important, if not a key role, in its establishment and maintenance of a monolithic national culture. It was assumed that ethnic and immigrant groups had to forsake their original cultures in order to fully participate in the nation-state. Ethno-cultural diversity was often seen as a threat to political stability, and hence as something to be discouraged by public policies.[9]

Leaving aside their predecessors (starting from 18th century and gaining ground at the time of German romanticism in the form of cultural pluralism and cultural relativism), the initial contemporary ideas of interculturalism and multiculturalism appeared in the 1970s, as a respond to ethnic revival and diversity movements emerged both in the North America and in Europe. Since then very different concepts of society, culture and education have been developed either under umbrella term interculturalism or multiculturalism The first notion is being used in the continental Europe referring primarily to education (for intercultural society), and the latter in the United States, Canada, Australia and Great Britain, covering not only new educational but integral societal theories as well.

Theoreticians and proponents of interculturalism often claim that they have elaborated advanced and only proper intercultural approach to

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[8] Robert Stam, Ella Shohat, "Contested Histories: Eurocentrism, Multiculturalism, and the Media", in David T. Goldberg (ed.), *Multiculturalism: A Critical Reader*, Oxford and Cambridge: Blackwell, 1994, p. 298.

[9] Keith Banting, Will Kymlicka (eds.), *Multiculturalism and the Welfare State, Recognition and Redistribution in Contemporary Democracies*, Oxford University Press, 2006, p. 1.

education in contemporary multicultural societies. It is said that the term multicultural describes culturally diverse nature of human society, including not only ethnic or national cultures, but also linguistic, religious and socio-economic diversity.[10] Interculturality, on the other hand, is unlike multiculturality dynamic concept and refers to evolving relations between cultural groups. In that sense, it has been defined as "the existence and equitable interaction of diverse cultures and the possibility of generating shared cultural expressions through dialogue and mutual respect".[11]

It is legitimate to adopt the above meanings of the terms interculturality and multiculturality for the scientific terms are the matter of convention within an academic community or a broader public. However, for the sake of academic correctness, we should have in mind that the term multiculturalism has been used in Anglo-Saxon literature to cover very different multicultural (intercultural) concepts of societies and education. Furthermore, in terms of their theoretical advancement multicultural theories could be favorably compared to the works of interculturalist authors.

Being aware that multiculturalism is often (wrongly) reduced to and understood as pure multicultural society, where different cultures more or less tolerate each other, but do not go into mutual understandings and productive dialog, some outstanding multiculturalists point out that they advocate *transformative* or *critical* multiculturalism in opposition to *conservative, liberal*, or corporative usage of the term.[12] The latter, namely, aim at artificial changes in people's perceptions of diversity, conserving at the same time the existing unequal power relations. McLaren uses also the term *resistance* multiculturalism that refuses to see culture as nonconflictual, harmonious, and consensual. From this perspective the goal of multiculturalism is not diversity for itself but critical recognition of diversity as prerequisite of social justice. A *progressive postmodern* multiculturalism requires acceptance of difference and appreciating of

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[10] UNESCO, *Guidelines on Intercultural Education*, 2006, p. 17.

[11] UNESCO, *Convention on the Protection and Promotion of the Diversity of Cultural Expressions*, 2005, Article 5.

[12] Peter McLaren, "White Terror and Oppositional Agency: Towards a Critical Multiculturalism", in David T. Goldberg, (ed.), *Multiculturalism: A critical reader*, Oxford & Cambridge: Blackwell, 1994, p. 53.

others, says D. Kellner.[13] This entails the active education of each person in the history and culture of others, a goal that has been pursued in some universities in recent years through advancing programs of multicultural education which contains a critique of Western civilization courses and the 'Great Books' (Canon) program. Although standard Western civilization courses are valuable in teaching literacy skills and offering an introduction into important figures and texts, they often reinforce elitist values and ignorance of non-white and non-Western cultures. Critical postmodern multiculturalism therefore wants to expand the curricula, to include voices, perspectives, and groups excluded from the main-stream and cannons of 'Western civilization'.

In short, both (critical) interculturalists and multiculturalists generally are in agreement that multiculturality is a factual condition of the most contemporary societies today. The question is how to deal with it, and they offer various answers seeking to similar goal. Interculturalists call it intercultural society (and education). Some multiculturalists stick with the term multicultural society, not only in terms of its socio-demographic structure, but also in a normative sense of a society based on recognition and affirmation of minority and deprivilaged communities. Others rather talk on multicultural citizenship, when they want to emphasize the difference towards orthodox liberal universalistic (monocultural) concept of social justice. Parekh suggests to istinguish between multicultural society that factually includes two or more cultural communities and multiculturalist one. Although, many contemporary societies are more or less multicultural, multiculturalist are only those that positively respond to multicultural reality, seeking to integrate on equal footing all of its (culturally) diverse communities. In other words, multiculturalist theoreticians within discourse of multiculturalism think on normative multiculturalist concepts relating to mutual respects and dialogue rather than on pure multiculturality or parallel coexistence of different cultural groups in a society.

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[13] Douglas Kellner, "Multiple Literacies and Critical Pedagogy in a Multicultural Society", in Georg Katsiaficas, Teodros Kiros, (eds.), *The Promise of Multiculturalism*, Routledge, 1998, pp. 213-215.

Multicultural societies, in particular liberal democratic ones, inevitably generate their own questions and issues in both political and civil sphere regarding social justice. We may call them either intercultural or multicultural challenges. What follows is mostly based on multiculturalist approach and answers to these challenges.

In social and political theory multiculturalism is a very recent phenomenon. Much of the initial theorizing about the idea came particularly from Canadian and Australian academics, but not before the late 1980s. From the next decade on the most heated debate has been waged in the United States among academics and politicians alike.

For those who begin to study enormous and ever growing literature on multiculturalism (interculturalism) it is important to know that there is no simple, widely shared definition of multiculturalism. Furthermore, multiculturalism is a vague and at the same time fiercely contested term. There are deep both political and theoretical divisions not only between its advocates and critics, but even within the two theoretical and ideological camps. Then, it means quite different things in different societies and debating contexts and is thus overloaded with diverse and sometimes conflicting meanings articulating different political agendas and discourses.

By the end of the eighties the American Right orchestrated its theoretical and political attacks on multiculturalism connected it closely with affirmative action and 'political correctness'. Right critics went so far as to declare 'culture wars' on the university campuses, having understood their fight as a crusade against the left-wing villains who jeopardized the traditional Christian-American freedom and values. The latter were accused for all sorts of evils, including anti-Americanism, relativism, hedonism, and suppression of free speech. The culture war was launched (1987) by the publication of Allan Bloom's book *The Closing of the American Mind*. He was followed by even less unscrupulous followers like Denish D'Souza, Roger Kimball, Thomas Sowell and Charles Sykes.

Brian Barry with appearance of his book *Culture and Equality, An Egalitarian Critique of Multiculturalism* immediately has become the most popular and cited liberal critic of multiculturalism.[14] He explicitly claims

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[14] Brian Barry, *Culture and Equality, An Egalitarian Critique of Multiculturalism*, Polity Press, 2001.

that multiculturalism is inherently flawed. For him egalitarian liberalism is incompatible with a commitment to cultural protection and group-specific rights and exemption. Furthermore, multiculturalist preoccupation with culture draws attention (academic and political) away from the real sources of unequal treatment and injustice. What minority groups actually seek for are the rights and resources enjoyed by those in positions of dominance and power. Unlike multiculturalists, Barry holds that protection of cultural differences only reinforces the power of traditional cultural elites, while harm in the last instance the depriviledged minority members.

The idea of multiculturalism frequently rests upon an unspoken mixing of what is and what ought to be. In other words, the term is employed both as an analytical concept and as a normative percept[15]. Sometimes it is used in a purely descriptive sense, referring to the fact of cultural diversity in a society (to the existence of various minority and deprivileged cultural, religious, linguistic, and even social groups). In a normative sense it relates to an ideology that attaches positive value to different (cultural) groups, calling for their equal recognition in public space. As ideology multiculturalism takes different forms. To simplify a bit, we can distinguish weaker or stronger versions of multiculturalism depending on how much significance is attached to the group identity vis-à-vis national identity, for instance, or how radical the demands for recognition become. Finally, multiculturalism can be used to refer to a set of policies that are designed to help cultural minorities, materially or symbolically.

Anne Philips points out to a paradox that the relevance of multiculturalism "cannot be understood just in terms of an absolute or growing difference… It reflects a shift in political culture and claims, where people who may be significantly less different than in some point in the past come to assert a stronger sense of themselves and their identities."[16] Groups whose members decades ago fought for their equal political and social integration now claim recognition of their cultural particularity.

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[15] Peter Kivisto, *op.cit.*, p. 36.
[16] Anne Philips, *The Politics of Presence*, Oxford University Press., 1995, p. 12.

Critical and postmodern thinkers emphasize that many differences, relating primarily to gender, class, race, ethnicity, are socially constructed.[17] As social constructions, these forms of difference are not inherently and biologically given, but rather take on historically specific meanings as a result of human action. Feminist scholarship put it in terms of dominance and oppression: "What difference does difference make in power relations?" The collective mobilization around (socially constructed) differences is central to what is varied termed the politics of recognition or the politics of identity/difference.

In the existing literature we can, according to Matteo, distinguish between two main analytical conceptions of the sociological meaning of multiculturalism – *narrow* and *broad* one.[18] The narrow conception corresponds to an anthropologically thick view of culture. This idea is well captured by Kymlicka's conept of a 'societal culture', namely, a "culture which provides its members with meaningful ways of life across the full range of human activities, including social, educational, religious, recreational, and economic life, encompassing both public and private spheres. These cultures tend to be territorially concentrated, and based on a shared language". Kymlicka has here in mind his understanding of national minorities as cultural groups of reference of such approach (including Aboriginal peoples or First Nations). Therefore, this view excludes from the multicultural debate all social groups that do not constitute a societal culture

Similar for Parekh multiculturalism is not about difference and identity *per se* but about those that are embedded in and sustained by culture.[19] The latter means a body of beliefs and practices in terms of which a group of people understand themselves and the world and organize their individual and collective lives. The author suggests that the term *diversity* should be used in a sense of culturally derived differences, to distinguish them from differences based on individual choices. Multiculturalism, then,

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[17] Yasmeen Abu-Laban, Christina Gabriel, *Selling diversity, immigration, Multiculturalism, Employment Equality, and Globalization*, Broadview Press., 2002, p. 13.

[18] Gianni Matteo, "Multiculturalism, Differentiated Citizenship, and the Problem of Self-Determination", in: Fred Dallmayr, Jose M. Rosales (eds.), *Beyond Nationalism? Sovereignty and Citizenship*, Lexington Books, 2001, pp. 226-227.

[19] Parekh, *op.cit.*, p. 6.

is about cultural diversity or culturally embedded differences. Since it is possible to welcome other kinds of differences but not those derived from culture, or vice versa, not all proponents of politics of recognition need be sympathetic to multiculturalism. Politics of recognition includes multiculturalism as its constituent element, but the latter maintains its distinctiveness as a theoretical and political discourse. A multicultural society, then, is one that comprises two or more cultural communities. There are basically two options how to respond to its cultural diversity, each of them with possible variations. It might welcome and respect the cultural demands of its constituent communities, and even make cultural diversity central to its self-understanding; or it might seek to assimilate these communities into its mainstream culture either wholly or substantially. In the first place it is multiculturalist and in the second monoculturalist in its orientation and ethos. The adjective 'multicultural' refers to the fact of cultural diversity, and the noun 'multiculturalism' to a normative response to that fact.

In contrast, the broad conception of multiculturalism takes into account groups that do not form a societal culture but whose members are supposed to share some characteristics that define them as different from members of majority culture(s) with respect to values, lifestyles, and interests. We are dealing here with symbolic elements embodied in social and political institutions, and this is precisely the reason why cultural difference affects the political resources of these individuals. The notion of culture in this approach is defined in a sociological perspective, that is, in a rational and pragmatic way.

The distinction between broad and narrow understandings of multiculturalism entails important methodological and normative consequences. Scholars who adopt a narrow conception of multiculturalism start from the assumption that national culture is morally relevant and hence it should occupy an important place in a liberal conception of democracy. In contrast, scholars relying on a broad understanding of multiculturalism consider national identity just as one identity among others.

For G. Matteo what is relatively new is not multiculturalism in itself, but its salience and visibility as a political problem.[20] In the last

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[20] Matteo, *op.cit.*, p. 223.

century, namely, the capacity of social actors to bring their identities and interests into the public sphere has considerably increased. Although great majority of contemporary societies today are more or less multicultural, the challenges of multiculturalism are faced almost exclusively by the liberal democratic governments. This can be explained by their constitutional commitment to the principle of equality for all their citizens, which legitimizes different (group) requirements for public recognition in the name of equality.

No wonder then most authors engaged in the world debate on multiculturalism consider themselves as liberal political theorists. They are divided now into two camps: proponents and defenders of multiculturalism on the one side and critics and detractors on the other. While first ones argue that the multiculturalist claims can legitimately be reconciled with liberal egalitarian principles (and even strengthen and deepen them), the others in any particular (cultural) group's rights see betrayal of (pure) liberalism, and even retreat to pre-modern social relations. The latter are committed to the idea of equal citizenship, understood to include social and economic rights that are to be enjoyed equally by every member of the relevant political community.[21] The institutions of the welfare state – public education, health care, income support, unemployment insurance, old age pensions, and so forth – are essential to guarantee those rights. Liberal multiculturalists, on the other hand, take into consideration conditions of cultural diversity and commit themselves as well to equal treatment of citizens *qua* members of cultural groups. As many have argued, this may require multicultural policies that provide protection and support to cultural minorities, whether by granting them exemptions from generally prevailing laws, supplying them with additional resources, or granting them symbolic recognition in the public realm. A tension between these two commitments hardly could be avoided.

Amy Gutmann formulates clearly the starting question for challenging of the universalistic democratic order.[22] Can citizens with

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[21] David Miller, "Multiculturalism and the welfare state. Theoretical reflections", in Banting, Kymlicka, *op.cit.*, p. 223.

[22] Amy Gutmann, "Introduction", in Amy Gutmann, (ed.) *Multiculturalism and "The Politics of recognition"*, Princeton University Press, 1994, pp. 3-4.

diverse (cultural) identities be represented as equals if public institutions do not recognize our particular identities but only our more universally shared interests in civil and political liberties, income, health care, and education? In what sense should our identities as men or women, African-Americans, Asian-Americans, or Native Americans, Christians, Jews, or Muslims, English or French Canadians *publicly* matter?

Relationship between liberalism and multiculturalism is both complex and fiercely contested not only between two camps but within them also albeit in a lesser degree.

Traditionally liberal political theorists have been concerned with the same issues now (re)opened by multiculturalism: justice, equality, rights and freedom. The fundamental question for multiculturalism, however is - whose conception of justice, rights or equality?[23]

The orthodox strand of contemporary liberalism still insists, says A. Gutmann.[24] that the impersonality of public institutions, is the price that citizens should be willing to pay for living in a society that treats us as equals, regardless of our particular ethnic, religious, racial, or sexual identities. It is neutrality of the public sphere that protects our freedom and equality as citizens. On this view, our freedom and equality as citizens rests only upon our common characteristics, and our universal needs for 'primary goods' such as income, health care, education, religious freedom, freedom of conscience, speech, press, and association, due process, the right to vote, and the right to hold public office. These are interests shared by almost all people regardless of their particular race, religion, ethnicity, or gender. Therefore there is no need for public institutions to recognize our particular cultural identities as a prerequisite of social justice. In addition, orthodox liberal egalitarians strike back to multiculturalists accusing them to support illiberal cultures. Is it really acceptable for liberalism that liberal democracies promote multiculturalism, when it includes different ethnic, religious or racial groups, even when most of them cultivate oppression of women and children. This last criticism has been emphasized especially by mainstream Western feminism.

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[23] Paul Kelly, "Identity, equality and power: tensions in Parekh's political theory of multiculturalism", in Bruce Haddock; Peter Sutch, (eds.) *Multiculturalism, Identity and Rights*, Routledge., 2003, p. 94.

[24] Amy Gutmann, *op.cit.*, pp. 4-5.

Can we then conclude, asks Gutmann that all of the demands for recognition by particular groups, often made in the name of nationalism or multiculturalism, are *illiberal* and illegitimate demands?[25] Or is this conclusion too hasty? Asking in contrast - do most people need a secure cultural context to give meaning and guidance to their choices in life? If so, then liberal democratic states are obliged to help disadvantaged groups preserve their culture against intrusions by majoritarian or 'mass' culture.

For multiculturalists, liberal egalitarianism is simply a set (advanced though) of historically conditioned social and political practices. Multiculturalist theorists (such as W. Kymlicka, J. Tully, I. M.Young, Ch. Taylor and M. Walzer) suggest that the liberal approach reinforces relationships of dependence and domination and fails to take account of the cultural specificity of the original norm of equality of opportunity.[26] They express their dissatisfaction with the apparent cultural blindness or false neutrality of liberal norms of justice and inclusion, and argue that existing (supposedly universalistic) liberal norms of inclusion are already culturally biased, favoring *certain* 'primary goods'. Namely, if 'universal' rights are premised on a liberal conception of autonomy, then they may well run up against the internal norms of a culture which does not privilege autonomy as a source of a good life. Liberals either have to principally justify rejection of cultural practice or have to acknowledge that such a response unduly favors the liberal majority in deciding a society's norm of inclusion. In the latter case they fail to treat cultures equally, regardless whether they admit that or not.

The significance of culture is not sufficient to identify a theory as (critical) multiculturalist.[27] Various forms of relativism, particularism or conservatism attach importance to culture as well. One might highly cherish one's own culture, but disregard the other cultures as morally worthless. In that spirit the extreme right uses the language of culture in order to enforce uniformity or to deny rights to immigrants or ethnic minorities. Multiculturalists tend to distinguish themselves (more or less explicitly) from other theorists who use the concept of culture by also claiming to be egalitarians. Liberal multiculturalists such as Kymlicka are

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[25] *ibidem*

[26] Paul Kelly, "Identity, equality and power ...", pp. 96-97.

[27] Paul Kelly, *Multiculturalism*, pp. 9-13.

egalitarians in the sense of accepting the idea of equality of concern and respect as the basis of any viable moral and political theory.

Not all multiculturalist theorists are satisfied with the liberal egalitarian reliance on equality of opportunity. For radical multiculturalists such as I.M. Young or Nancy Fraser the turn towards group or cultural recognition follows from false neutrality of liberal distributive norms. Indeed, these radical theorists are convinced that it is liberalism's failure to take seriously the extent to which opportunities reflect unequal power relations. Young argues that (orthodox) liberal egalitarianism places concern for social and cultural groups in the wrong place.[28] The problem is not simply one distributing rights and resources to groups and cultures in order for their members to be regarded as 'equal'. The problem comes from the underlying social norms that constitute opportunities in the first place. In other words, Young is not concerned only with additional resources needed by social and cultural groups to access on equal footing the opportunities that others have. The point here is that opportunities are never neutral but always socially constructed with inbuilt inequalities of power and relations of domination and subordination. Therefore, the opportunities are the issue, and not merely access to them.

In other words radical, concludes Kelly, egalitarianism is less likely to be concerned with the distribution of resources as a primary task and more likely to be concerned with issues of group representation and proportionality. For example, Young regards the absence of group proportionality of outcomes (in holding, for instance, prestigious jobs) as evidence of structural group disadvantage which must be compensated for. We cannot merely explain away the disproportionate absence of, for example, black males in certain professions on the grounds that there were no cases of direct discrimination and that this difference in outcome is merely a function of different choices (as if blacks do not prefer them).

D. Rockefeller draws an inspiring analogy between radical environmentalism and (radical multiculturalism). Namely, radical environmentalists abandoned an anthropocentric orientation that views non-human life forms as existing solely as a means to human ends, and embraced a biocentric perspective that affirms the inherent value of all forms of life. "Furthermore, just as multiculturalists might criticize the

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[28] I.M. Young, *Justice and the Politics of Difference*, Princeton University Press, 1990.

positing of the achievements of one group, such as white European and American males, as the norm of fully developed humanity, so some environmentalists criticize an anthropocentric outlook that posits human beings as the final end of the creation process and as inherently superior to all other beings. In both cases there is an attack on hierarchical modes of thought that tend to diminish or deny the value of other beings".[29]

However, good intentions either of the sides in controversies over multiculturalism are not enough to guarantee for real social promotion of deprivileged (cultural) groups and their individual members. Martha Minow well captures the dilemma, which can not be solved in Manichean way.[30] "When does treating people differently emphasize their differences and stigmatize or hinder them on that basis? and when does treating people the same become insensitive to their difference and likely to stigmatize or hinder them on *that* basis?... The stigma of difference may be recreated both by ignoring and by focusing on it."

In conclusion, we agree with J. Banks in his argument that a multicultural (multiculturalist) society has to seek for a balance between diversity and unity.[31] One of the challenges to diverse democratic nation-states is to provide opportunities for different groups to maintain aspects of their community cultures while building a nation in which these groups are structurally included and to which they feel allegiance. A delicate balance of diversity and unity should be an essential goal of democratic nation-states and of teaching and learning in democratic societies. Unity must be an important aim when nation-states are responding to diversity within their populations. They can protect the rights of minorities and enable diverse groups to participate only when they are unified around a set of democratic values such as a justice and equality.

At the end I would like to say that I agree neither with Glazer and Kymlicka when they say that multiculturalist won in the world debate over multiculturalism, nor with B. Barry's a severe critique of multiculturalism as the "latest incarnation of the fallacies of the New Left", and an

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[29] Steven C. Rockefeller, "Comment", in A. Gutmann, *op.cit.*, p.93.

[30] Marta Minow, *Making "ALL" the Difference: Inclusion, Exclusion, and American Law*, Ithaca., 1990, p. 20.

[31] James Banks, *A Cultural Diversity and Education, Foundations, Curriculum, and Teaching*, Pearson Education, 2006, p. 23.

"intellectual dead end". It is, namely, pretty obvious that the challenges of multicultural societies are here to stay for some time in the future, and some answers to them may still be called multiculturalism or interculturalism.

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INTERCULTURAL EDUCATION IN EUROPE. CASE STUDY: INTERCULTURAL ASPECTS OF THE MINORITY EDUCATION IN TRANSYLVANIA

Cristina Bojan[*]

Abstract:

The concept of intercultural education today is understood as the answer of the education system to the challenges of the society's multiculturalism. Starting with the ideas about the development of this concept and its fields of pedagogical practice, the present paper explores the intercultural aspects of the German and Hungarian minority education in Transylvania. It reveals some intercultural tendencies and challenges of the educational system and the multicultural society from Romania contrasting with the changes of the educational system from the last 20 years.

Keywords: intercultural education, multiculturalism, educational system, Transylvania.

The development of the concept of intercultural education and its fields of pedagogical practice

The concept of intercultural education is understood today as the answer of the education system to the challenges of the multiculturalism of the society.

Pedagogical debates on intercultural/multicultural education originated in the 1970s in Canada, Australia and the USA and in European countries such as Great Britain, The Netherlands, Switzerland, Sweden, Germany, etc, as a consequence of the problems streaming from mass migration of labour force.

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In the former big colonial powers of Europe – Great Britain, France, Belgium, the Netherlands – the migration of labour force reached its peak in the 1970s, a time when the majority of countries introduced more strict regulation and a more clearly defined policy of migration. Alongside the migrationist policies, the educational policies as well were aimed at regulating the new migration problems, such as schooling the children of the migrants, teaching the language of the state as a foreign language, and the status of the mother tongues in the teaching activity. When one compares the debates and the educational policies from Europe, one notices differences in approaching the same issue, based on the way in which the concept of nation was interpreted, and following it based on legislative, administrative and political differences from the Western European countries (for instance France and Switzerland).

Thus, we find at the centre of the pedagogic discussion the various pedagogic programmes and practices, "Ausländerpädagogik" – speaking about the equal opportunities, social and school integration, the deficit in knowledge of the official language of the state, anti-racist education. Starting with the 1980s, two approaches of the education issue of the migrants became distinctive:

1. The sociological approach that deals with social integration through granting of equal opportunities that believes that the core issues are the social and legislative disadvantage and discrimination;

2. A cultural approach that considers for the main objective of education the education for intercultural understanding.

In the last 35 years the concept of intercultural education crystallised, at the level of the pedagogic theories on the basis of the pedagogical practices and programmes. Intercultural education relies on intercultural pedagogy that in its turn relies on a wider understanding of "culture".

Culture means "more than just philosophical ideas, artistic symbols, scientific theories and ideological programmes. It means all that,

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[1] Georg Auernheimer, *Einführung in die interkulturelle Pädagogik*, Darmstadt: Wissenschaftliche Buchgesellschaft, 2003, pp. 25-33.

of course, but together with their inclusion in forms of social living of the human life".[2]

Or, in other words, culture with the meaning of a system of symbolic meaning/values that reproduce themselves in all the fields of life and function as a "system of social orientation" and it is part of the formation of individual and collective identity. [3] The symbolic character of culture implies as well the transformation of meanings, of cultural values, as these are interpretable while culture adapts continuously to the change in the living conditions, by adopting and adapting impulses through the individuals that are creators of culture from its lifeworld. Thus, these values, meanings and norms are undergoing a continuous transformation and the culture may be characterised by procesuality/dynamics and heterogeneity.[4]

Intercultural pedagogy implies a European, international, global perspective, one that is contributing to understanding within the society of the world[5]. It is based on intercultural learning – action that is oriented both towards the migrants as well as towards the members of the majority society and has as its objective the development of the intercultural skill of individuals, thus contributing to prevention of conflicts, to education for peace, etc.

The field of use of this skill is very comprehensive, one that-a vertical structuring, according to Holzbrecher's theory, is differentiated on three separate levels. The macro-structural level of the entire global society, the level of the "Lifeworld"- the concrete space of every-day interactions and actions, and on the level of psycho-social training of the subject/individual. The latter implies the development of an individual psychic force that lies at the basis of actions, the making of decisions in any context at the other two levels. This levelling is important in order to notice the close connections existent between education and the

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[2] Andrei Marga, *Filosofia unificării europene*, Cluj Napoca: EFES, 2003, p. 32.

[3] Georg Auernheimer, *op. cit.*, pp. 73-77.

[4] Wolfgang Hinz-Rommel, *Interkulturelle Kompetenz. Ein neues Anforderungsprofil für die soziale Arbeit*, Münster: Waxmann, 1994, p. 39.

[5] A. Holzbrecher, H.H. Reich, H. Roth (ed.), *Fachdidaktik interkulturell. Ein Handbuch*, Opladen: Leske-Budrich, 2000, p. 395.

development of a society and of the global society, and how important learning is for the training of the individual (knowing that this learning or more precisely the psycho-social training is taking place both within the educational system as well as outside of it).[6]

From a pedagogical point of view – following a horizontal structuring - the development of the intercultural competence implies an inter-subjective optic that manifests itself in six educational action areas, according to Hummelsberger. Those are:

1. Development of the personality (ego-strength, tolerance of ambiguity, solidarity, etc.)
2. Ethic-religious education (supporting the development of empathy, tolerance, openness, knowledge about fundamental values)
3. Linguistic education (language awareness, fluency)
4. Education to multiperspectivity (the realisation of the differences between the self-perception and the interpersonal perception, the relativization of its own cultural values by comparing them with different cultural values)
5. Social and communicative competences (civic conflict resolution, ability to dialogue and discourse)
6. Democratic education (supports the antiracist education and the knowledge about basic and human rights).[7]

Universal(istic) and cultural-relativistic approaches

In what the cultural values / the symbolic meaning are concerned, two approaches are to be differentiated at the philosophical level and of the one of pedagogic theory, namely the universal(istic) one and the relativistic cultural one (cultural-relativistic).

Those favouring the universalistic approach start from the premises that regardless of the fact that people belong to a certain culture or society

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[6] Alfred Holzbrecher, *Wahrnehmung der anderen. Zur Didaktik interkulturellen Lernens*, Opladen: Leske-Budrich, 1997, pp. 24-30.

[7] Siegfried Hummelsberger, „Zur Einführung: Von der Ausländerpädagogik zur interkulturellen Erziehung" in S. Hummelsberger (ed.), *Didaktik des Deutschen als Zweitsprache und interkulturelle Erziehung in Theorie, Schulpraxis und Lehrerausbildung*, Münster: Schneider, 2001, pp. 1-6.

in the common human life (menschlichen Zusammenleben) there are universalities (Universalien) that are due to the fact that each person holds/includes something essentially human (esenziell Humane). However, this approach may be accused of sliding blindingly over the differences conditioned by/coming from history and culture.

The relativist cultural approach has as its premises the recognition of the narrowness of its own perception and understanding. Thus, the ethnic differences and the cultural diversity have their own value that must be acknowledged/accepted/admitted while being aware of the historical-social and cultural context. This approach incurs the risk of reaching a(n extreme) relativity of values and of reaching the inability to act.

For the pedagogic practice these two different approaches are not perceived as mutually-excluding perspectives (either-or), but rather they mark the limits/the boundaries of the field of action, and between these two, numerous real situations show up, awaiting a solution.

Intercultural forms of learning and didactic approaches within intercultural pedagogy

In the following I would like to shortly present a number of the various practical approaches and pedagogical concepts that have as common points a number of basic themes of intercultural learning, such as: - handling of foreignness, recognition of the other / of other identities; handling (Umgang) differences without judging them; trans-border understanding while being aware of the global responsibility.

A) Looking for ethnic roots in history as well as in present times – the central element / the objective of this concept is the revelation that interculturalism is not something new, but rather a characteristic of history, one that can be realised by looking for the signs and symbols of the present and the revealing of their historical context (memorable places - cemeteries, statues, celebrations, language - etymology of names, family history, rites and gestures, symbols and their importance in the forming of social identity – clothing, sports fans, etc)

B) Anti-racist education – this concept focuses on the critical confrontation with ideologies. It first originated in the UK. Among possible example we might mention Adorno's publishing in post-war Germany of 1966 the "Erziehung nach Auschwitz" or, in our times, the confrontation with the manifestations of the extremist right wing.

C) Education for peace, for democracy, for instance Betzavta[8], or the programmes of the Council of Europe after WWII.

D) Learning for Europe – has as its objective the formation of a European identity based on certain common values, meaning in the same time a distancing from those that do not share these values.

E) Intercultural learning through development of linguistic competency

F) Global learning, summed up by the motto "think globally, act locally".

After this short overview of the development of intercultural education as pedagogic theory starting from real situation caused by the migration of labour force, we must differentiate between the multicultural societies with migratory minorities and those with historical/ethnic minorities, because the social tendencies/objectives differ. While the migrants are subject to an assimilation in order to integrate as quick and as deep as possible within the society, the national minorities wish only for a partial integration, up to the limits of keeping their own cultural and linguistic identity.

The objectives and the methods of the intercultural education sketched above may be applied as well in a society that is made up of ethnical minorities, just that we must take into consideration as well the difference between the objectives of the different types of minorities.

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[8] The Hebrew word *betzavta* means „togetherness" and it is the name of a method of learning democracy, which was developed by the Adam Institute in Israel. It makes up the programme and the philosophical background at the same time. See more at www.betzavta.de.

Case study: Intercultural aspects of the German and Hungarian Minority Education in Transylvania

In the last 18 years the Romanian education system has gone through major changes at all levels of education, such as: curricular reforms, reform of the pre-university and university studies, introduction of new subjects such as IT, civic culture, the stressing of the importance of learning foreign languages, etc.

In what the intercultural education is concerned, seen as an all-including educational mission that is aimed at the entire educational system, two tendencies may be differentiated in Romania.
  1. Implementation of the general European perspectives of intercultural education that is aimed at creating a science-based multicultural education. This tendency came about as a necessity for a country that is member of the EU and that wishes to be competitive at European level. The previous reforms had brought already certain changes in this direction. [9]
  2. The second tendency is concentrating on identifying the specific intercultural aspects, with reference to the historical, cultural and social context of the country through strengthening of the intercultural relationship among the co-habiting minorities.

In the following I would like to focus on this "specific" aspect of intercultural education from Romania.

General data

The legal framework of education in the minority languages is insured by the education laws passed as a result of the reforms from 1995, 1999 and of the country's Constitution. According to these, the persons belonging to

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[9] See more in [*Declaration by the European Ministers of Education on intercultural education in the new European context*], 10-12 November 2003,
[http://www.coe.int/t/e/cultural_co%2Doperation/education/standing_conferences/e.21stsessionathens2003.asp#P7_407], 16th January 2009.

national minorities have the right to study in their mother tongue at all levels of education.

In the educational system for minorities, several types of schools and of teaching in their mother tongue can be differentiated, according to the requirements and the size of the population of the given minority. These would be: schools with teaching in mother tongue (Hungarians, Germans, Croatians, Serbians, Slovaks, Czech minority, Ukrainians), schools with partial teaching in mother tongue (Croatians, Turks, Tartars – only a few subjects belonging to the vocational education are taught in the native tongue), schools with teaching in Romanian, where the mother tongue is taught as a separate subject (Armenians, Bulgarians, Germans, Croatians, Greeks, Italians, Polish, etc).

The curriculum for the schools with teaching in mother tongue provides for the teaching in mother tongue of subjects such as Romanian language and literature, Romanian geography and history being taught in Romanian, alongside a subject about the history and culture of their own minority that is taught in their mother tongue.

Education of German minority in Romania

The education of German minority is endangered by the lack of teachers and students as a result of mass migration of the German minority. Between 1993 and 2003 the number of Germans in Romania decreased from 119 436 to 60 008, out of which not all have declared German as their native language (according to the data of the Census from 2003). After the migration, the number of schools with teaching in German has decreased from 476 (1989/1990) to 303 (1991/1992) to 262 (2001/2002 – 19803 pupils) and to 140 (2004/2005 – 19570 pupils).[10]

The German Democratic Forum and the Ministry of Education have attempted to rescue the German schooling tradition through decrees that were aimed at the possibility of organising classes of only 15 pupils, the diffusion of teaching in the German language in schools, high-schools and universities, the support for the possibility to examine the pupils for

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[10] See Statistical Data Regarding Minorities for the academic year 2004-2005, [www.edu.ro/index.php/articles/c176], 16th January 2009.

the Deutsches Sprachdiplom II of the Staendigen Konferenz der Minister der Bundesrepublik, etc.[11]

The situation of education for the German minority is controversial - from the point of view of the German minority it is regrettable and from the intercultural perspective it is positive. It is positive because of the big interest of the non-Germans to learn the German language and in this way to populate the traditionally German schools. (Sibiu, Sighişoara, Timişoara, Satu Mare, Cluj Napoca, Bucureşti). In certain cases 80 % of the pupils are not German.

Thus the classes are mixed (students that have as mother tongue German, Romanian, Hungarian) and the subjects such as "The history and tradition of the German minority", German language and literature, Romanian language and literature, History of Romania(ns) and Geography of Romania make possible to meet/ accommodate two cultures and languages.

The education of the Hungarian minority in Romania

Although the number of the Hungarians from Romania decreased in the 90s because of migration to Hungary or other destinations, the number of schools with Hungarian language teaching has grown after the repressive educational minority politics of the communism.

From 2145 (1989/1990) to 2428 (1991/1992), 2384 (2001/2002 - 187156 pupils), 1545 (2004/2005 - 181887 pupils).

In this case the intercultural framework within the classroom is not so appropriate, because the classes are almost homogenous or the biggest part of the pupils are Hungarians and the others Rroma, or other minorities, with Hungarian mother tongue. And only the curriculum supports intercultural aspects – I mean here the courses - The history and tradition of the Hungarian minority, Hungarian language and literature,

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[11] See decree no. 3205 of February 3rd 1998 regarding the support given to the teaching of German language in schools, high schools and universities and Decree no 3084 of January 20th 2000 regarding the extension of teaching in German language and the consolidation of the German school tradition in Romania. See more in Othmar Kolar, *Das Bildungswesen der Nationalen Minderheiten in Rumänien 1945-2001*, Oldenburg, München, 2001, pp. 219-220.

Romanian language and literature, History of Romanians and Geography of Romania.

Only the existence of these courses in the curriculum is not a guaranty for the good knowledge of Romanian language and of the development of intercultural competences. A good example for this are the problems and controversies on the question of how to learn Romanian language in the region, as mother tongue or as foreign language - of Szeklers (Harghita, Covasna), where the pupils have the biggest Romanian language deficit.

Measures have been taken in order to solve these problems- in the forms of teacher-training, of writing of specialized textbooks, but it is always questionable how efficient the Romanian language teaching is today.

Conclusions

If we look through an intercultural perspective and compare now the two situations, those of the German and Hungarian minority education, for them the educational system offers more or less the same framework; nevertheless we can see differences - in the acceptance of the language and culture, in the prestige of languages, in the interest of the others (Romanians), etc. And we can conclude, that only the status of minority education offers in this educational system the possibility to implement an intercultural aspect in education. But the education in Romanian language (non –minority education) has a deficit in what the curricular content of information about the culture and languages of the minorities is concerned, minorities that are living in the same region.

From the point of view of the minorities, they need a certain intercultural openness, and exchange, because without it, they can be self closed, that would lead to various difficulties regarding the integration into the society of the members of these communities.

On the other side one may ask the question whether it won't lead to a stronger integration and thus to a quicker assimilation, losing as a consequence the very identity they had wanted to preserve.

Naturally, the following question emerges from the policy and educational policy field: "How can a balance be reached between enough and not too much interculturality? "

This question would approach a real risk if we were to consider the identity as a finite product/limited object, a non-flexible one. On the contrary, the concept could be seen as an ongoing process.

In the same way as culture, it has a procesuality character, as it reproduces itself through redefining the values that are already accepted in various contexts and ages and it is part of the formation of individual and collective identity. Redefining the values through we each identify ourselves as individuals or as a group makes the change, the continuous formation of identity possible.[12] Thus the practical education/ educational theory that has at its basis a canon of cultural values adapts to the new contextual changes of the lifeworld and mirrors them.[13]

Intercultural education- can attaint its aims if it lived/ practiced and not only pronounced on the discursive level. The term interculturality supposes two interacting parts, and for being realised intercultural education needs reciprocal interest and openness of all involved/interacting parts. While searching for solutions for the development of intercultural education (with specific regional aspects) we must take into consideration the fact that intercultural learning and the development of intercultural competences exceeds the limits of institutionalised education. – inside and outside of the school and the educational system, both are part of the lifeworld.

Inside of the school a possible solution would be a change of educational perspectives - from national to intercultural. This would mean a reciprocal opening of the ethnic groups of the multicultural society and this would also mean that each course (History, Physics, Music, Arts, the language of the nationalities of the region could be taught as elective foreign languages in all schools of the region etc.) could support

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[12] The concept of multiple corelated identities makes possible this continuous formation of the personal and collective identity. See Andrei Marga, *op. cit.*, pp. 331-344.
[13] Georg Auernheimer, *op. cit.*, pp. 64-71.

interculturality, and could offer the educational frame for the personal development of the intercultural competence.

But this change of perspective should be supported outside of the school as well, and this implies as well the level of educational policy and self-awareness of the multicultural society of Romania and in this case Transylvania.

The development of intercultural education is a challenge for the national educational systems and for the societies of Europe as well, but in the field of education there are already theories, practices and good-practice examples we can rely on, and thus the possibilities are wide open.

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CULTURE SHOCK IN INTERCULTURAL COMMUNICATION

Delia Flanja[*]

Abstract

People live in communities based on the things they have in common, and the means of sharing those things are through communication acts. In order to form a community or a society, it is impetuously necessary to have common goals, beliefs, aspirations, knowledge, a common understanding.

Not too many of the people that go abroad take into consideration the way in which cultural differences may affect their well being. "Culture shock" is the state of discomfort experienced by the intercultural traveler, in a more or less profound way, once he or she is placed in an unfamiliar environment. This is the aspect that I will try to clarify in may paper, more precisely the importance of being aware of, and learning how to cope with culture shock.

Key words: culture, interculturalism, culture shock, differences, training

As nowadays the groups that enter into contact are constantly enlarging, the ways of communicating also need to develop in order to respond to the needs of those coming into contact. The communication that I am referring to is intercultural communication, which also implies an intercultural knowledge. Inside his own culture, one does not think considerably at the cultural specificity, as the interlocutors share similar sets of rules and values. But when going internationally, communication becomes difficult without having the same background. The individual must compensate for all the things that his interlocutor has learned in his life time, by trying to learn, understand, and adapt to the other's set of behavioral and conceptual rules.

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The Concept of "Culture"

Harry Triandis, a specialist in cross-cultural psychology, uses a definition of culture that is, at the same time, explicit and wide enough to describe the term:

> "Culture is a set of human-made objective and subjective elements that in the past have increased the probability of survival and resulted in satisfactions for the participants in an ecological niche, and thus became shared among those who could communicate with each other because they had a common language and they lived in the same time and place."[1]

The term "human made" reveals the fact that culture, even if it has its historical background that has left inerasable traces, has the quality of evolving over time and adapting to different types of circumstances and needs. As A.L. Kroeber stated in one of his articles, "it is increasingly evident that no civilization is ever actually static. It always flows"[2]. And one of the circumstances nowadays is the development of that movement towards an intercultural dimension.

People tend to be unaware of their own culture. They take things as they come and they do not wonder what cultural aspect influences their beliefs and their behavior. When they come into contact with a new culture, the conscience of one's own cultural belonging awakens. The bigger is the differences between cultures, the higher will be the awareness about one's own cultural specificity.

The Context of Intercultural Contact Development

Nowadays it seems more than natural for people from different cultures to interact. But what determines them to interact and why did interactions increase so rapidly in the last years?

The mass media that introduce different cultures to different parts of the world, the purpose of economic development, the new source of

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[1] Harry Triandis, *Culture and Social Behavior*, New York: McGraw-Hill, Inc., 1994, p. 22.

[2] A. L. Kroeber, "The Delimitation of Civilizations", in *Journal of the History of Ideas,* Vol. 14, 1953, no. 2., pp. 264-275.

inspiration that the intercultural environment might represent, the increased possibility to travel abroad, the need for integration in a wider space, the tendency of correlation between the national and the international context, all these constitute the background for the intercultural contact development.

Besides the movement towards America, considered for a long time to be the land of all possibilities, there is a strong tendency of Europeans to move inside their own continent too, due to the Europeanization process. Talking about Europeanization, Stephen Weatherford considers that

> "In a world in which national economies are becoming increasingly integrated, the vicissitudes of trade and capital flows have had dramatic impacts on domestic welfare in every advanced country."[3]

Treating this subject, John Borneman and Nick Fowler made a short review regarding the unity that the Europeans started o create inside their continent. They mentioned the European currency (the Euro), the European flag, the European newspaper, television stations and universities, the European film festival, parliament, court, law, song festival, Champions League for soccer. They also brought into discussion the concept of "unity in diversity", a concept that suggests the possibility of different countries to maintain their specificities even when being integrated to the big European "family".[4]

Fred Halliday, in the paper *Rethinking International Relations*[5], considers that states are inclined to correlate more and more one with the other and to adopt sets of norms and values shared by different societies, which are being promoted by the competition among states. But, inevitably, there is a difficulty in conforming to an international pattern dictated by this competitive homogenization, by the need of overcoming the handicap caused by the difference in development among some sates. This difficulty of conforming becomes even higher if we take into

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[3] Stephen Wheaterford; Haruhiro Fukui, "Domestic Adjustment to International Shocks in Japan and the United States", in *International Organization*, Vol. 43, 1989, no. 4, pp. 585-623.

[4] John Borneman; Nick Fowler, "Europeanization", in *Annual Review of Anthropology,* Vol. 26, 1997, pp. 487-514.

[5] John Fred Halliday, *Rethinking International Relations,* London: Macmillan, 1994, pp. 117-122.

consideration the fact that there is also a need of keeping the distinctive aspects of national cultures as well.

This "unity in diversity" is a good way of perceiving intercultural communicating as well. There are some global rules of communication that one must master, but specificity and compatibility are the aspects that people coming into intercultural contact should put more emphasis on, in order to become fully comprehended, and in order to be able to receive the massage that the interlocutor intends to send.

Basics of Cultural Differences

Culture influences the way humans select, interpret, process, and use information. So, keeping informed about a certain culture is not enough. One must also know how to interpret that information in an appropriate way, which may be different from his first perception. The importance of this aspect is very well formulated by Harry Triandis who asked the following question:

> "In a world that can become extinct in a nuclear holocaust, can we afford to neglect a better understanding of the relationship of culture and social behavior?"[6]

The answer is obviously "no". In the century of speed, information cannot be ignored and most certainly must not be postponed. The diversity is too big to afford applying the general to the particular.

These are some of the reasons that determine the appearance of such phenomena as "culture shock". For a better understanding of the term, I will make use of Kalervo Oberg's definition, a famous Canadian anthropologist, definition reproduced by Harry Triandis in *Culture and Social Behavior*.

> "Culture shock occurs when people interact with members of a very different culture and experience a loss of control. This happens when they cannot understand the behavior of the people from the other culture. 'Then they feel confused and develop both physical (e.g., asthma,

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[6] Harry Triandis, *Culture and Social Behavior*, New York: McGraw-Hill, 1994, p. 31.

headaches) and psycho logical (e.g., depression) symptoms (Oberg, 1954, 1960)."[7]

Sources of Culture Shock

We operate inside our culture, guided by unperceived and rarely acknowledged networks. When we are placed out of our comfort zone, the phenomenon of culture shock may occur. Culture shock is caused by unfamiliarity with the new country, difficulty or inability to speak the language, or not knowing how to behave in an unfamiliar culture. Newcomers can sometimes feel like children because they cannot understand all these new things at once.

So, culture shock can have its sources in the lack of knowledge, the lack of ability to adapt, the lack of willingness to adapt, etc. One of the reasons why people cannot adapt is the preconceived ideas about the host country, which are as dangerous as the lack of knowledge.

> "Attributions refer to judgments or causal explanations about human behaviour. While individuals use attributions to make sense of their surrounding environments, their causal accounts are often influenced by motivational biases. One of these biases is related to the need to maintain and enhance self-esteem. Social psychological research has demonstrated that in most cases individuals attribute their successes to internal or dispositional factors and their failures to external or situational factors."[8]

Discrimination from the representatives of the host country can only intensify the state of discomfort. It is difficult to adapt even in a friendly environment, and reticence from the host nationals is a big impediment. Also, it is very difficult to maintain one's identity in a multicultural society, while obtaining acceptance and feeling integrated in host social groups. Discrimination results in conflicts and those conflicts lead us back to stereotypes.

What one must take into consideration when dealing with stereotypes is the fact that they are comparative judgments and that the

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[7] *Ibidem*, p. 239.

[8] Coleen Ward, Stephen Bochner, Adrian Furnham, *The Psychology of Culture Shock*, Routledge, 2001, p. 112.

correct manner of referring to a characteristic of one culture is by comparing it to another culture. Triandis gives the example of a certain culture A, where people wash their hands around one hundred times a day and of a certain culture B where people wash their hands around seventy times a day. Of course, there are exceptions to those numbers inside those particular cultures but the average is of one hundred and of seventy times a day. Given those numbers, representatives of both cultures can be considered to be clean and attentive to hygiene, but representatives of culture A can easily consider those of culture B not to be very clean.[9]

In giving another example to support the idea that difficulties may occur as a result of cultural particularities I will also make use of Catherine Beaulieu's study on 23 students, from 11 countries, involved in a summer program. The focus of her study was on the perception of personal space by representatives of different cultures, and on the way this perception affects the communication process. The term of personal space was introduced by Edward Hall in 1959 and it refers to an invisible zone surrounding each individual, which allows him to feel comfortable in interactions. Though the author admits the small number of subjects involved in the survey, the results obtained are just a confirmation of what had already been concluded by other surveys in that domain and they can support the effects of cultural differences in communication. Anglo Saxons need a larger personal space, fallowed by Asians, Caucasians and Latinos. Even the body posture is different when interacting. As a result, a Latino may seem aggressive to an Asian, while his style is simply more direct.[10]

All the above mentioned elements may constitute sources of culture shock. But how exactly does this phenomenon affect the intercultural traveler? This aspect will be clarified by presenting its stages and its symptoms.

Stages of Culture Shock

Though each individual reacts differently to the cross cultural differences, Kalervo Oberg, quoted by Delia Marga in *Intercultural Business*

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[9] Harry Triandis, *op.cit.*, p. 138.
[10] Catherine Beaulieu, "Intercultural Study on Personal Space: A Case Study", in the *Journal of Applied Social Psychology* vol. 34, Issue 4, April 2004, pp. 794-805.

Communication. Professional Discourse Analysis. A reader, in his discussion regarding "culture shock", detailed four general phases of emotional reactions associated with cross-cultural sojourns. These phases are at the basis of studies in the domain of "culture shock".[11]

1. The "honeymoon" stage

This stage is the one experienced at the beginning of the contact, and it is characterized of euphoria, excitement, fascination, and enthusiasm. Positive attitudes predominate, and even if travelers come with a luggage of pre-conceived ideas, the thrill in front of the new and out of the ordinary predominates. Most tourists do not surpass this phase. Those that intend to stay for a longer period of time are preoccupied with getting accommodated and making connections. Similarities are regarded with comfort while dissimilarities are regarded with interest.

2. The "crisis" stage

This stage is the most difficult and challenging one, as it is characterized by feelings of inadequacy, frustration, anxiety, irritation, hostility, etc. The euphoria of the exotic and out of the ordinary has passed and the traveler has to face reality. In this stage the manifestations of the "disease" culture shock starts to manifest. If this stage is surpassed, though some travelers never do, then the "healing" process can begin.

3. The "recovery" or "gradual adjustment" stage

During this stage, the individual takes measures to exit the crisis stage. He begins to understand the new culture and to create a comfort zone. The unfamiliar becomes familiar and this diminishes his states of anxiety and nervousness. His actions evolve from artificial to natural, due to crisis resolution and culture learning. Sojourners and immigrants suffer the most severe adjustment problems at the beginning stage of transition when the number of changes is very high and coping resources are very low.

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[11] Delia Marga (ed.), *Intercultural Business Communication. Professional Discourse Analysis. A reader*, Cluj-Napoca: Cluj University Press, 2004, pp. 152-154.

4. The "complete adjustment" or the "biculturalism"

This stage reflects enjoyment and functional competence in the new environment. The "patient" has entirely recovered from his "disease". He has learned to accept things the way they are and he has embraced some of the culture particularities of the host country. He no longer feels a "fish out of water" (a metaphor which refers to taking the individual out of habitual environment that he can control and where he feels at ease). Harry Triandis states that even if an individual has the chance of getting support in the host culture, it is not equivalent to the one received from his family and friends. He also speaks about avoidance and formality as factors that come against one's adaptation.[12]

For those that return to the host culture, some specialists support the idea of the existence of another stage. This stage is called the "re-entry shock" and it does not necessary fallow the other four. It depends on the level that the individual has reached before returning home.

> "As he becomes involved once again in his home culture he is faced with the need to bring his reconstructed value system into closer juxtaposition with indigenous values; he is faced with the need to prove his sameness without discarding his newly acquired outlook."[13]

Gulbahar Huxur, university professor in Columbia, clearly summarizes the reasons for the re-entry shock by describing it, in an article published in 1996, as a feeling of both gain and loss. Gain of new concepts and values, of new experiences, of new perspectives, and loss of an environment that was familiar for a longer or shorter period of time, regain of what he or she has left at departure and loss of what he or she has found in the new culture.[14]

Lysgaard (1955), quoted by Coleen Ward et alii in *The Psychology of Culture Shock* proposed in his cross-cultural study a U-curve model of

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[12] Harry Triandis, *op.cit.*, pp.262-287.

[13] Louis Cajoleas, "Counseling Overseas Students" , in *The Journal of Higher Education*, Vol. 29, 1958, no. 4, p.212.

[14] Gulbahar Huxur, Earl Mansfield, Reginald Nnazor, Hans Schuetze, Megumi Segawa, *Learning Needs and Adaptation Problems of Foreign Graduate Students*, 1996, pp. 3-6.

adjustment during cross-cultural relocation based on his investigation of some Scandinavian students in the United States. The conclusion of his study was that there is a critical adjustment period for the intercultural sojourners. That period is considered to be from six to eighteen months of departure. This conclusion is based on the fact that students returning home after six months have managed to adjust to the needs required in that interval. After around six months, the enthusiasm of the new and the effects of the "honeymoon" stage start to fade away. So, sojourners encounter new problems in adaptation that are considered to be surpassed after eighteen months or more. As opposed to the U-curve adjustment theory, there is also a longitudinal adjustment theory. Longitudinal studies have considered the early months of transition as having the higher level of psychological distress. Still, the U-curve proposition has continued to exert strong influence on the field.[15]

Lysgaard's U-curve model has been analyzed by Miriam Sobre-Denton and Dan Hart, in the article *Mind the gap: Application-based analysis of cultural adjustment models*.[16] The authors of this article analyze the advantages and disadvantages of four important cross-cultural adaptation theories. The main strength of this model is in their point of view the so called "intuitive appeal" while the main disadvantage is the fact that it focuses to much on a pattern, leaving aside the uniqueness of each individual and of each experience.

The second analyzed model is the Anxiety/Uncertainty Management model, introduced by William Gudykunst. What this model draws attention to is the fact that uncertainty and anxiety do not damage the process of acculturation, but contribute to the "positive acculturation". Also, it does not have the weakness of the previously presented model, as it is adapted to different individuals in different situations. In spite of that, the problem with this model derives exactly in the orientation towards this great diversity. The forty seven axioms invest this model with a great degree of complexity that can be disorienting.

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[15] Coleen Ward, Stephen Bochner, Adrian Furnham, *The Psychology of Culture Shock*, Routledge, 2001, p. 80.

[16] Miriam Sobre-Denton, Dan Hart, "Mind the gap: Application-based analysis of cultural adjustment models", in the *International Journal of Intercultural Relations*, vol. 32, Issue 6, November 2008, pp. 532-538, 539-540.

The third model brought into discussion is the Transition model which presents adaptation as a natural process and it focuses even more on the particularity of each individual. According to Bennett, the promoter of this model, cultural adaptation training should be more sojourner oriented than pattern oriented, and this aspect is considered to be a positive one by Miriam Sobre-Denton and Dan Hart along with the perception of culture shock as a natural psychological phenomenon. The negative aspect is considered to be the difficulty of applying this model to larger groups involved in training sessions.

Finally, the last model of training in cultural adaptation presented is the Stress-Adaptation-Growth model of Young Yun Kim. This model focuses more on the immersion of language and communication in the acculturation and deculturation processes that lead to assimilation. As opposed to the last two models, the disadvantage of this model is its lack of focus on the individual.

The presentation of these four models was just a way of framing the theoretical aspects related to the stages of culture shock. More emphasis on the training techniques will be put later on in this article. Whether it is represented in a liner way or as a U-curve, the effects of culture shock depend very much on each individual. As Jacques Demorgon pointed out in his *Dynamiques interculturelles pour l'Europe*, all in all, the capacity to tolerate what is foreign finds a certain limit in each individual.[17] Having established the stages of culture shock, a clarification must be made regarding its manifestations, more precisely its symptoms.

Symptoms of Culture Shock

Culture shock does not manifest itself in the same way for each individual. Still, taking into consideration the frequency of some manifestations, a list of the most common symptoms may be presented to the reader.

The most frequent culture shock symptoms:
- homesickness

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[17] Jacques Demorgon, Edmond-Mark Lipiansky, Brukhard Müller, Hans Nicklas, *Dynamiques Interculturelles pour L'Europe*, Paris: Ed. Economica, 2003, p. 114.

- excessive concern for sanitation regarding hand washing, the quality of the food or water consumed
- fear of physical contact with members of the other culture
- troubles with concentrating on certain things
- insomnia
- nightmares
- fatigue
- feelings of helplessness
- embarrassment
- anger
- fear of being injured, robbed or cheated
- exaggeration of the damage caused by minor injuries or any other physical disorders
- stomachaches
- headaches
- alcohol or drugs abuse
- even more severe effects, like suicidal attempts

Triandis also pointed out that the degree of manifestation of culture shock is proportional with the conceptual distance between the home culture and the host culture. There is also a strong connection between culture shock and intercultural experience, the proportion being reversed in this case.

I will end this section by presenting one of Triandis' experiences as a traveler. Though he had a rich traveling experience, the first time he went to Calcutta, India, having arrived during the night, he was surprised to see lots of corpses along the road. But what he thought to be corpses were actually people sleeping. Only later he learned that those people were not dead; it was common for people to sleep there, in order to save some of the money they gained and to help their families in the villages. His conclusion is that:

> "When we are able to predict what others will do, when we can act so as to get others to do what we want done, when we know how to get rewards from our environment and avoid punishments, we feel in

control. In new cultures we are often not able to predict the behavior of others or get them to do what we want."[18]

Means of Coping with Culture Shock

Intercultural training presupposes not only teaching the language of a certain country. Giving information about the culture of foreign countries and constantly adapting the information to the current situation is an imperative in intercultural training.

As the language aspect has been brought into discussion, I would like to draw attention on what knowing the language of the culture that is going to be visited actually means. In a case study on 127 students, engaged in study motilities in France, Margaret Pitts notices that there is a difference between the levels of language that student perceive of having and the way they manage to perform in that particular language abroad. She considers this to be in many cases a first level of shock for students.[19] Different academic demands, combined with an unexpected language difficulty could represent a first challenge into adaptation, and this is why even language knowledge should be adapted to particular regions and social environments.

Culture training addresses especially to long term travelers like sojourners or immigrants; in the case of tourists, some general information is usually sufficient. The economic aspect should also de taken into consideration because culture training is rather expensive and this is why special emphasis should be put on long term travelers, which can benefit much more than tourists from that training. Besides the period of departure, the need for special training and the potential difficulties of psychological and socio-cultural adaptation depend on the quantity and quality of relations with the host nationals and the cultural differences between the county of origin and the host country.

The international traveler is looking for support in two directions. The first direction is from the host nationals and the second one is from

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[18] Harry Triandis, *op.cit.*, pp. 262-263.

[19] Margaret Pitts, "Identity and the role of expectations, stress, and talk in short-term student sojourner adjustment", in the *International Journal of Intercultural Relations*, vol. 33, no. 6, November 2009, pp. 450-462.

family, friends, or acquaintances back home. The support from the people back home seems to be the most reliable source of support but it can also make the traveler's stay abroad more difficult. Keeping constant contact with people back home can, in some cases, create difficulties in adaptation, as homesickness is intensified. So, contact with people back home and with host nationals should be combined in such a way that the traveler can find his comfort zone.

Some studies have focused on the sources of support for the sojourners and among the most used and effective ones we can find: maintaining contact with the people back home and coming into contact with the host nationals or with other international students, visiting the new country, being open-minded and optimistic, having a good knowledge of the foreign language, learning the other culture's specificity, keeping a journal, finding a comfort zone, thinking about the outcomes of that experience. Besides the general stress coping strategies, each individual should try to discover his or her own ways of feeling comfortable in the new environment and should take advantage of all the help he or she can get.

There are some reactions to culture shock that, instead of diminishing its negative effects, can only increase stress and the negative attitude towards the new culture. Some intercultural travelers blame their condition on the host nationals, on the environment or on the persons that have encouraged them in their departure. Though blaming others and staying more or less isolated may seem as a proper solution to avoid responsibility, this only postpones taking efficient measures for making the time spent abroad as enjoyable as possible. [20]

In the case of international students, active counseling can help them surpass difficulties and to benefit the most from the experience. Keeping them busy and involved could be a good method for diminishing culture shock. Community programs and group integrations may seem time consuming but it can be both relaxing and educational.

> "These two goals, if broadly defined, are not antagonistic. Although the student may have a specific academic goal, inevitably he will have experienced cultural unities and diversities during his sojourn abroad. Almost inevitably, he will

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[20] Nancy Adler, *International Dimensions of Organizational Begavior*, second edition, Belmont: Wadsworth Publishing Company, 1992, pp. 227-231.

be called upon to fulfill, in addition to his professional role, upon return home, the role of a cultural interpreter."[21]

So, it is perfectly justifiable why adequate communication has been regarded by many as the key component of intercultural effectiveness.

Training Techniques

There are several training methods in this domain and I will present some of the most efficient ones in the following paragraphs, using the study of Colleen Ward et alii[22] as source of information:

One of the best training methods is to bring a member of the host culture into the trainee's one. This way, he is exposed to a very realistic and genuine source of knowledge and he is kept away from experiencing the first contact shock, on foreign ground. It is, of course important to learn about the foreign culture, but having an example in front of you is much more concluding. Of course, the person selected must be one representative for his or her culture, not an out of the ordinary individual. Though it is more difficult to put in practice, short term exchange among culture members seems to be the best way of a proper comprehension.

Another learning method, though more theoretical, is indeed very efficient. This method is called "the culture assimilator" and it is a programmed learning approach that consists of a set of one hundred to two hundred scenarios in which individuals from two different cultures interact. For each scenario, the trainee is given a set of explanations for the miscommunication process, and he has to choose the correct one.   This technique is also useful because, instead of presenting facts, it places the trainee in the position of learning from his own assumptions. This can give him a feedback on what he already knows and on how prepared he is for a future contact. Also, having actual situations as examples makes learning more practical and attractive.

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[21] Cajoleas, Louis, "Counseling Overseas Students" , in *The Journal of Higher Education*, Vol. 29, no. 4, 1958, pp. 209-212, 234.
[22] Coleen Ward, Stephen Bochner, Adrian Furnham, *op.cit.*

In the BAFA BAFA game, trainees are given a hypothetical cultural group that they have to identify with. There are two different teams, Alpha and Beta, belonging to different cultural groups. Both teams receive information regarding the culture that they must identify with. The game consists in exchanging visitors and simulating a host-sojourner situation. This way, the trainees learn in an interactive way of two cultures at the time and, also, they make an idea of what being a host means.

Another interesting technique is the Barnga game. The subjects receive a set of playing cards, different for each team, and a set of rules that they have to memorize. They are not allowed to speak or write words. They can express themselves only by gestures and drawings. When the game is over, the participants discuss their experiences. The aim of Barnga is to simulate intercultural communication difficulties.

In the Ecotonos game, players are divided into three teams, each representing one culture. They receive cards with rules in each culture. After discussing for a short while about their cultures, they must make up stories about their cultural development. Then they are combined in "multicultural" groups, and are given different tasks that they must accomplish together, taking into consideration the cultural background that they have been assigned. This game also gave the purpose of improving communication skills and cultural knowledge.

The last technique that I will describe is "the critical incident technique". This technique presupposes the analysis of some episodes of misunderstanding or conflict arising from cultural differences between the actors. With the help of a facilitator that will explain at the end, in detail, what had happened, the trainees must discover the problem issues.

It is very difficult to evaluate the efficiency of one training method or another, as it takes a lot of time to see the results and those results are very much influenced by the specificity of each individual and of each culture. Some of the methods of testing their efficiency are the feedback on return home, the individual's performance or his results, the feedback of representatives of the receiving country. "The analysis produced a three factor model of intercultural effectiveness: (1)

ability to manage psychological stress, (2) ability to communicate effectively, and (3) ability to establish interpersonal relationships."[23]

> "The 'shock' part of culture shock is now being discussed in terms of skills deficits (Bochner, 1986) and acculturative stress (Berry, 1994a, 1997). This, in turn, draws attention to the range of mediating and moderating variables that can either attenuate or accentuate the effects of behavioural deficits and psychosocial stressors that sojourners, immigrants and refugees may face." [24]

It is important to comprehend that no method is self sufficient or completely efficient. Still, the importance of being aware of the potential difficulties reduces culture shock considerably. To support this final idea I will make use of the adaptation of Fons Trompenaars to the famous saying "When in Rome, do as the Romans do". Referring to the Japanese people and to their solution to adapting to the changes produced by globalization around the world, he considers that the correct manner of dealing with interculturality and its challenges would be: "When in Rome, understand the behaviour of the Romans, and thus become an even more complete Japanese." [25]

CONCLUSIONS

The boundaries of one's country are no longer an impediment in one's development. People have the freedom of circulating more freely among countries and cultures and the changes in their needs often determine them to take advantage of that freedom. But being a good communicator in one culture does not necessary mean that one will be a good communicator in all cultures.

The cultural differences may put in difficulty even the most experimented traveler, as the examples in my paper have shown. In order to surpass those difficulties, people need to embrace a new set of rules and

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[23] *Ibidem*, p. 41.
[24] *Ibidem*, p. 40.
[25] Fons Trompenaars, *Riding the Waves of Culture. Understanding cultural Diversity in Business*, London: Nicholas Brealey Publishing, 1993, p. 4.

values. If they are not able to adapt, than the negative symptoms of culture shock intervene. One may experience this culture shock when he is placed out of his familiar environment, in an environment where his own norms and values are not compatible to those of others.

Nowadays, the international travelers have the advantage of being quite numerous. As a result, it is easier for them to integrate in a new environment if they find people placed in a similar situation. Lately, the economic implications of intercultural contact have led to the tendency towards training also the host nationals for the intercultural encounter. The manner in which this training should be made and the proper model to be chosen is as challenging as in the case of pre-departure training.

What we should keep in mind is that there is no correct or incorrect way of perceiving things and of communicating; there is just a different way of doing those things. In order to improve our life, we must adapt our behaviors and our needs to the environment that we inhabit. As the environment is constantly enlarging, intercultural training is an imperative in any communication act.

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THE INTERCULTURAL DIMENSION:
AN ESSENTIAL PREREQUISITE FOR THE SUCCESS OF THE AMERICAN EXPORT OF DEMOCRACY

Lucian Bogdan[*]

Abstract:
We shall try to investigate in the following whether exporting democracy can prove beneficial for the envisioned countries, on the condition of being conducted in an appropriate manner, or, on the contrary, identify the reasons for it cannot, given the local cultural specificities and the civilizational differences between the U.S. and the targeted countries. In this respect, we shall highlight several theoretical considerations regarding the key concepts of interculturalism and the need for intercultural and intercivilizational dialogue, along with the allegations in favor or against U.S. interventionism and regime change, in order to see whether they are mutually compatible and/or what has to be done for the betterment of today's ongoing tendencies in the field.
Keywords: civilizations, interculturalism, interventionism, local specificities, export of democracy

1. Preliminary theoretical considerations

Given the high degree of interconnectedness between all the disciplines involved in having a good command of statesmanship in the world of ever-increasing interdependencies, one should not think in a bigotry-laden manner, but widen his or her perspective, especially when the investigation of social issues is not performed solely for the sake of the academia, but is meant to serve policymaking. Thus, the statesman placing bold measures on his or her foreign policy agenda ought not to stick solely

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to political or strategic considerations, but keep a close eye on issues defining local specificities.

Let us start by highlighting the fact that what generally constitutes the perception of the public at large – perception induced by the classical approach to international relations, in which states were deemed as sacrosanct entities, acting as a whole, expressing unity of will – represents in fact the product of what sociologists have termed the fallacy of reification[1]. To be more specific, it is wrong both from the rational and moral standpoints to reify a nation's populace as a whole and perceive it as acting accordingly; on the contrary, sound policy planners have to distinguish between the various centers around which decision forms itself in the envisioned area and act in such a manner as not to alienate precisely those elements that could be most favorable to their design.

Thus, while the ideal situation for policymakers would consist simply in applying templates that have once proven successful to other areas of interest, history has proven this approach if not utterly wrong, at least highly counterproductive, the main reason being the ignoring of the natives' local specificities, or, to be using the terminology of cultural anthropology, culture as a paramount, defining element of human nature.

In this respect, we need to take a look at the concepts of culture, civilization and interculturalism, which constitute essential elements for exploring the grass-roots of any nation, or, more widely speaking, of any sensitive region. Thus, it is nearly tautological to affirm that misunderstanding a people's traits by the promoter of an interventionist stance would equate, most likely, to an immediate coming to a grinding halt of the ongoing process.

Let us, then, in order to have a sounder basis for analyzing the culturally-related issues affecting the exportation of democracy, tackle with the aforementioned concepts from the theoretical perspective, in order to deal afterwards with the more detailed, punctual issues.

We shall start by assuming the definition of culture as "the integrated system of socially acquired values, beliefs, and rules of conduct

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[1] For details, see Lewis A. Coser, "The Significance of Simmel's Work", in Hans Geser, Markus Roth, Nora Zapata (eds.), *Masters of Sociological Thought: Ideas in Historical and Social Context*. Second edition, New York : Harcourt Brace Jovanovich, 1977.

which delimit the range of accepted behaviors in any given society"[2] and its immediate corollary, stating that it is cultural differences that distinguish societies from one another, we realize the overwhelming importance of possessing at least a basic degree of knowledge of the targeted people's culture when engaging it economically or diplomatically, with a significantly deeper knowledge being required when pursuing more ambitious political influencing goals, for preparing today for yesterday's challenges may prove a futile and counterproductive endeavor.

Let us proceed next to the issue of civilization, which, from the Spenglerian perspective, is definable as the end-product of a culture, stemming from the latter in an organic succession, "the thing-become succeeding the thing-becoming". Civilizations are, in the German philosopher's view, "the most external and artificial states of which a species of developed humanity is capable"[3].

While this definition is rather restrictive, it does nevertheless serve our purpose, by underlining the fact that any civilization poses distinct traits, reflected in its constituents' material life and, at the same time, being intimately interconnected with their culture.

Basically, by juxtaposing the two previously-quoted definitions, we may draw the conclusion it is the integrated system of socially acquired values, beliefs, and rules of conduct embraced by a given community that determines the material accomplishments of its civilization. Or, to be putting it otherwise, the accomplishments of a given organized group[4], comprising its civilization, are probably its most strikingly perceptible end-products and, hence, the elements which define it to the outside world.

It is noteworthy that, from the intercultural perspective, an us-against-them approach would lead to perpetual conflict, given the high number of communities coming to interact; second, merely ignoring one another would not be suitable, as (a form of) segregation would imply the

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[2] "Culture", in *Columbia Encyclopedia (2001-2007),* 6th edition, New York: Columbia University Press.

[3] Oswald Spengler, *The Decline of the West*, Oxford & NY: Oxford University Press, 1991, p. 24.

[4] Or one could almost unmistakably use the term "society", but it is nonetheless true that even pre-societal communities can garner significant accomplishments, thus fostering a particular civilization.

impossibility of a broad series of exchanges to develop, which would be detrimental for all parties involved.

Consequently, making recourse to the intercultural approach would be highly beneficial: unlike the simpler multicultural approach, which merely aims at the preservation of diversity[5], the intercultural one puts a higher emphasis on interactions, on exchanges between the various cultural groups that have come together. This way, by fostering – by means of intercultural education – openness and dialogue in-between members of various communities engendering diverse cultures, yet which come into interaction, tensions can be worn-off and coexistence can resume its peaceful course, or, even better, it can take place under even better auspices than beforehand.

2. The emergence of the export of democracy

After having evoked these brief theoretical considerations, let us proceed to the more specific issues, regarding the American policy of exporting democracy, scrutinized from the perspective of interculturalism and cultural relativism.

But, prior to properly engaging the issue, let us start by opening a brief parenthesis, with the historical context having led to nowadays' international context, by remembering that, when the institutional mechanism of the United Nations was devised more than six decades ago, as a forerunner of a (potential) future system of global governance – as, at least, staunch supporters of idealistic internationalism claim it was – the main ideas behind it were the safeguard of human rights, international peace and security, deemed as cornerstone elements of a free world.

However, it would have proven virtually impossible to include these liberally-minded principles in their fullest extent in the U.N. Charter at that time, for reasons concerning the sensitive political context of those years. And, undoubtedly, too strong an affirmation of the principles of democracy and liberty –the very principles that had fueled the American

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[5] Diane Powell, and Fiona Sze, (eds.), *Interculturalism. Exploring Critical Issues*, Oxford: Inter-Disciplinary Press, 2004, p. 16.

war effort, which proved essential in tipping the balance against the Axis[6] – would have rendered impossible the ratification of the Charter.

Therefore, in order for the new international order to become possible, it is only the broadest common grounds, the most general principles and, thus, most applicable at global scale, that have been referred to in the constitutive documents of the U.N. and other new institutional developments of the era. A common denominator was mandatory to be used, and in this respect solely sacrosanct principles were to be given utterance in binding treaties.

In turn, this implied that the ideals regarding a world order based upon the rule of law and an institutional mechanism to reflect the ideals and principles standing at its groundwork had to be scaled down, the elements that would have born too striking a resemblance with the American democratic model getting a far lower profile than in F.D. Roosevelt's original design – for it is undeniable the envisioned model was, to a great extent, an American-inspired one.

While Woodrow Wilson, by pledging his nation to fight gun-in-hand for making the world "a safer place for democracy", was the first to actively commit the U.S. to the fulfillment of her "Manifest Destiny" on the global arena, the idea of acting against regimes perpetrating "oppressive restrictions on human freedom" are identifiable to writings as early as those of Thomas Jefferson[7], the first who dreamt of his nation's international engagement in the service of the ideals it stood for.

Nevertheless, the process that had started ever since is by no means going to come to an end – and, as we shall see, there are a series of reasons for which it should not (though we shall also see a several reasons against it, or, at least, we shall be suggesting the need of a major overhaul of the process as a whole).

In this respect, let us mention the fact that the doctrine standing at the groundwork of the postwar world order, namely idealistic internationalism (also known as liberal internationalism), has as main target the shaping of international relations so that interactions on the

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[6] For details, see *Basic Facts about the United Nations*, New York: United Nations – Department of Public Information, 1998, p. 3 sq.

[7] Robert W. Tucker and David C. Hendrickson, "Thomas Jefferson and American Foreign Policy", in *Foreign Affairs*, New York: Council on Foreign Relations, Spring 1990.

world stage are carried out according to the models of peace, liberty and prosperity[8] which characterize the domestic environment of a democracy. We have to remark, however, that the latter approach to international relations has not been constantly dominant, but, nevertheless, several key issues have been supported by supporters of all major doctrines, either it be liberal internationalism, realism or conservatism.

3.   Controversies regarding the American export of democracy

Speaking of the need of democracy and freedom throughout the world, one can easily identify a strong interdependence between the peaceful conduct of international relations – including the reluctance in waging foreign wars, serving for no actual domestic purpose - and the degree of domestic freedom supported by a given government[9] (or, at least, this phenomenon is detectable until a certain threshold is reached, for afterwards, as we know ever since Theodore Roosevelt[10], civilian, peaceful development cannot go farther without the backing of a strong defense mechanism, devised not for obliterating anyone, but, in order to, by its mere existence, deter any potential contender from undertaking any mischievous actions).

Were things that simple, a significant amount of troubling issues would not have arisen during the last century. Thus, whilst it is beyond any doubt that democracy constitutes by far the best political order available, or, at least, the least deficient one, its exportation overseas, even by the country which contributed most to its crystallization in nowadays' form, can lead, if conducted inappropriately, to utterly adverse effects.

Thus, the idealistic view behind the American export of democracy overseas, that of the "City upon a Hill"[11], of an exceptional nation,

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[8] Martin Griffiths, *Relații internaționale. Şcoli, curente, gânditori*, Bucureşti: Editura Ziua, 2003, p. 167.

[9] In this respect, a relevant analysis is given utterance by Alexis de Tocqueville, who highlighted the relationship between militarism and the erosion of democracy - see Alexis de Tocqueville, *Democracy in America*, Charlottesville: University of Virginia, 1997, pp. 309-313.

[10] Theodore Roosevelt, *An Autobiography*, New York: Bartleby, 1998, p. 220.

[11] As coined by John Winthrop's sermon of 1630, *A Modell of Christian Charity*, better known by its subtitle, *A Citty upon a Hill* – fully reproduced in Lauter, Paul (general editor) *The*

endowed by the Deity with a mission of spreading its values and ideals to the world at large, reshaping it according to its own image, not only rests upon good intentions, but if conducted appropriately, can yield positive effects both domestically and for the envisioned nations, the adverse situation is also possible.

In this respect, committing the U.S. to too daunting a task of promoting its model abroad would imply, as John Quincy Adams had pointed it out, sending her on a perpetual quest for monsters, eventually transforming the country in the dictatress of the world. And not only would this imply an aggressive, bullying stance towards other nations, but it would also lead to an accelerated erosion of its domestic democratic institutions, which would constitute, undoubtedly, a totally undesirable situation.

Therefore, even a conduct apparently depicted as positive, as the export of democracy is, can yield highly negative effects, both domestically and on the international arena, especially by giving both the people in the nation where the implementation of democracy is attempted and those in other nations facing relatively similar domestic conditions the impression that they are forced into submission, by a far stronger, unequal "bargaining partner".

Let us mention, in this respect, the French perspective upon the U.S.'s conduct of foreign affairs, as expressed by Raymond Aron, qho, when analyzing the superpower's conduct on the international arena, coined the phrase "the imperial republic"[12] . Departing partially from Adams's and de Tocqueville's conceptions, according to which an overstretching of the overseas promotion of values mechanism could eventually lead to their erosion, the French philosopher takes things even farther, arguing the U.S. is in jeopardy of sharing the fate of the Roman Republic, which, because of too strongly acting in pursuit of its ambitions of aggrandizement, ended up by becoming an empire and forsook the democratic principles it started from.

Heath Anthology of American Literature, vol. 1, 2nd edition, Lexington: D.C. Heath, 1994, pp. 226-234.

[12] For a detailed account, see Raymond Aron, *Mémoires. 50 ans de reflexion politique*, Paris: Julliard, section „*République impériale*", 1983, pp. 635-645.

Though there are certain signals hinting a shift towards the aforementioned direction, nowadays' situation is by no means that grim, or, if one prefers, at least it is not irreversible: in spite of the fact that during the latest presidential tenures neoconservative-inspired unilateralism has imposed itself as the dominant doctrine, not only a return towards international dialogue is due to take place shortly, but signs forerunning it are increasingly visible – let us mention, in this respect, one of the most ambitious projects of foreign policy of the latest years, namely Condoleezza Rice's doctrine of "transformational diplomacy"[13].

In the creator of this system's own words, the objective of transformational diplomacy can be defined in the following: "[t]o work with our many partners around the world, to build and sustain democratic, well-governed states that will respond to the needs of their people and conduct themselves responsibly in the international system. Let me be clear, transformational diplomacy is rooted in partnership; not in paternalism. In doing things with people, not for them; we seek to use America's diplomatic power to help foreign citizens better their own lives and to build their own nations and to transform their own futures."[14]

In this respect, one can see the envisioned objectives, contrary to what pacifists and anti-American leftists may claim, are far from what could be termed as "imperialistic". However, the problem still bears far more hues than one may grasp by analyzing only sparse bits of the entire picture. Thus, whilst it would be preposterous to say that the export of democracy is an utterly evil, mischievous conduct, undertaken solely for narrow, obscurantist interests, as supporters of the New Left may claim, it would be equally wrong to claim that things are perfect in this field.

Though having started from noble ideals, the process of exporting democracy overseas cannot remain in the lofty realm of ideas and has to face the harsh scrutiny of every day's life grim reality. And besides the already mentioned opposition towards this policy from behalf of the New Left, who claim they support pacifism and a better world[15], another

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[13] Condoleezza Rice, *Transformational Diplomacy*, lecture held at Georgetown University, Washington, D.C., January 18, 2006.

[14] *Ibidem.*

[15] Though they may be well intentioned, leftist pacifists more or less intentionately overlook the fact that "while opposing overseas intervention and arms build-ups as "imperialistic"

significant problem the supporters of the exportation of democracy lies in the cultural differences identifiable throughout various regions of the world.

4.   The relativist perspective – a viable alternative?

As an antithetical perspective, let us mention the view expressed by Antonio Gramsci regarding cultural relativism[16], according to which one cannot deem any culture as superior, each and every of them bearing intrinsic values and, hence, being noteworthy in itself. According to the Italian political philosopher, one should reckon the merits of practically every civilization, without taking into account a specific, limited set of achievements – as, for instance, material, or, even more specifically technical ones – but, instead valuing it as a whole, taking into account all the achievements of that specific culture, in a broader variety of domains.

This way, one may draw the conclusion that cultures cannot be exalted as superior or, on the contrary, shunned as inferior, these being the first bricks in the wall of mutual understanding and appreciation. We tend to appreciate this interpretation constitutes probably one of the best rebuttals of intolerance-based extremism and, hence, of aggressive policies based upon a self-asserted stance of superiority.

Nevertheless, one should not forget the main flaw of the logic standing at the groundwork of relativism: since all assertions are relative, practically nothing being determinable as one hundred percent true, then not even this assertion can be deemed as true. On the contrary, plunging deeper into the matter of relativism applied in the field of international politics, we realize one cannot fully assert there are *no* common guidelines and no sacrosanct principles, for this would imply the utter dissolution of any institutionalized order – including, consequently, any perspectives for any global mechanism.

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and claiming for the outlawing of war in the name of "humanity", they *do not oppose dictatorships*" [our emphasis]. Therefore, pacifists oppose one country's use of armed force against another's, but do not oppose the use of physical force from behalf of a dictator against a country's unarmed citizens, situation we could only deem as preposterous – see Ayn Rand, *Capitalism: the Unknown Ideal*, New York: Signet Books, chapter "The Roots of War", 1967, pp. 35-43.

[16] Giovanni Sartori, *Teoria democraţiei reinterpretată*, Iaşi: Polirom, 1999, p. 437 sq.

Thus, while respecting and cherishing all the achievements of practically any civilization existing or that has existed worldwide, one cannot disregard the existence of certain common benchmarks. These would not be required inasmuch to assess the "value" of a given culture, which not only would rest on solely pseudo-scientific bases, but would also place itself in the jeopardy of this assessment being used to fuel extremism and xenophobia, but, on the contrary, in order to have a common reference basis.

Whilst assessing a certain culture as superior or inferior would be, as we have seen, utterly counterproductive, applying similar considerations to the civilization having issued that culture (to be using the aforementioned distinction set forth by German philosopher Oswald Spengler we have cited earlier on), is actually useful, in order for a common basis in-between the existing nations belonging to various civilizations to become possible.

Thus, while paying due respect to local specificities, traditions, religion and other individualizing traits, when analyzing the nations' political capability of modernizing itself and, hence its ability to successfully integrate in the global environment, we cannot disregard a series of objective, universal principles.[17]

Among these, we identify the very principles having stood at the groundwork of the establishment of the U.N. more than six decades ago, namely "the rule of law, basic rights and civil liberties protected by periodically elected political authorities, accountable and transparent governments, elected representatives and ever increasing freedom, equality, participation and social justice".[18]

Since observance of the aforementioned principles is an essential prerequisite for any nation's thriving in today's context of ever-increasing interdependencies, one could not deem as detrimental the envisioned nation's being provided with help in order to more easily attain these goals. Of course, for the export of democracy to become a successful prospect, the entire process has to take place in strict observance of the elements defining the local specificity, so that only the essential positive elements defining a

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[17] Andrei Marga, *Relativism and its consequences*, Cluj-Napoca: Presa Universitară Clujeană, 2005, p. 32.
[18] *Ibidem.*

democratic state, where law alone, and not any arbitrary power, reigns supreme be emphasized, while the others be left aside, in order not to obtain the utterly adverse effect, of alienating the populace.

In fact, this latter situation is by far the most detrimental one for the "exporter" of democracy, as its entire demarche will be coming under the most intense scrutiny from behalf of those supposed to be democratized, who will feel that, instead of being helped, they are either colonized, or, even worse, under conquest. It will be most difficult for the initial assailant (for, under most circumstances that come to be rejected by their due addressees, the exportation process is generally undertaken by the use of military force, without this in itself being necessarily a cause for its debacle) who finds itself under attack now, to redress the situation.

Nevertheless, the policy planners' lack of relevant data from the field prior to launching the intervention, or, in the event data has been collected, its severe misinterpretation, may yield equally detrimental consequences, namely the failure of the intervention. Of course this may happen in the conduct of military operations devised to attaining far less spectacular end goals, but then an unfavorable outcome can with relatively greater ease be either ignored, or a corrective solution be devised in due time.

5. Avoiding past failures, for devising future workable solutions

But whenever the envisioned targets are given extensive media coverage, in order for the public opinion to support the overseas endeavor and the prospects for a swift success are claimed loudly, an unfavorable shift of the situation on the battlefield will, most likely, determine a swift increase of the demand for troops withdrawal and a cessation of the overseas "adventure" – as was the case, for instance, with the 1993 U.S.-backed intervention in Somalia, when after the elite regiment of the Army rangers was, against all odds, defeated, Congress decided to withdraw its support for the intervention[19].

Nowadays, military strategists argue that the debacle in Somalia occurred because of a series of factors, including tactical ill-planning and

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[19] "Rep. John Murtha Urged Somalia Pullout in '93", in *News Max*, [www.newsmax.com/archives/ic/2005/11/21/100353.shtml], November 21, 2005.

other military flaws, but, what matters most for our study herein, because of a severe lack of knowledge regarding the cultural specificities and habits of the populace[20]. Thus, a mission devised for bringing humanitarian relief and putting an end to tremendous sufferings ended up in a bloodbath on both sides.

Even though it would be utopian to claim that the intervention in Somalia could have been successful in exporting democracy there – since, it was a far more limited intervention, its goals being providing humanitarian relief and securing an end to the genocide that had been raging for more than a couple of years – this component of the mission should not be overlooked, as it constitutes a significant part of any nation-building effort.

Of course that the first steps in nation-building (actually starting with peace-building[21]) consist in providing the basic facilities for the people and a climate of elementary safety, but, in the medium-long run, the end aim is not merely securing peace as non-fighting, but, even more importantly, creating a stable domestic environment. And even though there may be stable totalitarian regimes, once violence has erupted and an international intervention has taken place in order to quell it, by no means would another dictatorship prove an adequate solution. Basically, the only applicable one is to move onward towards democracy, at the fastest pace the situation allows it.

Let us note the problem does not only consist in that of the political system in itself, as a mechanism of redistributing power and alternation between various factions – for this would be possible even in the event of, let us say, mob rule – but what truly bears importance and what, unfortunately, proves most difficult, is the instilment in the people's minds, of the feeling they are free and of its direct corollary, that they alone are responsible for their future well-being.

The development of civil society is a severe challenge a newly-freed from despotism country faces and, unfortunately for both its liberator and for the envisioned people, the odds tend to be against them, as not only is this a time-demanding process, but incipient democracies are extremely

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[20] Maj. Clifford E. Day, *Critical Analysis on the Defeat of Task Force Ranger*, Maxwell, Alberta: Air Command and Staff College, 1997, p. 5 sqq.

[21] *UN in Brief*, „Chapter 2. What the UN Does for Peace", United Nations Online Publications, [www.un.org/Overview/uninbrief/index.html], 2005.

vulnerable and even slight changes in the domestic environment can make the entire edifice crumble.

A possibly workable solution for securing democracy in some of the world's most troubled regions (and precisely those targeted by the latter administration as recipients of the export of democracy process, mostly in what has been termed as the Greater Middle East), was devised by U.S. Senator and presidential candidate John McCain and was given utterance in an essay he published for *Foreign Affairs.*[22]

Before taking look at his line of argumentation, let us remember President Clinton's words after the defeat of Task Force Ranger in the Somali campaign of 1993: were too hasty a retreat to have been ordered, this would have meant "open season for Americans"[23], signaling all anti-American forces that the superpower's will to fight could easily be eroded, by simply targeting a few of its soldiers. He favored the devisal of a retreat plan, but solely after providing the necessary guardsmen, so that everything could be done in observance of all necessary safety precautions.

In this respect, McCain's proposed policy towards solving the stalemate faced by the U.S. in on its two major battlefields in its "long struggle against terrorism"[24] could largely be deemed as a sound one, which, if conducted appropriately, could bring forth the so badly-longed-for victory – note that we do not have in sight simply a military victory, but, in the Clausewitz-ian meaning, namely bringing the "enemy" into submission; neither is the classical terminology entirely applicable, since the actual enemy is not the any given nation-state – however called names as it may be in any moment of political tension, for it has been proven that even citizens of "rogue states" can personally support pro-American values and cherish democracy - but merely the perpetrators of international terrorism, which may be provided safe haven by a given government.

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[22] John McCain, "An Enduring Peace Built on Freedom. Securing America's Future", in *Foreign Affairs*, New York: Council of Foreign Relations, November/December 2007.

[23] Bill Clinton, *apud* John M. Broder, "Clinton Orders 5,300 Troops to Somalia; Vows End in 6 Months", in *Los Angeles Times*, [www-tech.mit.edu/V113/N48/somalia.48w.html], October 8, 1993.

[24] Expression coined by neoconservative ideologist and scholar Norman Podhoretz, who had first given it utterance in his *Commentary* magazine articles, then in his volume, *World War IV. The Long Struggle Against Islamofascism*, New York: Doubleday, 2007.

It is true that for the public opinion the classical perception of nations waging wars of annihilation one against each other is easier to grasp (and, of course, it serves the pacifist movements' interests better), but by no means is this the case with the wars in support of the exporting of democracy process: not only are civilian settlements spared, but they also receive aid from their "occupiers", precision weapons are used, targeting whenever possible solely military facilities or terrorist caches (for though from the humanitarian standpoint casualties recorded could be deemed as high, but they are extremely low as compared to the protraction of the fighting[25] and to the destructive potential of the available arsenals) and whenever soldiers commit abuses against the populace, they have to face charges[26].

Besides, an attitude and behavior contrary to these sound principles would be highly detrimental: if we are to take a look at the major ongoing conflicts in which the U.S. has recently been engaged into, there are even nowadays voices claiming a clash of civilizations is in the unfolding and arguing an Islamic renaissance is building up against the "invaders". By no means should these attitudes be fostered; on the contrary, a restraint of violence on both sides is highly necessary, in order to allow things to cool down and, therefore, for the properly-speaking phase of the export of democracy be able to take place.

This would be beneficial not only for the U.S., whose position on the world arena would no longer come under so intense scrutiny from behalf of all those feeling, as we have seen above, that their nations' local specificities are threatened. Moreover, were U.S. statesmen not necessarily give up their nation's commitment to the spreading of the American model to the world at large, but to adopt a lower profile, supporting the ideals of democracy and liberty in a way similar to that undertaken until now, but with the reserve of paying more observance to local specificities, customs and taking into account not only their desires in the shaping of global order, but also the legitimate interests of those directly affected by their policies, far better outcomes could be attained.

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[25] Especially as compared to past wars, calculated in casualties per day of fighting.

[26] For details, see Colin H. Kahl, "How We Fight", *in Foreign Affairs*, New York: Council on Foreign Relations, November/December 2006.

Only under those circumstances would, to be quoting Zbigniew Brzezinski,[27] the American model become a real prospect for the world and would a broad range of nations fell prone to adopt it for themselves; only then could we say the export of democracy has become a really viable enterprise. Not necessarily blindly following the path trodden until now by American statesmen, but pursuing largely the same principles, and, as we have seen, in mandatory observance of the peoples' of the world interests and cultural specificities, democracy and liberty could, in a more or less distant, yet foreseeable future, become the dominants of political life if not globally (which would, in turn, fuel the hopes of the supporters of global governance), at least on wide areas, thus being beneficial to increasingly significant proportions of the world's populace.

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MARTIN BUBER'S RESPONSE TO THE HISTORICAL AND CULTURAL CONTEXT OF THE FIRST WORLD WAR

Valeria Forte[*]

Abstract
The First World War saw an enthusiastic and active participation of many German Jews who perceived this historical event as a unique opportunity for complete social integration and political union with their German nation. One of the most famous voices in the German Jewish tradition of the First World War was that of Martin Buber, whose fervid rethinking of Judaism can be defined as the intellectual product of his historical and existential experience. The main focus of this study is an analysis of Buber's response to Nietzsche's nihilism in the form of a renewed religious consciousness which has gained great popularity among Buber's readers.
Keywords*: crisis, finance, spillover effects, culture, war, Martin Buber.*

Introduction

While the early stage of the First World War was characterized by patriotic fervor and deep hope among Jewish communities, through the course of very few years, this bellicose event developed in an unfavorable direction for German Jews who felt a sense of historical delusion and national disorientation. Jews in the army were progressively seen with suspicion and a general sense of distrust toward Jewish communities pervaded the political atmosphere in Germany toward the end of the war. In this very intricate historical period, Jews played a double and contrasting existential role; while they were patriotic militants of the German cause, they were also victimized by the same historical event that they were advocating.

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This study will analyze a cultural phenomenon created in the context of the First World War; a very complex and prolific intellectual time for Jewish religious introspection and philosophical discourse. Martin Buber's religious awakening during the period of the First World War presents an open dialogue not only with the tradition of Judaism, but also with the philosophical essence of Nietzsche and other philosophers.

Historical Background: A Brief Overview of the First World War

The Great War devastated the world, and mainly Europe, for four years which resulted in the casualty of over forty million deaths among military and civilians between the years 1914 and 1918. A series of escalating events resulted in this tragic bellicose outburst, which historically began on 28 June 1914 with the assassination of Archduke Franz Ferdinand, heir to the Austro-Hungarian throne by a Bosnia Serb citizen of Austria-Hungary, Princip Gavrilo. As a consequence of this assassination, political alliances among European nations were formed and a series of war declarations afflicted Europe which, within one month, was in a state of open warfare.

In reality, the crucial factor that resulted in this tension among European nations had its roots in a changing balance of power that took place in Europe at the beginning of the twentieth century, with the unification of Germany, the discontent of France in the loss of her territories, a growing military and economic competition between Britain and Germany and a growing ambition of German domination. This war, which started among European powers, soon included the participation of other states, such as Japan, Italy, and the United States, escalating from a European war to a world war, becoming the most tragic and inclusive bellicose event that had afflicted the world since the beginning of history.

The catastrophic event of the First World War resulted in an unfavorable political and social change for the Jewish community in both the German and the Austro-Hungarian Empires, where the Jews experienced a sense of alienation in their relationship with their government. This negative social result had not been predicted at the outbreak of the war in 1914 when, on the contrary, it seemed that the war could function as a cohesive social and political factor for the Jews in both empires. Marsha L. Rozenblit, in *Reconstructing a National Identity*, argues that Jews in Habsburg Austria were motivated with patriotic enthusiasm at the advent of the war not only

by loyalty toward their state, but also for the unique chance that the war would present an opportunity for the liberation of Jews in Galicia and Eastern Europe from Russian oppression. Rozenblit writes: "Jews embraced the war effort because they could fight for Austria and the Jewish people at the same time"[1]. Some specific historical events such as the Burgfrieden in Germany and the voice of the emperor promoting a message of equality among all Germans gave hope to the Jewish community for the possibility of a total social integration in their German nation. Most of the Jewish community embraced the German cause: Orthodox, Zionists and the mainstream of German-Jews felt a genuine patriotism and the obligation to devote their energies and their resources to the political cause of the fatherland. The Jewish press, as in the case of the Selbstwehr, engaged in an active role of propagandistic Habsburg-Austrian oriented patriotism calling on Jews to provide unlimited sacrifices for the just cause of the war.

This same view was shared by Jewish scientists, such as Albert Einstein and Fritz Haber, and by prominent Jewish writers such as Felix Salten, Siegfried Trebitsch, Stefan Zweig and Stefan Grossmann. In this enthusiastic atmosphere of general consent, very few Jewish voices maintained a sense of skepticism and, at times, vocalized an opposition to the war. Among the Jewish intellectuals who resisted the shared enthusiasm for the First World War, Sigmund Freud expressed his opposition to this historical event that, in his opinion, had debased the progress achieved by human civilization. To this counter discourse against the general enthusiasm for the war also participated Arthur Schnitzler and Karl Krauss, who felt that the war propaganda was corrupted and motivated by a hypocritical political agenda counter productive to the Jewish social advancement in their nation. Although there was a Jewish minority resistance to the war, general support by the Jewish community for the First World War was seen as the historical resistance to czarist Russia and was therefore a war to fight with dynamism and cohesion[2].

Among the several intellectual Jewish voices that proclaimed enthusiasm for the war, the influential opinions of Martin Buber played a significant role. Buber believed that the event of the First World War would

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[1] Marsha L. Rozenblit, *Reconstructing a National Identity: The Jews of Habsburg Austria during World War I*, New York: Oxford University Press, 2001, p. 162.
[2] *Ibidem*, p. 4.

provide not only a spirit of renewed religiosity among the Jews, but also would spark the beginning of a new era marked by a strong feeling of human cohesion. Buber defined this idea as the "Incipit vita nova", the beginning of a new life, a new era in which Germans and Jewry would join in a cosmic historical mission to promote a renewed spiritual dimension as an alternative to the growing materialistic logic that had impoverished Western civilizations. This message resounded with great influence among the young generations of Jewish intellectuals who considered Martin Buber a reference model in their intellectual development. Buber's enthusiasm for the war is vividly expressed in his own writings to a Zionist friend in 1914:

> Never has the concept of '*Volk*' become so real for me as during these weeks… When we Jews then feel, wholly feel to its core what this means: then we shall no longer need our old motto, *Not by might but by spirit*, since force and spirit shall now become one for us. Incipit vita nova[3]

These words, written at the beginning of the war, which expressed Buber's hope and personal feelings, are vital to understand not only Buber's personal wish at this time, but the general hope that many Jews felt at the outbreak of the First World War, when many believed that a special historical moment had arrived to favor the social, political and spiritual advancement that would free the Jews from a long marginalized social position. As the war progressed, however, this bellicose event developed in an unfavorable direction for the Jewish community, generating a sense of historical delusion and national disorientation. These feelings will be reflected in the intellectual expressions of Jewish thinkers as well as in the literary production of Jewish writers. Before analyzing the progression of this change from enthusiasm to delusion and Buber's intellectual response, it is important to take into consideration some crucial philosophical influences that were prevalent in Europe at this time.

In order to understand Buber's initial enthusiasm for the advent of the First World War, it is crucial to understand the significant philosophical influence that Nietzsche's nihilism played on the development of Buber's thoughts since his early formation and throughout his entire life. Buber's central idea of "incipit vita nova", the faith in the beginning of a new era,

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[3] Maurice Friedman, *Martin Buber's Life and Work: The Early Years 1878-1923*, New York: E.P. Dutton, 1981, p. 193.

can be placed in relation to the Nietzschean idea of the prophecy of the Superman, a theory introduced by Nietzsche in *Gay Science* which expresses the empowerment of human beings to encounter adverse historical circumstances, to overcome them and to rise to a new level of existence as humans who have triumphed over their own limitations.

The Relevance of Nietzsche's *Thus Spoke Zarathustra*

During the late part of the nineteenth century Nietzschean philosophy had a tremendous impact on European intellectual development. Nietzsche's prolific writing permeated European culture in such a deep way that it is still difficult to estimate, objectively, the vast influence and historical repercussions that his thought played and continues to play on European cultural expressions. The prolific production of Nietzsche's writing discusses many aspects of human cultural manifestations: philosophical concepts, discussions on myth and religion, the function of prophetic expressions, the esthetics of art and music, existential reflections on the human condition, and the nature of human life in relation to history. Due to the complexity of themes discussed, Nietzsche's writings attracted intellectuals of many disciplines. Writers, musicians, dramatists, philosophers and politicians embraced, rejected and reinterpreted his provocative messages, engaging in an intricate dialogue that is still fervent and vibrant not only among European intellectuals, but among intellectuals at the world level. It would be impossible to discuss the prolific production of Nietzsche's creativity, what is most relevant in this discussion is to identify and to analyze those Nietzschean themes that permeated Buber's intellectual dialogue and the dynamics of responses they produced in our thinker.

One of Nietzschen's most influential writing which he considered his highest intellectual achievement is *Thus Spoke Zarathustra*, written between 1883 and 1885. The message of human self-overcoming and the energetic sense of human revitalization contained in this book become cardinal reference ideas of discussion for many European intellectuals and functioned also as an inspirational message to the young soldiers participating in the First World War. The vigorous message contained in this book, expressed in a prophetic tone and aphoristic style became so popular that the German government ordered the printing of 150,000

copies of this work thirty years after its initial publication to be used by soldiers as inspirational reading during the time of war.

In order to understand the crucial impact that *Thus Spoke Zarathustra* played on the development of European intellectual thought, it is important to analyze the nature and the essence of this writing. Nietzsche, in essence, created a polemic attack against the false morals that had prevailed in society which had resulted in a prevalent social morality of self-deception. The exaltation of Christianity, science, rationalism, positivism and history, according to Nietzsche, had resulted in a morality meant to repress the Dionysian spirit, the primordial essence of human nature, and to favor instead research for an elusive absolute and ultimate truth. Natural human inclinations, according to Nietzsche, had been repressed by the feeling of guilt and bad conscience promoted by unhealthy Christian morality and by an obsessive philosophical research for an ultimate truth. Zarathustra states: "I conjure you, my brethren, remain true to the earth, and believe not those who speak unto you of superearthly hopes! Prisoners are they, whether they know it or not"[4]. Nietzsche was not the first proponent of this idea which had already been debated in classic time in Plato's *Gorgia*, where the antithesis between morality and immorality, reason and instinct was represented by the binary opposition of Socrates and Callicle. Before Nietzsche, Schopenhauer had also theorized the concept of human existence as random, irrational and not guided by any kind of rational law. But while Schopenhauer reacted to this idea of the vane research for the truth with pessimism and asceticism, Nietzsche proposed a vigorous response of human self-overcoming that was especially functional to the enthusiastic spirit generated during the First World War.

Nietzsche argued that science and the mediocrity of men in search of a false truth had resulted in the prevailing social morality of renounce, a conduct of existence that has found its highest theoretical expression in the Christian message, according to which life should be devoted to sacrifice and submission to a divine power. To this idea Nietzsche opposes a transmutation of old values that were wrongly believed to be the truth. Against this prevailing morality of false truth Nietzsche promoted the acceptance of all earthly and physical aspects of human existence.

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[4] Friedrich Nietzsche, *Thus Spoke Zarathustra*, New York: Modern Library, 1954, pp. 6-7.

Zarathustra, the Prophet of Dionysius, declares this new truth of human essence and human existence and, in opposition to the Socratic philosophy focused on the research for the ultimate truth, he affirms that the corporeal essence of human life is the prevailing force in human existence, manifested by a will to power. Zarathustra's prophecy opposes the traditional virtues promoted by the false morality with new virtues which are more in tune with the original essence of humanity: health, joy, love, war, will to power and others.

According to Zarathustra the transmutation of old values and the affirmation of new ones is a needed step to reach human self-overcoming, a higher condition of being that elevates humans from a state of mediocrity to a mode of superhuman existence. In this new elevated existence, the superhuman, instead of escaping the reality of the world, accepts it in all its manifestations and becomes, therefore, completely integrated into the world. In this cosmologic configuration Nietzsche does not convey to the superhuman absolute universal values; the world according to Nietzsche remains a random and irrational manifestation of phenomena neither guided by logic nor by unity but in which the sole energy of "will to power"[5] determines an eternal recurrence of events that link humans of the past to those of the present.

Nietzsche and Buber: A lasting philosophical dialogue

The influence of Nietzsche on Buber's academic formation is recognized by several scholars; Tamra Wright, in *Self, Other, Text, God: The Dialogical Thought of Martin Buber*, argues that the interest of Buber in Nietzschean writings began at the early age of fourteen, when Buber moved to Vienna to live with his father. In her essay, Wright states that Buber became particularly interested in the thought of Kant and of Nietzsche, two crucial philosophical influences that remained cardinal in Buber's academic formation and which motivated Buber to study philosophy, German literature, psychology and history of art at the universities of Vienna, Berlin, Leipzig and Zurich[6]. If the enthusiasm for the advent of the First

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[5] Gabriele Giannantoni, *Profilo di storia della filosofia*. Vol. 3. Turin: Loescher, 1979, p. 254.

[6] Tamra Wright, "Self, Other, Text, God: The Dialogical Thought of Martin Buber", in *Modern Jewish Philosophy*, Michael Morgan and Peter Eli Gordon (eds), New York: Cambridge University Press, 2007, p. 102.

World War and the concept of Buber's "incipit vita nova" can be analyzed in comparison with Nietzsche's energetic idea of personal over-coming, the influence of Nietzsche on Buber can equally be noticed in Buber's later writings.

The concept of Nietzsche's idea of the world as a random collection of events not guided by a logical order becomes an evident element in Buber's theory of life, which can be observed in his later writing, was documented by Aubrey Hodes in *Martin Buber: An Intimate Portrait*, in which Buber writes:

> I have no system, no method. I do not believe in formulas. I believe in people. And so I cannot give you any easy recipes that will solve all the problems. If anyone comes to you and says he has the solution, he knows how to solve all the problems, my advice to you would be, do not trust him![7]

The Development of the War: From Enthusiasm to Delusion

As the events of the First World War developed, a sense of delusion afflicted the morale of the Jewish community. The war which had started with promising hopes for the Jews progressed in an adverse direction. Buber's enthusiasm for the war, together with the enthusiasm of many other Jewish intellectuals, underwent a radical change. A sense of existential delusion and national disorientation prevailed in the consciousness of many Jews who manifested these feelings in different ways.

As World War One unfolded, many Jewish soldiers who had wished to form a sense of camaraderie, found themselves alienated and targeted by anti-Semitism. Paul Mendes-Flohr, in his essay *In the Shadow of the World War*, presents a description of both the psychological and physical distress that Jewish soldiers suffered during their participation in the War. In his reconstruction of the Jewish soldier's condition during the war, Mendes-Flohr reports the feelings expressed by a Jewish soldier on the front:

> "The Jewish comrade suddenly realized that he felt as if he were discovering an unknown world." The difference was palpable not only in drinking and the telling of lewd jokes, but also in more serious conversation. A further, even more painful, realization was

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[7] Aubrey Hodes, *Martin Buber: An Intimate Portrait*, New York: Viking Press, 1971, p. 200.

that the camaraderie of the trenches did not suppress the anti-Semitism of the average German that the Jew met in the army[8].

This sense of self-delusion was felt not only by the Jewish soldiers on the front, but equally by Jewish intellectuals, whom, after the initial enthusiasm and hope for social integration generated by the war, later expressed their self-delusion in their writings. Ernst Simon, a close friend of Martin Buber, verbalizes his frustration in a very clear and direct way when he wrote:

> I want to relate how I was transformed from an aesthete devoid of Jewish identity into a Zionist…The first week of the war were refreshing, a renewal of ecstasy, a postponement of awakening from a beautiful dream. In danger-and in standing up to it-we found a kind of substitute for the mood of the war's first days; we measured our sense of well-being by the intensity of the emotional swings that we experienced, felt closer to our comrades and believed that at last we had become an integral part of the life of this alien and beloved people.[9]

The unpredictable development of the First World War became for the Jewish people much more than a political world event, it provided a historical chance to evaluate, with a very lucid mind and with an objective point of view, the realistic condition of the Jewish community in the context of the European social fabric. The unfolding events of the First World War reminded Jews that, regardless of their effort and dedication to the nationalistic cause of their fatherland, an underlying difference between Jew and non-Jew remained a constant element of social alienation and segregation. In fact, because of the war, the Jewish community suffered a very unique psychological distress; while fighting the outside enemy to defend their own homeland, they came to be viewed with suspicion by their fellow German citizens, becoming victims of the cause they were serving.

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[8] Paul Mendes-Flohr, "In the Shadow of the World War", in *German-Jewish History in Modern Times. Vol. 4*. Michael A. Meyer and Michael Brenner, eds, New York: Columbia University Press, 1998, pp. 12-13.

[9] *Ibidem*, p. 13.

Buber's Literary Response to the Feeling of Self-Delusion

The delusion generated by the First World War in the Jewish community resulted in a variety of political and intellectual responses. The unrealized desire for total social integration and the unfulfilled sense of national belonging to the German nation heightened a sense of identity and promoted an open dialogue among Jews to better understand and define an appropriate cultural and political response to the negative effects of the First World War.

During the course of the war, the theme of human encounter becomes a central aspect in Buber's thought, as well as in the experience of other Jewish writers for the important social encounter between German and Eastern European Jews, which would favor a mutual process of opportunity and transformation. In April 1916, during the most crucial years of the war, Martin Buber founded the journal *Der Jude* which, according to Buber, was a needed element not only to create cohesion, self-examination and a sense of unity at a time of difficulty for the Jews, but also to redefine the relationhip of Jews to other people and their sense of Jewish identity and destination. In *Der Jude* Buber wrote: "The new unity of Judaism appears among the Jews who, having been shattered by the Jewish experience of this war, now feel responsible for their community….The first expression of this new unity is a transformed understanding of self"[10]. It is clear from these words that the initial enthusiasm at the beginning of the war directed to the social unification of Jews and Germans, was now directed to a renewed spirit of cohesion among the Jewish community.

Buber's response to the delusion of the war resulted in an energetic act of Jewish self-affirmation and renewal. *Der Jude* became an important voice of Jewish reference for many Jewish intellectuals and writers, among them Franz Kafka, Hermann Cohen, Franz Rosenzweig and many other prominent non-Jewish authors. N. N. Glatzer, in his introduction to *The Way of Response: Martin Buber*, argues that Martin Buber's writings in the course of sixty years were a constant series of responses that the writer produced in reaction to philosophical, cultural, religious, political and

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[10] Paul Mendes-Flohr, "In the Shadow of the World War", in *German-Jewish History in Modern Times. Vol. 4*. Michael A. Meyer and Michael Brenner (eds.), New York: Columbia University Press, 1998, pp. 19.

social messages. It would be impossible to analyze the totality of Buber's prolific literary production through this vast period of time; what can be observed, instead, are some prevalent themes that characterized his writing. A comparative analysis between Nietzsche's philosophical expression and Buber's dialogue with this crucial influence in his formation indicates some interesting points. A significant element in the literary production of Martin Buber was the philosophical articulation of the dialogic principles, as promoted in his work *I and Thou*.

Overcoming Nietzsche: Buber's Philosophical Articulation of the Dialogic Principles

Buber's initial enthusiasm for the advent of the First World War was derived by that special feeling of human connection and cohesion that both Jews and Germans felt and shared in an unprecedented way during the demanding historical period. This element of human connection remains a constant theme of interest in Buber's thought; in fact, one of the most prevalent interests in Buber's intellectual writing is the correlation between the individual and his social experience. The analysis of the human social experience constitutes for Buber the most prevalent element in his philosophy of dialogue. The delusion caused by the unfulfilled hope for total integration during the First World War motivates Buber to elevate philosophical theory to the dialogic principle of encounter. The central theme of the encounter is a perfect symbiosis between the I and You, which Buber develops in his masterpiece *I and Thou*. Buber writes:

> The relation to the You is unmediated. Nothing conceptual intervenes between I and You, no prior knowledge and no imagination; and memory itself is changed as it plunges from particularity into wholeness. No purpose intervenes between I and You, no greed and no anticipation; and the longing itself is changed as it plunges from the dream into appearance. Every means is an obstacle. Only where all means have disintegrated encounters occur.[11]

Buber's message of perfect human connection has a universal value that can be generalized to the totality of human beings; however this idea

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[11] Martin Buber, *I and Thou*, Trans. Walter Kaufmann, New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1970, p. 63.

analyzed in the context of the Jewish experience, acquires a multilayered meaning. Arnold Eisen in his article *Exile*, argues that the idea of a perfect union and the sense of belonging that derives from it can be expressed not only in the longing for human connection, but also in the quest of a land that becomes "home" and may resolve the condition of exile. In his article Eisen analyzes in a comparative way both Nietzsche's and Buber's images of the world:

> The image of a world adrift, cast off from the anchor of faith and meaning, became in Friedrich Nietzsche the distinctive mark of modernity - and in Martin Buber that which organic Jewish communities in the land would rectify… exile repelled them because it was not only *galut* but the universal human condition of homelessness - which might now be overcome.[12]

At a time when German philosophy with Nietzschean nihilism declares the end of metaphysical thought, Buber produces an intellectual response to overcome not only the limitations of metaphysics, but to reinvigorate and renew Jewish cultural, political and social traditions.

Conclusion

Judaism is a primordial and essential component in the development of Western civilization which would not have developed as it is today were it not the product of Judeo-Christian religious and cultural interaction lasting for over two thousand years. German philosophical tradition reached a unique status of privilege among the noble sciences. Because of this significant achievement, scholars questioned to what extent and in what form Jewish philosophical thought has played in supporting the advancement of German philosophy to a world level. This question for many of us seems irrelevant because even the thinkers, writers and philosophers that are not defined as belonging to a Judaic upbringing are still the cultural product of millennia of Judeo-Christian interaction.

This brief comparative analysis between Nietzsche's and Buber's philosophical dialogue in the historical context of the First World War indicates that Buber absorbed, responded and overcame Nietzschean

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[12] Arnold Eisen, "Exile" in *Contemporary Jewish Religious Thought*, A. A. Cohen and Paul Mendes-Flohr, eds, New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1987, p. 225.

nihilism and that he elevated the idea of the super-human in the context of his dialogic principles in which the Nietzschean idea of self-overcoming expands to the concept of   encounter, a condition of perfect cosmic symbiosis that, although not permanent, is nevertheless an experience of the absolute. While Nietzsche's philosophical ideas remained relegated to the realm of theoretical philosophical speculation, Buber's philosophical thought was involved in a discourse of social responsibility. As a member of the Jewish society that was targeted, marginalized and physically endangered, Buber had to respond not only with theoretical speculations, but with an energetic discourse of political substance and resistance. Buber's practical involvement with local Jewish educational centers, his interaction with students and local communities, and his active role in *Der Jude* are specific elements of traditional Jewish involvement in social services. Buber could not have been so influential had he not been the product of strictly Jewish cultural traditions such as the religiousness of Judaism, Jewish Hasidism, mysticism and especially the teaching of Ba'al Shem Tov. At the time when German philosophy declared with Nietzsche the end of metaphysics, Jewish thinkers responded with an energetic intellectual renewal that elevated philosophy and opened new philosophical directions. The scope of this essay is not to analyze the complexity of Buber's intellectual production but to show his talent as a Jewish intellectual who had to respond to the necessity of his time with energy and positive creativity. In particular, it is interesting to observe how a Jewish intellectual responded with a message of cohesion and hope for the advancement of Jewish society in the unfavorable context of World War One.

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THREE ROMA GROUPS FROM IRIS – A FRAGMENTED ETHNOGRAPHY

Zsuzsa Plainer [*]

Abstract

Ethnographic description of Roma communities from Iris, a Cluj neighbourhood, proposes to deconstruct typical images on the" Gypsies" – regarded as poor, uneducated an evil. Complexity and contextualisation in representing "Gypsyness" is revealed through different classificatory systems, in- and outward categorizations made by all local Roma and non-Roma groups. Roma relations to institutions is a special focus for this study, forasmuch local school, NGO, church, are all relevant sites for producing and reproducing socio-culturally shaped practices and images. Reasons for deconstructing the essentialist subject of "the Gypsies" are to highlight differences between Roma as subject for policy-making and social surveys and Roma life experienced through narratives.
Key words: Roma, ethnic classification, underclass, Cluj, images

Surveys on Roma from Romania usually reflect the Gypsy's exclusion and limited access to resources; subsequently these accounts work out a homogeneous representation of Roma: all uneducated, out of work, poor. Without questioning the statistically significant presence of Roma ethnics among the deprived, the less trained, the unemployed, my study proposes to go beyond such social imagery. By offering an ethnographic description of a district in Cluj by focusing on its Roma population, the following questions are to be answered: does deprivation, poverty, unemployment comprise all local Roma from Iris neighbourhood?

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If not, what are the internal differences among the locals? In case of the deprived, maybe "underclass"[1], how are such traits of marginality (geographic isolation, long-term cut off from welfare systems) perceived by the people?

Questions above are strongly embedded in the larger framework of Romany studies, rejecting the general, essentially constructed "Roma" subject[2]. Such approaches advocate for internal differentiations of Roma groups. Such variety – in the eyes of historians and anthropologists – are created through relations toward social systems and institutions (public services, NGOs, public discourses), completed by a series of social variables: work place, dwelling, and their cultural significances like clothing or prestige. Idea of categorization is also present in the quantitative approaches on Roma: the above-mentioned Ladányi and Szelényi, for instance, advocate for a nuanced account to the group through discerning auto- and hetero identification. Subsequently Roma are not only those, who defyne themselves as such, but persons, too, whom are referred to as Roma by others[3]. Presentation and representation of the Roma self is

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[1] Term of underclass is used here in accordance with Ladányi János, Szelényi Iván, *Patterns of exclusion : constructing Gypsy ethnicity and the making of an underclass in transitional societies of Europe,* Boulder, CO : East European Monographs, 2006, p.8.

[2] Internal diversification of Roma is a "commonplace" for many researchers, for instance Alaina Lemon, *Between Two Fires: Gypsy Performance and Romani Memory from Pushkin to Post-Socialism,* Duke University Press, 2000; Leo Lucassen, Wim Willems, The weakness of well ordered societies. Gypsies in Europe, the Ottoman Empire and India 1400-1914. Paper for the NIAS-Conference 'Accommodating cultural and religious differences', Wassenaar, 5-7 July 2001, Manuscript; Michael Stewart, *The Time of the Gypsies (Studies in the Ethnographic Imagination,.*Westview Press, 1997; Ulf Hannertz, *Soulside. Inquiries into Ghetto Culture and Community,* Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1969.

[3] Classification of Roma in quantitative approaches provoked a larger debate in the Hungarian academic field. For outcomes see: Havas Gábor, Kemény István, Kertesi Gábor, „A relatív cigány a klasszifikációs küzdőtéren. [The relative Gypsy in the classyfing arena]" in Horváth Ágota, Landau Edit,Szalai Júlia (eds.) *Cigánynak születni* [Born to be Roma], Budapest: Aktív Társadalmi Alapítvány, Új Mandátum Könyvkiadó, 2000, p. 193–201; Kertesi Gábor, „Az empirikus cigánykutatások lehetőségeiről". [On the possibilities of empirical Roma researches]", in: Horváth Ágota, Landau Edit, Szalai Júlia (eds.), *idem,* pp. 211–238; Ladányi János, Szelényi Iván, „Van-e értelme az underclass kategória használatának? [Could usage of the underclass category be reasonable?]", *Beszélő,* 11, 2001, pp. 94-100; Ladányi János, Szelényi Iván, „Az etnikai besorolás objektivitásáról. [On the objectivity of ethnic categorization]", in Horváth Ágota, Landau Edit, Szalai Júlia (eds.), *idem,* p. 203–209; Ladányi János, Szelényi Iván, „Ki a cigány? [Who are the Roma?]", in

not only a matter of social classification but also a way to handle it: as Michael Stewart argues[4], groups outwardly labelled as „underclass" may regard themselves less poor, less marginal, and by no means a social burden for others. Therefore taking into account internal differences, social categorizations and types of self ascriptions among Roma, one may understand how Gypsy lives differ from their statistical imprint and policy-making.

The fieldwork for this study has been conducted in 2007,[5] later in 2008 and 2009 with short-time but frequent visits to the local Roma neighbourhoods anticipated by a month-time daily encounters. My body of empirical material consist of narrations and experiences (either of the Roma or of local institution-leaders) regarded – in accordance with life-history methodologies[6] – solid grounds for understanding social phenomena from an inner (respondents) viewpoint. The site chosen conveys specificity to this study: researches on Roma from Romania are usually carried out either on rural settings or on urban ghettoes, from where a holistic view on the group – so common for a traditional anthropological epistemology – is easier to take out. Such holism sees the Roma condition within a totality of local resources and socio-cultural practices: local labour market, local policies, local political power etc. My site cannot fulfil such ambitious goals, its reluctance to holistic accounts comes from within: being a city neighbourhood with no local labour market and but a handful of local institutions, its inhabitants belong to larger and diverse networks (beside the local ones). Diversity in

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Horváth Ágota, Landau Edit, Szalai Júlia (eds.), *idem*, pp. 179-191; Ladányi János, Szelényi Iván, "Még egyszer az etnikai besorolás „objektivitásáról. [Again on the „objectivity of ethnic classification]", in Horváth Ágota, Landau Edit, Szalai Júlia (eds.), *idem*, pp. 239–241.

[4] Michael Stewart, „Deprivation, the Roma and 'the underclass'", in Chris M. Hann (ed.), *Postsocialism: Ideals, Ideologies and Practices in Eurasia*, London: Rutledge, pp. 133-157.

[5] My research belongs to a larger Phare project 2004 "Institutional capacity consolidation and partnership-creation for improving Roma condition and perception". In order to protect all my informants their real names and surnames were changed.

[6] On methodology see for instance Roswritha Breckner, *The Biographical-interpretative method – Principles and Procedures,* Working Paper, University of East London, Center for Biography and Social Policy, Sociology Department, 1996.

memberships, situations and conditions makes my ethnography to remain a fragmented one.

Out of focusing on apparently soft issues like classification and perception, my research also tries to take into stock macro-changes responsible for tracking different positions to local Roma groups. As past and present of Iris district is strongly related with socialist urbanization and post-socialist changes, identification of such factors seems to be relevant.

"What was socialism ...?"

Situated in the North part of the city of Cluj-Napoca, Iris was one among the typical working-class neighbourhoods from the interwar period, populated mainly by ethnic Hungarians migrating from the neighbouring villages. In the 70-ies 80-ies the district became an industrial area as a bunch of important factories in the city set up in there: the shoe-factory and tan-yard Clujana, the pharmaceutical factory Terapia, Sanex (producing wall tile and flagstone floor), the brick-works, the chemical works Carbochim, factories of heavy industry Unirea and CUG, the china-factory. Public transport was, too, designed to serve Ceauşescu's project of urbanization and migration: Cluj's two tram-lines made during the 80-ies were designed to link industrial areas with Mănăştur district where rural migrants were given apartments by the newly set up factories' leaderships. Subsequently a new stratum of migrants (mostly Romanians and Roma) appears in the area during the industrialization; as being employed in the factories, many is allocated apartments in blocks of flats from Iris.

Closing the plants took place in mid 90-ies as follows: Clujana, Unirea and Carbochim had been taken over by an association of employees and then sold to foreign owners as store houses. Clujana after a long period of incertitude was sold, too, to foreign entrepreneurs who reduced its productive capacity; similar to Unirea and Carbochim, from 90-ies onwards the huge halls of the tan-yard were used as storage rooms. CUG, producer of a huge amount of debts was also sold to foreign companies and divided into peaces with the promise of re-structuring in 2008. Changes resulted from privatization had a strong impact on worker's life: at least a part of them became unemployed living on from social welfare and work in black labour market.

Although there are no available census data regarding the inhabitants' number and ethnic composition, everyday observation may inform us about the Romanians, Hungarians and Roma presence in the district. Many locals are living in large houses alongside the tram-line or in the streets on its juncture, others lodge in the blocks of flats built up during the communist area. The "centre" of the district lies from two tram-stops from the railway station (for about 20 minutes-walk) "hosting" all main institutions of the district: school, Orthodox Church, dispensary, community centre for children.

Roma are rather dispersed in the area: two extended families living in a street close to the entrance of the neighbourhood, some Gabor families dwell in the centre in houses, many in Byron Street's block of flats. Internal differences between local Roma conditions and life-styles are rather visible: Galilei Street[7]-inhabitants are living in crowded houses of poor condition, without running water and other utilities, meanwhile Gabors from the centre are better-off; they dwell in large, attached houses. The two-faced Byron Street is a forge of these two: one block of flat offers a typical example for the mediatised poverty in Romania, at least at the first glance, the other buildings seem to be more decent with (more decent) Roma and non-Roma inhabitants.

Web of institutions

The medical consulting rooms, the local school, the community centre and the Pentecostal church, together with the local council acting on the city-level represent all the institutions responsible for merging these communities into "the Roma from Iris". Mayor's office allocates the social allowances and daily food for the poor, not just Roma, and issues all kinds of cerificates: birth, marriage, certificates of property. In my interlocutor's (L's) view – in charge with Roma problems at the county council – Roma do not profit from possibilities offered by authorities: they are not interested in allocation for repairing their houses, or in campaigns of issuing trade cerificates enabling especially the Gabors to legalize their activities; in L.'s view these people need urgent solutions for a short time. He recalls example of the campaign targeting the problems of identity cards.

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[7] Proper names (like street-, family or Christian names) are entirely fictional here, except Byron Street, which is largely known as a "Gypsy area" all over the city.

Although Roma from Patarât were given provisional ID's, they didn't come to mayor's office to renew them in time.

Two (she) doctors are working in Iris: one responsible for adults, the other for children, the latter refusing to talk. She says, she had done all she could, but problems are difficult to solve: children are not taken for the compulsory medical examinations, although the nurse pays visits in their homes trying to convince the family. She has 1500 children registered; a quarter of them being Roma. Gabors do come neither for medical examinations, nor for vaccines, as they are usually in a move. The younger physician (who works in Iris about 11 years) has 2 595 patients evidenced, with five Gabor women, 3 pregnant, 3 Gabor men, and for about 50 other Roma from Byron, Muncii and Sobarilor among them. Roma from Byron usually have cardiac problems and bronchitis from drinking and smoking, some have diabetes. They are sometimes insistently asking for sick leave (as – according to the doctor - they need some rest after being beaten or cut in violent attacks). Gabors are not very careful with diets, however many of them suffer from diabetes, too; as many of them are Neo-Protestants, drinking and smoking are not threatening their health. Only a few Gabors have health insurances, they usually go directly to the hospital, preferring to pay there for medical interventions. In the physicians view corturarii (travellers) are the most difficult to handle, as they are dirty, unhealthy and in a permanent move. They are registered only when become pregnant, they go to gynaecologist, but not to general physicians.

Situation with certificates, mandatory for sick leave, underlines – in doctor's view – Roma inhabitants' relations to medical system. Roma from Byron – as she relates – frequently visit her to obtain certificates proving their inability for community work. After the doctor's refusal (they are perfectly well indeed) they try to negotiate with her ("insistă ţigăneşte"), pointing out they have many children and many problems. In local physician's opinion major problem is lack of registration: majority of local Roma have no health insurances. They refuse, too, to participate at the so called "evaluare", (denoting a series of medical analysis free but also compulsory for entire Romanian population), although she scheduled extra consultation time. As the physician says, it is not a simple systemic problem, although this side would be difficult to forget, but also a matter of her Roma patients' attitude. She recalls the story of an old Gabor woman,

who – after several attempts to stop her in spending a lot of money for treating diabetes – accepts after all gathering and handing in all documents necessary for free medical care. "They have possibilities, but they're lazy" – the doctor concludes.

Although the institution bears the official name of Maranata, it's known in each community from Iris as „Gypsy Church", label accepted even by its preacher man. It is a true name – he confesses – because 90% out of its 130 members (from which 70 are active) have Roma origins. Members of the church are mainly „Romanian Gypsies" – not speaking Romany but Romanian – except those two Gabor families who lately have moved to Târgu Mures and the three corturar ones living at Bulevardul Muncii, street following the tram-line, in their self-built houses. As other neo-protestant churches, local Pentecostal community is an important factor for Roma integration: not only by offering them a different way of life without drinking and having fun, but also by the preachers' strong network with other fellow-protestants that enable Roma community members to have access to certain material and symbolical goods. Bela, the preacher supported by his „Christian fellow-owners" – as he names them – helps Pentecostals to find jobs for themselves: let known by an owner about his need for unqualified employee, Bela finds somebody from the community suitable for the job. Strength lays also in the preachers connections with Roma elite (president of Roma Party's local branch, who is actually his brother-in-law): thus when a project for Roma is announced – places for Roma pupils and students in universities and schools – he launches the information within the community. Besides sharing his network, Bela also provides allowances to his Pentecostal followers: food and clothes or even materials for construction. In his view neo-protestant Roma dress neatly and clean, go for work and stop drinking. Pentecostal women, who before their conversion usually stayed at home and do no official work, after the adherence become engaged in community work for the local council enabling them some salary and access to social services. Members of the three corturar families ceased stealing after conversion and have been earning their living from collecting iron in households.

Local school, Şcoala Generală „Nicolae Iorga" (Nicolae Iorga Elementary School) had 415 children in 2007-2008, with 98 Roma among them. The institution carries on several projects for Roma children since

1999; the first one, founded by Centre for Ethno cultural Diversity had its objective to reduce school drop-out; a kindergarten-program was also designed in order to make children familiar with educational system. The joining up program "The second chance" started in 2000, and offered not just a possibility for children to attend elementary school, but also collaboration with two vocational schools in the city, enabling these children to continue their studies and have a qualification after graduating XIIth form. School statistics for "The Second Chance" show a weighted Roma intake: in classes I-IV there are 18 children in the program, 90% Roma, in V-VIII classes their rata is 55,50%.

R. started teaching in the school in 1989, becoming headmaster in 1998. Although refuses to criticize her "ancestor", she admits, condition of Roma children was different during her activity, as they were parallel classes for Romanians and Roma. In her perspective there are no problems among children, but some teachers have a "mentality" difficult to understand (she refuses to give details). During these projects, the school made seminars for teachers, too: at the beginning, they had a distant attitude towards Roma programs, but today teachers ask for classes in "The Second Chance".

Beginning her work in 2004, Olga, the school mediator is officially engaged with linking the community to the school. As she said, her activity consist of bringing allowances (food, clothes) from a community centre of the Orthodox church in Mănăştur „for those I can cope with, otherwise quarrels happen." She also helps families in re-installing running water, recovering manuals at the end of the school-year, telling the parents about the latest news from school concerning their children. She conducts data collection on pupils' condition at the headmasters' request and accompanies dancing club members for conquests.

Form-teacher of "The second chance" has been participating in this project since 2004. As a joining-up program designed for children four year older than their "class-age" (the age they abandoned school) it is based on volunteer participation: pupils continue schooling by their own (or their parent's) decision. As Ana says, children and adults join this program because they realize their needs for writing and reading. Some of them take this program as an occasion for spending spare time; others regard it as a tool for entering driving license-exam, which requires alphabetization.

Uniqueness of the program lies in individual work with children during the classes; they have school equipments donated by the state but kept in the school. In Ana's view "The second chance" although it is a good initiation, provides a program difficult to follow: textbooks are sometime hard to understand for children who, besides, have no "external" material (newspapers for instance) necessary to do its exercises. She also recalls children's amusement on the bookish Roma vocabulary from the manuals. The I-IV form she teaches in, is made of 18 children almost each being Roma. As Ana tells, there are internal conflicts within different Roma groups: some refuse to stay in the same bench with the other, because he is a baiesi (beash). The pupils have problems with expressing affectivity; stranger visitors are not welcomed by them in the class. Timing is also a difficult for them: they usually go to school whenever they want or whenever they can get up. This – in her experience based on visiting the parents – is due to the lack in perceiving time characteristic for unemployed families. It is impossible to give homework to them because some have no electricity in their houses. In order to motivate pupils Ana handles them self-made diplomas awarded for decent behaviour, keeping things clean, being punctual etc. School schedule has to follow parent's way of life: Ana tells it needed some time till she discovered pupils are absent from school on Wednesdays, because it is the day of the fair. Her solution was to time classes children really like, such as drawing, computer work etc. on fair-day, encouraging pupils to choose going to school instead of following parents to the fair. Parent are also invited from time to time to visit school and follow sons' and daughter's work. Some of them encourage their child to write neatly and pay attention in the class.

As concernes some community members' perception: they are (or at least seem to be) contented with the school, although as one girl mentioned, Romany dancing clubs attended usually by Roma, because as one pupil declares it, "Romanians keep away from Roma" ("românii se feresc de țigani"). I found no narrations on teacher's bad treatment or prejudices on Roma.

FRCCF, the community centre supported by a British NGO started its work in 2004. The main objective, offering help for children consists of many activities: they provide assistance for children in doing their homework during the afternoons, consultancy in psychological problems,

free health-care; occasionally some donations (toys), activities for school-time and vacation are other projects of the centre. Their clients are 20 families, mostly Byron Street Roma, with incomes less than 2,5 million old lei. They follow the children's school work; mediate between parents and school together with Olga, trying to stop drop-out. FRCCF also offers free job consultancy including help in finding workplaces for parents (searching for announcements, preparing them for job-interviews, letting them make phone calls from the centre), advocacy in legal and administrative problems: getting a certificate or an identity card if necessary, following divorce and separation cases. Other centre programs are offered for about 85 children, but only these 20 are members of the project sponsored by PHARE. In their experience lack of cooperation consists one of major problems: although parents are asked to let their children to school they usually refuse it. They also consider unimportant the services they got because – in FRCCF social workers' view – it is less concrete, palpable and prompt than material help.

Local people have an ambiguous attitude towards FRCCF: C., member of one poorest family from Byron says she got nothing from them, and they are all cheaters. Some days later I met P. in the neighbourhood leaving for her to help in taking C.'s retarded child to the doctor. For about a month after finishing the proper fieldwork I re-met C. at FRCCF, seeming to be perfectly happy with their help. M. from Stephenson, who at the very first time looked contented with FRCCF services, had an outburst at a moment, saying they treat her and her family, as she got nothing from the washing powder distributed at the centre.

SPEAKING FOR THEMSELVES – THE THREE COMMUNITIES

The Galilei Street-ghetto

Located among blocks of flats, the Galilei ghetto is made up of about 11 split houses, inhabited by the members of the same extended family migrated from Sárpatak, near Târgu Mureş, all declaring themselves "Hungarian Gypsies", which – as one of them remarked – means that they marry both Romanians and Hungarians. It can also be a mark of their Rom-Ungro origin, as one of their relatives was a musician; Maria, one family-

member recalls his meeting with a Hungarian folklorists during the 70-ies, who had come to record his play. The older generation (grandmother) and her daughter can speak Hungarian, grandchildren only understand, grand-grandchildren are Romanian speakers; they all are fluent on Romany used frequently in everyday conversation.

As previously mentioned, state-communist industrialization and post-communist privatization have been seriously influenced life of the locals. The couple I was talking with had worked together during the 60-ies in constructions from Bucharest to Câmpulung, Piteşti, wherever they find a better workplace. They arrived to Sárpatak in 1973 and dealt with basket work; in 1979 left for Cluj where have been staying even since. In the city they were working at Şantier (Constructions) 1, 2 and 4, engaged with building blocks of flats from Mănăştur and Mărăşti. In Maria, the wife's, memories men and women had the same work to do, except cleaning of the newly built block which went exclusively to women. On that period there was a separated brigade of Roma workers just because, as she said, they were from the same village and liked working together. She recalls state-communism period when "everything was fine because people had work and money". Communism to her was a period of social events and fun: birthday parties, weddings with music and dances. They frequently left for Sárpatak in order to participate at family reunions, but also had celebrations in Cluj: she once butchered 10 chickens for her sons' birthday. After constructions were finished, the company they worked for, closed in the early nineties. Influenced by the hay-days, the family was looking for a possibility to do better: they sold their block of flat from Iris (allocated from the factory and bought later), put their money in the Caritas in order to buy a better living place, but they lost the whole sum. To regain their apartment they decide to leave for Hungary where he worked in constructions while she was selling goods in the market. As business didn't go well they decided to return in mid 90-ies. They moved into the small, practically one-roomed house of Maria's mother, and attached new buildings to it, each for every family, without having proper building licence to them. Rest of the family, mainly siblings, were following them, all returned to Cluj after plants they worked in were closed. The first courtyard is inhabited by Maria's family living in five attached houses, with one room each. Maria's

brother with his family is living in the first "apartment", the other three is occupied by Maria's sons with their wives and children.

Living conditions of the family are rather poor: electricity and water was cut off, as no one had enough money to pay it; they usually go to the neighbouring boiler house to take water for 50 000 old lei per occasion. Men usually work in constructions, some being permanently employed. Others earn their living from working for the "gas company", which – in Maria's opinion – is not so good, they earn only 100 000 old leis for one running-meter installed tube. Her daughters and daughters-in-law are mostly unemployed (except one) they stay at home and take care of children. All her grandchildren go to kindergarten or school, although Ileana seems not to finish the seventh form. Her children have only a few classes, especially the elder son who had to take care of younger siblings in his childhood. She is very proud on her youngest son, Karcsi, who after finishing elementary education began secondary school at Technofrig but later he was transferred to one from Mănăştur district with special classes for sportsmen. He plays soccer and is about to become a professional, that's why he refuses to continue his studies. Her husband, a learned man with 11 classes also works in constructions by the day, although he had a private company in the early 90-ies given up due to his health problems. He has no social allowance, although she does not understand why. She says doctors find him healthy.

"Tradition" is contextually kept within the family: all speak Romany and teach it to children and grandchildren. Although they celebrate family reunions by dancing, in Maria's view it isn't taught to sons and daughters. As she admitted, his youngest son learned Gypsy dances on his own to the parent's great surprise. The older generation speaks Hungarian but this knowledge is not transmitted to grandchildren. They also keep the "custom" of eloping. Maria's son chooses a Romanian girl at 14 and flees away with her. When the girl's parents visit Maria's house she tries to convince them his son is a worthy one for their daughter. Other daughter-in-law recalls her meeting with Maria's son and her elope to Făgăraş in spite of an approval from both parents. Her mother follows them trying to pursue to return home. The couple does so but they refuse to break up, thus they become accepted as spouses and stayed with Maria's family.

Gabors from the centre

Entering Janos' family began with a ritual negotiation between Margit, one of his daughters, and me. After talking to a teenager girl in the centre who was pursuing a taxi driver to buy her goods, I asked her to show her house in order to talk with the relatives. In the courtyard many Roma women gathered recognizing my presence at once. Margit declares from the very beginning, they are eager to let me to conduct a registered interview with them and take pictures but they want 200 euros in return, because they are Gypsies and this is the way they make their offers. At my denial, no other local Roma negotiated with me till that moment, although I had had discussion with many of them, she started to lower the price till it lowered to the value of a pack of coffee. At my return a day after, she had said she was joking, they are not "as bad", besides her father is waiting for me to talk. I took out the coffee from my rucksack saying "I'm not as bad, too and I keep my word". Our second meeting was a negotiation as well; she needed one more pack of coffee for showing me around her family members in return.

Janos' grandparents came to Cluj during the interwar period from Seckler's land and dealt either with agricultural work, or with selling and repairing copper vessels; they also raised horses and sold goods in the market. His father had learned making spouts by his own and taught Janos, as Janos taught his sons. They never worked in factories but had trade license even during state communism. After graduating four classes he finishes his education because he is needed in the family as his father helper. During the sixties (in 1963) Janos' father as many Roma, got a house from the state at Dâmbul Rotund, close to the railway station; in his memories it was part of the state-program making the Gypsies to settle down. After a while the father was forced to move out for somebody else's sake. Being revolted by this intruding and the force he was pushed to move out, the father left for Bucharest and paid a huge sum to a judge, who helped them to get the building back. The four children, Janos and his three brothers live at Dâmbul Rotund seven years more together with their parents. In the 70-ies his father bought a new, larger house in Iris, he himself another one – they are actually staying in – in 1989.

As spouts are replaced nowadays by pre-fabricated ones they have to earn their livings from selling goods, too. Janos' family goes to the Hungarian Chinese market in order to purchase clothes and steel cauldrons and re-sell them in Hungary and Romania. Because of having some unpaid debts, they have to sell their house settled in the centre with a small garden and move to Salonta, Bihor County. As Janos says only a few Gabor families remained in the area, others left Cluj and settled down in Târgu Mureş. As Janos recalls it, before 89 many Gabor families were living in that area dispersed between the iron bridge and the way to Chinteni (the middle of the district to crossroad towards Byron). Now they are about 6 extended families, all relatives coming from the same area: Praid and its neighbouring settlements In his opinion it was the Caritas-business that made Gabors to leave the town: they all invested some money in the game and lost it, thus – in order to pay their debts – they had to sell their big houses and leave for Târgu Mureş.

Janos married at 15 his wife, a 14 years old distant cousin, chosen by his parents. He has six children among whom three are staying with them in the same courtyard; Margit with her husband and three daughters is living in Reghin with her mother-in-law. She usually goes home she does not like her in-laws, as she says. Other son is living in Turda with his family: wife and two children. In the two houses from the centre five couples are living with their children, for about 17 people. Women are selling goods in the streets or markets, men make spouts; the latter are working legally as they have trading licences.

Roma identity is very often present in our discussion, Janos usually explains to me „we, as Roma" are different than „you, the Hungarians". Gabors do not leave behind traditions and despise all Roma who does so. Janos and his daughter speak with disapproval about baiesi (beash) from Galilei and Byron, who cannot speak Romany at all. He also mentions children marriage as a basic institution for Roma. As he says, husbands and wives are chosen by the parents, but hopefully they learn to like each other in time. Separations and re-marriages are not unusual for the Gabors. As Margit's cousin tells us when we visit her house, she was separated by her first husband because „they didn't get along well", besides her parents found him rather poor for their daughter.

Many Gabors are Adventist, they visit the church in Cuza Voda Street, inside the city; Janos' family was converted in 1993. Lately a new church was built in downtown for Romanians and Roma, because they can't understand Hungarian, the language of rituals and religious ceremonies. His children left the church for some time: one of Janos' sons cannot keep restrictions imposed by church (drinking, cursing, etc.), while Margit re-marries a man of different religion without official and religious ceremony.

As concerns socialist and post-socialist influence, salient is the Gabors distance from the system(s). However, similarly to the Galilei-dwellers they become subjects to state policies (trying to keep them located), Gabors take no part in socialist industrialization; due to their occupations learned from and transmitted by family members steered them away from post-socialist "looser" scenarios. Besides they're clients of neo-protestant churches that help them in accumulation of material-social capital. Their staying apart is accompanied by superiority in their ethnic belonging.

The two-faced Byron Street

As mentioned before, in order to be close to the factories built and functioning during communism (Armatura, Terapia, Clujana, China-work, etc.), the workers were allocated apartments in the neighbourhood before 89. Factory privatization producing a mass of unemployment, influenced property-relations, too: the buildings became private property in mid 90-ies, possible to be bought and sold. In these new conditions some ex-factory workers bought their lodgings; others – with less money – were forced to move out, others rented their apartments from new owners. Newcomers also settled in Byron in mid 90-ies: they were ex-workers, in quest for smaller and cheaper apartments, becoming unable to maintain their old ones in Mănăştur and Mărăşti. They know the area, as many ex-colleagues or relatives have been settled there.

Byron Street is made up of two distinct parts: a cleaner one versus the so called „Gypsy block of flats." Due to their specific micro-history these two parts are to be discussed as separate units.

The „cleaner" side is made of two parallel ways bordered by two rows of buildings and divided by a third; all roads have no asphalt.

Coming from Bdul Muncii, where the tram runs, one walks along the first of the ways with sun-dried, one levelled blocks with roofs at one side and newly built factories owned by foreigners (sewing factory, shoe-factory) at the other. It was about to build a mill in that area but, as inhabitants told me, the project was cancelled. The second street – belonging also to Byron – is edged by the blocks mentioned and has two-levelled buildings at the other side. The latter bearing the typical features of state-communist workers' houses. This area is an awkward mixture of town and village, blocks and houses, even of east and vest: mud blocks have small gardens, some really neat, many flowers in the windows, Persian carpets and freshly washed clothes hanging on the balcony. Many people are sitting in their gardens or in first floor-galleries. The area is crowded by people, especially children, Roma and non-Roma, old Dacia and western cars all over the street. Worker's houses are known as cămin by the locals, this label being such common that it also serves to navigate taxi drivers.

In Byron-people's memory this part was inhabited by workers from the neighboring factories, who got these apartments as allowances from the state. Living there was a happy period, especially for the young, who spent lot of time together as they were working in remote places and living in the same area. After finishing work they went out together in the city for a coffee, a movie or sometimes to dance. During the weekends trips were organized either by the factory or by workers' own initiative; in order to participate on these events young people had usually change their shifts and work 16 hours without a stop. Old workers' houses were made up of large rooms for eight people divided into two by a thin wall: girls and boys were living in separated buildings and there were also some for married couples.

Roma appeared in the area during the 80-ies and occupied the mud blocks left on their own. They were horse raisers with cars and doing day-work. During the last years of communism the neighborhood was a noisy and even dangerous one as – according to non Roma memories – Gypsies were having fun all the time and provoking gadja girls.

After questions of ownership got clear during the mid 90-ies, blocks were sold. The new, mostly non-Roma owners let them to "decent" people, Roma and non-Roma, throwing out the Gypsies with no identity cards or ambiguous background (too poor, too dirty, too lousy etc.). According to

local knowledge, belayed by the local council social worker, these people were sent to Patarât, the most famous (and the poorest) Roma colony from Cluj. Present-day inhabitants are those ex-factory workers who had enough money to buy the apartments. They usually work in newly established factories from the neighborhood, are employees of the newly established companies or doing their old jobs (constructions) in the black market. Many of them have been working in Italy since one or two years, in order to get enough money for moving out. Men abroad are usually legally employed, doing their old jobs, while women have agricultural work by day during summertime keeping their jobs in Cluj.

Newcomers to Byron (Roma and non-Roma) are those ex-workers who moved from more expensive Mănăştur and Mărăşti blocks of flats. They know the area, because some friends and relatives were living there many years ago. Few Roma live among non Roma (4-5 families in each house), who seemingly accept them: "they are religious people, go to the Pentecostal church and are clean" as they say. Discussions with such Roma reinforces the image: although some of them are real "losers" of transition, as they become unemployed after the factories were closed, too young and less educated for having a pension, they still managed to buy their houses, raise their children, and sometimes find some work.

The other face of Byron area is made up by the so called "Roma block of flats" situated in the end of the street, reminding the observer of Roma ghettoes usually presented in the news, meant to show Romanian misery. People are gathering in the isolated courtyard, children playing, men talking, smoking and drinking, women feeding new-born babies. Entering here is also difficult. Our first attempt was thwarted by two men sitting in front of their apartments, smoking and drinking. After introducing ourselves they immediately stopped the conversation declaring there's nothing to see in this neighborhood. They suggested us to come back after a couple of years by the time they become able to get rid of poverty and send their children to university or at least to high school. My return in a month-time was seconded by one family from the other area, who has children at 15 Byron, and introduced them to me. Ileana, my first interlocutor and her family consider themselves apart from others, keeping no relations with the neighbors. In spite of her Roma origin Ileana blames local school for having too many Roma kids there; she works at the sewing

factory, her husband in constructions. I succeeded to get in again, thanks to Cora, who firstly had refused to talk, but after a while she invited me in their apartment. A possible answer for Byron-street-inhabitants rejection is given by a family from the other part, who told me, that mass-media reported strange things about the block, mocking on satellites fixed on galleries, which – in media-elites opinion – was in contrast with the poverty of the people.

This block of flat has the same structure with those from the other side: mud-bricks-made, one-leveled with a roof, galleries in the first floor, a kitchen and a larger room altogether 40 square meter. The 21 apartments have gas, electricity and running water, although only a few have separate measures for consumption. In Iris people's memory it was also allocated during the 70-ies from factories to workers among which 2-3 were Roma. After 89 almost each non Roma family moved out in better living places while Roma "invade" the empty apartments. In Janos' (the Gabor's) view, who presents himself as an old inhabitant of the area, with a vast knowledge about its past, these Roma were relatives of those 2-3 factory-worker Gypsy families. Problems of ownership got clarified only in 2003, till then there were rumors about selling the block; that's why inhabitants did not even try to pay their bills.   After the intervention of WASDAS Roma organization property-questions solved, new contracts were made enabling 4-5 richer families to buy their apartments, and others to rent it legally; due to these new conditions many living places could serve as public houses for poor Roma. A part of the inhabitants moved in from more expensive districts in order to save money. Appearance of Dan a couple of month before, a local entrepreneur changed the situation of many: in return to the attics he offered about 45 millions for each family, making possible to buy their apartments. He also promised to take garbage away and renovate the exterior part including gangway, but the works have not started yet. As inhabitants know attic-flats are going to be sold but no one knows who the new owner would be.

Poverty can be well represented by Corina's case. Having only two classes she is unable to get a job, although she was working as a cleaner for a time. Her husband is temporary hired in constructions, which enables him to get some material home and finish the bathroom some time. In the kitchen with a stove, a bed and a cupboard Cora cooks and washes, in the

room, furnished by another bed two families are living: Cora with her husband and three kids and her sister with a daughter. The third kid, a 3 years old boy is considered retarded by the doctors, so is the 9 year old niece. Although the two other girls, one of nine and one of seven, have no mental problems, they are sent to school for children with special needs, because, as Cora explains education there is totally free. As she tells, her husband was working for ROSAL, cleaning company, winner of tender for cleaning the whole city, but he wasn't contented, although he was legally employed. The usual narrative of leaving workplaces for to find "something better" becomes understandable through the terms of salaries: social allowance in Romania is gained by participation in so called community work: street-cleaning in 21 hours per month. Working for about three hours daily for the sum of 2,5 million old lei is quite acceptable compared to the payment at ROSAL, which is about 3 millions, and can be earned by full-time activity at the workplace. Cora has no allowance, because, as she says they are not legally married with her husband. She is upset on community center and refuses to bring her children there or turn to them for any help, because, in her memories, they have not given her the washing machine she needed. In 2008, when I returned she happily told me she's now employed as a cleaner in the neighboring supermarket, recently built, and she had already bought a big screen TV and a washing machine from a credit.

Beside this immeasurable poverty Cora lives in, the block is inhabited by other kind of people, too. As they are employed at ROSAL, companies in construction or they work illegally abroad, such people become owners of the apartments, which they succeeded to decorate in these past years. For some, both Roma and non Roma staying there is a kind of downward mobility, because they were either forced to sell apartments in Mănăştur for this cheaper one, or had no material possibility to move out after 89. Eva's example is relevant for such changes: the family lives in Mănăştur, being excepted by local non-Roma, but after grandmother's death, Eva's parents, uncles and aunts have to share it, or its price. The apartment is sold, its price – too low to cover costs of a new one – Eva's family is living out, being settled for a couple of years illegally on a territory in construction. When constructions are finished, the owner – who previously agreed with the family's temporary stay – asks them to move

out. Being familiar in the neighborhood, as some family members were already living there, Eva and his family moves to Byron, in the "Gypsy block". The father, an ex-worker in one of the plants from Cluj leaves for Italy and works there, is awaiting Eva to follow him recently. Newcomers to Byron have an other typical reason for moving in, different from factory privatization and unemployment: as many local persons recall, working conditions in factories had become worse and worse, threatening employees' health; Byron-people's moving out from the labor market, causing their dependence on sick leaves, social allowances.

Some (Roma) families proudly present themselves as descendents of the first inhabitants: although they had a track similar to their neighbours', Anamaria and her family regards themselves different, more special:

„we were among the first to come, as the flat was allocated to my father who worked as crane operator here. We did not moved in with force, nor were we given the apartment by the local council, as many do. In those times the place was arranged, flowers everywhere."

As concernes ethnic division, four mixed or non Roma families are living in the block. One of them, an old couple has been   staying   there since 1979 the apartment being given as allocation from the tan-yard Clujana, where she and her husband were working. They could not move out as they have not enough money to buy a better living place. The other, mixed family (she Roma, he Romanian) have been living there since the 90-ies. She is now looking for a work place in a sewing-factory, he has a company in constructions together with his father, Kati's story is similar to Eva's except their non-Roma background.

How a Gypsy block becomes a „Gypsy block"?
As described above, Roma from the „Gypsy block" do not share the same conditions: some really belong to „underclass", depend on social allowances, work preiodically, usually on the black market, live in inmeasurable poverty. Others live out from small salaries, being employed either in constructions, or at small companies; their conditions are not too good, especially when women are unemployed and children ill, but they're

by no means underclass people. Emigrants and migrant families may form a third category, albeit their lives are the most difficult to know: formally they seem to be clients of the welfare system (living out from allowances, applying for food at the local council) but – possibly from their earnings abroad – they have big screen TVs, PCs, houses decorated. What conveys then such a bad reputation for the block? First of all it is the scene itself: the dirt and misery, so typical for Romanian poverty, accompanied by rejection of the locals and their refusal to talk to strangers; they have attitudes typically attached to „dangerous" people, who live in „unfashionable" areas. Distance towards strangers is accompanied by distrance towards the institutions, which therefore reinforces the Byron Street-people's negative image.

Solid grounds explaining the production and reinforcement of such negative image are rather speculative, hovewer, I inclued them here as starting points for future investigations. Enhancement of the stigma in the eyes of these of neighbors, local institutions and other Cluj dwellers may come from the way ownership of the estate has changed. As mentioned before, blocks from Byron street were sold in the mid nineties, and the new owners simply throwed „troublesome" people out, especially Roma. The „Gypsy block of flat" was not sorted out for being bought, likely either because its property relations were too ambiguos, or because the local council dessignated the building as a location for stately homes. Being dropped out from privatization also ment a stagnation in improving living conditions, therefore when Dan the entrepreneur appears, „the Gypsy block" might have been the most unattracktive investment in the area, unsuprisingly he invests in other buldings from the street, „the Gyspy block" being ultimately targeted. Besides the businessman – as Kati retold me – assures non-Roma inhabitants, the attick bought from the dwellers wouldn't be reselled to Roma, as „they break everything down".

Such and imagery (first-glance hostility, poverty, dirt) influenced my data-collection, too: respondents said they have work places (or at least incomes), decorated homes, It was something different than my first impressions, which labeled locals as „Roma with problems". Unfitting into an expectedly (problematic) Roma life, I thought the respondents could'nt be relevant for my research, so I dropped them out and tried to look for others more „deprived". Briefly speaking I excepted poverty, exclusion,

underclass-ness from a site in miserable conditions settled in a bad-reputed area, and such focusing on „problematic Roma" is far to be an individual mistake.   Quest for Gypsy problems is, too, reinforced by a general framework of Roma policies[8] and the applied researches attached to them: these accounts expect – and invest huge sums on – dealing with segregation, exclusion, poverty without being interested everydays of an „ordinary" Roma way of being.

Categorizations

From an outward point of view – school mediator, form teacher, social workers – the Byron community is considered to be the most "difficult" among all three groups investigated. At the beginning of my research the school mediator of Roma origin even refused to take me there, labelling the locals as "evil" people, ("sunt răi"), admitting she reduces her contacts with them. Her perspective is enhancing community centre-workers' who regard Byron-people as difficult to work with. Form teacher of „The second chance" program also keeps herself apart from the community in Byron, recalling the event when she was threatened by a Roma man living there promising she'd be beaten unless she keeps away herself for their children; in her view Byron-people are "dirty, non-cooperative and violent" („murdari, necooperanți, violenți"). She herself considers Gabor community the most respected among all „because they are clean". For school-mediator inhabitants of Stephenson Street were on her top, labelled as „good Roma" (țigani buni"), keen to cooperate. The doctor has, too, a negative opinion about the Roma from Byron, but she keeps a distance towards the Gabors as well.

Internal classification is somehow different: Galilei neighbourhood regards itself as a bunch of Hungarian Gypsies, "magyar cigány", meaning here the possession of a good command of Hungarian and Romanian language and sometimes their inclination for exogamy with Hungarians, Romanians and even foreigners (and possibly a reference to their Romungro origin). Gabors consider themselves as the aristocracy of Roma

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[8] Relevant for such approaches are the EU and national statements on Roma conditions, and reports on educational policies. On the measurements and aims of the Roma decade see for instance [http://www.romadecade.org/decade], October 15, 2009.

for their interest of preserving Romany language and tradition (customs and a set of social institutions such as children marriage) and despise the other two for not doing this. In their opinion Byron and Galilei people are only „băieşi" or "házicigány" towards whom they keep a certain distance. Byron people, those from the block make clear distinctions among them: old inhabitants usually disregard the newcomers; many Roma labelling the neighbourhood as a Gypsy area: "I don't like the school – says a mother of Roma origin – too many Gypsy children attend it." As Eva specifies, the area is not good, as it is full of Gypsies. Roman-non Roma version of such categorization appears in Kati's narratives: she presents her experiences as an administrator of the block. Although she was accepted by a Roma neighbor, considered a kind of informal leader in the flat (cannot be visited as a tragic event happened in his family), and therefore integrated in the community, she is blamed for calculating water consumption incorrectly during her work as with the authorized jointed representative. When she had quit, the representative (the above-mentioned Roma person) asked her to keep the position as he is unable to count and thus needs her help. She also complains neighbors at the local council as they are lousy and always quarreling. Although she admits they are not all the same, only 4-5 families behave like that, Kati depicts them as cheaters, who accept social allowance and food from local council but they sell it for cigarettes: "They even curse their children and argue for 5000 lei, can you imagine, for 5000!" She finds unjust that poor people got allowances; meanwhile many ex-colleagues of hers have to pay big money compared to their salaries almost equal to the allowance for their rented apartments. Other locals have good opinion on Roma, even an older couple living in "the Gypsy block of flat": they say, families with problem (namely too lousy children) are a few, others decent ones.

Parallel to these internal differences, Roma are regarded as mainly problematic ones by all the institutions (phrases like "they look for immediate solutions", "non-cooperative", "difficult to pursue" are common knowledge of both school, consulting cabinets and the NGO). As concerns the Roma they seemingly don't understand how such institutions work: Maria for instance does not know why her husband not gets social allowance after that many years of legal employment. Similarly, Cora from the "Gypsy block" stays surprised and perplexed when the announcement

for compulsory medical examinations is received; she cannot even read it. Chaotic, too, is Gabriela's case; she was told to give special medical care in Spain for their asthmatic child. She is in quest for material resources in order to collect money necessary for the trip. Similar stories may rise suspicion of the less tolerated (why should asthma be healed in Spain?), and may reinforce stereotypes against Roma, who are considered living out on others. In my insight Roma relations with institutions are extremely ambiguous: such two-fold interactions may usually empower negative categorization of both sides. One example is offered by Maria and her family from Galilei, who – in spite of their poverty take a cab when visiting the downtown doctor. Such a scene (people with no electricity, running water, regarded poor, spent their money on taxi – although a tram station leading to the cabinet is relatively close) may have different interpretations. It can reinforce non-Roma stereotypes on Roma, who – from this point of view – are incapable to save money and refuse to leave poverty behind; for Roma such a deed gives security, they do so, because, as they say "it is proper". Need for security and recognition may lie beneath such deeds: Roma from Galilei want to be regarded and treated as everyone else at the doctor's, with credibility and respect.[9]

Hostility towards institutions has a longer history in the life of "Gypsy block" inhabitants, too: beside their above-mentioned encounter with mass-media representatives, who were mocking on their satellites mounted in spite of poverty, local Roma faced a different unpleasant story, too. Once the head of the neighbouring orphanage took pictures from their building and used them in his found raising as illustration of poor conditions; albeit he is said to get money, local people had never seen a dime of it. In addition, as some locals told me, they were usually badly treated in official places, rejected without any reason. As Gabi once told me, she met up with a non-Roma journalist, who – registering her conversations

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[9] Stories on opposite understandings of Roma behavior are subject of many empirical researches. Alaina Lemon claims that Roma from Russia form a noisy gang on the streets – evoking disdain of the non-Roma – for fear of being insulted by the latter (Lemon, idem). For similar stories see Judith Okely, *The Traveller Gypsies*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1983. In interpretation of the above-mentioned situated Judith Okely's personal remarks were of my help. Getting familiar with my example, she asserted these people need to show "off" in order to get recognition and trust.

with the bureaucrats – proved the injustice of the letter and helped Gabi to obtain her pension.

Self esteem is strongly related to the problem of categorizations and presentations of the self. Roma from Iris – regardless where they live, how much they earn, how are treated by non-Roma – usually introduce positive elements on their narratives. Besides relating their difficulties, Maria's family does not hide their esteem towards Karcsi, a future soccer player, whom they are proud of. Gabors regard themselves as holders of the highest rank in a virtual ladder of Roma classification: they are true Roma, keepers of language and tradition. Roma from the block of flat are contented with their washing machines, wall-ties, decorated houses, or - sometimes – with their positions regarded as undesirable from on outward point of view. The most relevant example was offered by Andra, dweller of "the Gypsy block of flat", who – after closing the factory she was employed – worked for a shorter time at a sanitary company:

> "Sanitary people are usually Gypsies, it is a job disregarded by Romanians. Although, normally they should have been proud of us, because we made Romania enter the Union. No state can join, unless the streets are clean, we cleaned them, and made Romania to become a member."

Conclusions

Aim of my paper was to write an ethongraphy of Roma from Iris district. Gathering all relevant information the difference between outward and inward categorization becomes salient. Local insitutions usually treat the Roma as clients with problems, who sometimes do not want to fit in the site of a modern landscape. Roma, even the poorest ones, regard themselves with a certain dignity: they are proud of their children, of family members, who succeed to get a job; poverty and marginality is only one side in their presentations of the selves. Importance of such internal perceptions becomes more interesting if one has in mind that statistics usually merge all these differences into one, general identity of Roma, albeit from on inward point of view their lives, conditions, experiences may look rather differently.

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BOOK REVIEW

Laurent Godmer, *Des élus régionaux à l'image des électeurs ? L'impératif représentatif en Allemagne, en Espagne et en France*, Paris, L'Harmattan, coll. Logiques Politiques, 2009, 238 p.

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Au fil des temps, les décentralisations, comme phénomènes dans le cadre de l'organisation politique territoriale, ont contribué à stabiliser des classes politiques régionales. Intéressé des élites politiques et de la théorie politique, Laurent Godmer, maître de conférences en science politique à l'Université Paris-Est, essaye, dans son livre, *Des élus régionaux à l'image des électeurs ? L'impératif représentatif en Allemagne, en Espagne et en France*, de nous surprendre dès le début par le désir exprimé de découvrir le capital d'éligibilité requis pour être élu régional. Est Laurent Godmer capable d'accomplir son objectif ? Pour en savoir la réponse, il est nécessaire de mentionner que cette œuvre est en partie issue de la seconde partie de sa thèse de doctorat en science politique, *Les mutations du capital représentatif. La sélection des représentants régionaux* et a été actualisée entre 2004 et 2007 suite à des recherches complémentaires menées en Allemagne, en Espagne et en France.

Le domaine de « la régionalisation politique » a constitué, en effet, un contexte intéressant d'étude des transformations de la représentation politique ouest-européenne et partant des structures sous-jacentes de la démocratie représentative en général. Le livre présent s'encadre dans cette catégorie, en traitant des transformations de la sélection des élus régionaux

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en Allemagne, en Espagne et en France. Le but final, exprimé par l'auteur même, est de concevoir « une étude précise des évolutions en profondeur du jeu politique dans les espaces démocratique ». L'auteur se propose d'aborder la question sous l'angle d'une analyse des ressources requises pout être élu régional. Ses recherches s'appuient sur les élus des assemblées régionales métropolitaines ayant siégé durant la dernière décennie du XXe siècle et dans la première décennie du XXIe siècle. La tentative se concrétise par le biais d'enquêtes et d'études des biographies des membres des assemblées régionales allemandes, espagnoles et françaises.

Le livre est structuré en deux parties : dans la première, l'auteur analyse le maintien des lois d'airain classiques qui régissent cette sélection du personnel politique régional et, dans la seconde, on peut observer que tout se passe comme si le logiciel de la sélection des représentants était « en surface » fortement modifié par la mise en œuvre d'un impératif représentatif qui promet une représentation plus représentative des représentés, notamment en termes de genre, de générations et de présence des minorités ethnoculturelles.

Le premier chapitre traite la sélection des élus régionaux et une disqualification partielle des représentants issus des majorités sociales « invisibles », précisément les milieux ouvrier et employé. Cela signifie la disparition complète d'une particularité en termes de sélection des élus qui avaient conservé une signification statistique dans le premier quart de siècle de la représentation régionale et partant la prégnance d'un impératif de représentativité reposant sur une homogénéisation sociale très forte. Mais, en revanche, les élites traditionnelles conservèrent une place plus importante, au prix d'une modernisation de la sélection dans les assemblées régionales allemandes, espagnoles et françaises.

Ensuite, l'auteur démontre que les « anciennes élites » demeurent quant à elles présentes mais déclinantes. Laurent Godmer parle d'une perte de valeur des ressources « notabiliaires » compensée uniquement par la modernisation liée aux entreprises (qui permet l'émergence de nouveaux notables qui cumulent des mandats locaux notamment) et la traduction de l'omniprésence des détenteurs de ressources intellectuelles, qu'ils soient des agents issus originellement des secteurs privé ou public.

On apprend du troisième chapitre que les ressources « culturelles » sont naturalisées comme faisant partie du « background » quasi-obligé de

l'élu (ou plutôt de la grande majorité des élus). L'homogénéisation, la dénotabilisation, la féminisation qui interviennent dans la sélection des élus renforcent cette situation, même si, dans les cadres des assemblées parlementaire, la construction de l'autorité est souvent liée à la concentration du capital culturel entre les mains d'un nombre restreint d'élus. L'auteur trouve que le logiciel de la sélection des élus régionaux est devenu de plus en plus fondé sur un paradigme « épistémocratique ». Ce paradigme s'explique par la domination du savoir, détenu par ceux qui acquièrent un « droit à jouer » particulier, les ressources culturelles, axées sur « la magie du titre », étant centrales dans le portefeuille de ressources des élus régionaux. Concrètement, la domination des détenteurs de capital culturel se traduit par une présence très forte des fonctionnaires et surtout des enseignants dans les assemblées régionales allemandes, espagnoles et françaises. Cette domination masque de nombreuses ambiguïtés et des situations diverses. De cette analyse on constate que tout se passe comme si les enseignants disposaient non seulement des ressources plus valorisées, mais surtout d'une capacité, voire d'un droit particulier à les convertir en capital d'éligibilité.

Ainsi se présentant le panorama de la sélection des élus régionaux, Laurent Godmer montre la domination de certaines ressources socioprofessionnelles dans le jeu. Ce trait, qui constitue un des éléments majeurs du tableau général, peut nous aider à faire des différentes logiques qui s'imposent à ce même jeu : l'importance des détenteurs de capital culturel, mais aussi la résistance des élites traditionnelles, ainsi que les processus d'élimination socioculturelle qu'implique cette concurrence entre ces deux grands groupes dans le cadre compétitif de la professionnalisation de la politique. La domination de capital culturel constitue la condition de possibilité de la mise en place d'un impératif représentatif qui implique que ces élus socialement homogénéisés soient représentés dans leur hétérogénéité de : genre, âge ou leur différence ethnoculturelle.

Dans la seconde partie du livre, l'auteur constate que tout se passe comme si les diverses minorités visibles (femmes, jeunes, minorités ethnoculturelle) étaient devenues celles qui doivent être représentées, tandis que les majorités visibles (milieux populaire notamment) devaient être quasiment disqualifiées dans la sélection des élus régionaux. Le chiasme est le socle de l' « impératif représentatif » selon lequel

pratiquement la présence de ces minorités visibles valorisées est plus importante que celle de l'articulation d'intérêts des groupes sociaux. Il assoit sa légitimité sur une logique de représentation-miroir combinée ou plutôt assise sur le fait que la représentation est d'abord la représentation des détenteurs de capital culturel. Cette évolution est notamment fondée sur l'élimination des contre-mécanismes dans les partis sociaux-démocrates qui permettaient une représentation différente. Contre la « mal-représentation » se met en place un impératif de représenter l'électorat tel qu'il apparaît.

La mutation qui s'est produite au cœur de la démocratie représentative, très visible dans les assemblées régionales, conduit précisément les femmes, les jeunes et les minorités ethnoculturelles à occuper une place majeure dans la sélection des membres de ces dernières. Ces grandes transformations contribuent à l'édification d'un nouveau type de démocratie représentative.

Dans le IVe chapitre, on découvre que, si pour longtemps les statistiques ont montré de la « domination masculine » dans les assemblées régionales, aujourd'hui on constate qu'une rupture fondamentale a eu lieu : la « féminité » est devenue une ressource positive dans le processus de sélection des élus. Ça fait un axe principal d'une transformation physionomique du capital d'éligibilité ou plus précisément du rééquilibrage principal de la « structure » de ce capital en direction d'un impératif fondé sur le capital culturel. Cette transformation radicale a certes été établie sur 3 décennies, de la décennie 1980 à la décennie 2000.Elle a été possible, dans une certaine mesure, par le développement d'une représentation sélective sur le plan du capital culturel. Les processus de féminisation dans le jeu politique régional ont toutefois souvent eu lieu par le biais des dynamiques coercitives et des longues et âpres luttes à l'intérieur des partis politiques.

Selon le niveau de représentation, le « rattrapage » des assemblées françaises fut en effet pour le moins progressif avec l'application de la loi sur parité, autrement dit : une « paritarisation » des assemblées régionales. La féminisation peut renforcer « l'élitisation » de la professionnalisation de la politique. On ne peut pas affirmer maintenant que « les femmes sont les groupes les plus sous-représentés des élites politique dans le monde ». Le rattrapage fut effectif durant les années 1990 et 2000 et il n'a pas éliminé à

intérieur des assemblées le « plafond de verre » ou plutôt les effets de « pyramidalisation ». La transformation majeure du fonctionnement de la démocratie représentative s'est notamment opéré par le biais des mécanismes de « paritarisation », de façon qu'on a de nos jours une démocratie paritaire statistiquement observable dans les assemblées régionales allemandes, espagnoles et françaises.

Dans le Ve chapitre, l'auteur émet l'hypothèse d'une mutation fondamentale du capital d'éligibilité, celle d'un rajeunissement important des élus. Ça semble que la logique de la carrière politique régionale, comme toute carrière professionnelle, repose en partie sur une progression en fonction de l'avancée en âge. L'accès aux positions électives semble de moins en moins corrélé à l'accumulation des ressources sur une longue période. Autant que la gérontocratie traditionnelle s'estompe, autant une certaine diversification générationnelle de la sélection a eu lieu ; elle semble être bénéfique pour des jeunes militants en tant qu'elle participe, comme la mise à la retraite de plus en plus précoce des élus, à une professionnalisation du travail de représentation politique.

L'impératif représentatif s'articule donc autour d'une forte professionnalisation et, donc, d'une logique mimétique par rapport à la population active, qui se doit d'être « représentée ». Cela semble passer une « mise à la retraite » de plus en plus précoce des élus régionaux. La thèse « gérontocratique » développée notamment par Alfred Sauvy, avec la population n'est pas vérifiée ou plutôt n'est plus vérifiée.

À la fin de la seconde partie du livre, l'auteur constate que la première décennie du XXIe siècle a engendré un logiciel installé dès la décennie 1990 (et fondé notamment sur une « endogénéisation » des contraintes médiatiques), qui produisait lentement mais implacablement ses effets. Cette évolution majeure est la diversification « ethnoculturelle » des profils des élus régionaux qui, combinée à la féminisation et au rajeunissement des élus régionaux, participe de la mise en place d'un impératif représentatif, notamment dans le cas précis des assemblées régionales allemandes, mais également françaises.

En lisant ce livre, on constate que, dans le cadre des élections régionales, le personnel politique régional s'est en partie distancé du recrutement notabiliaire traditionnel. En outre, la professionnalisation de la politique a surtout favorisé des détenteurs de capital culturel, en particulier

des enseignants. C'est de cette manière que s'est formé une élite politique régionale au profil aussi dominant que celui du personnel parlementaire national.

Par l'analyse prosopografique du personnel politique régional, l'auteur nous relève des nouveautés ou, pour citer l'auteur, « une révolution ». Tout se passe comme si s'imposait un impératif représentatif intégré par les partis politique, en vertu duquel les élus doivent être de plus en plus représentatifs des représentants, engendrant une représentation paritaire, rajeunie et diversifiée. Ainsi, par le rapprochement sur le plan physionomique entre les élus, se crée une mutation de la démocratie représentative : celle-ci devient une sorte d'hybride qui combine élitisme et représentation-miroir, même si les élus demeurent séparés des catégories moyennes et populaires par leurs trajectoires.

Comme modalité de recherche, de compiler les biographies de l'ensemble des personnes appartenant à ce groupe en listant le plus possible de caractéristiques pertinentes, mais aussi comme thématique, le livre de Laurent Godmer est une présence notable dans le domaine de la recherche en science politique. Le texte analyse, d'une manière précise, l'apparition et le développement d'une « révolution » dans le cadre de la sélection des élus régionaux. L'analyse prosopografique entrepris par l'auteur et les études de cas font de cet ouvrage un document de référence pour les études suivant sur la sélection des élus régionaux. L'auteur a le mérite d'avoir exprimé ses arguments dans une manière logique qui l'a aidé dans la démonstration graduelle de son hypothèse. Laurent Godmer a donc accompli sa mission avec succès.

BOOK REVIEW

Ruxandra Ivan, *La politique étrangère roumaine (1990-2006),* **Éditions de l'Université de Bruxelles, Bruxelles, 2009**

Crisanta Moldovan[*]

Le livre, *La politique étrangère roumaine (1990-2006)* de Ruxandra Ivan met à la disposition de la communauté académique et d'un public exigeant une riche image sur la politique étrangère roumaine après 1989.

Ce type d'approche de la politique étrangère de la Roumanie vient combler un vide dans la littérature de spécialité. Comme l'auteur le mentionne, avant la chute du communisme on ne saurait parler de l'existence d'une pareille étude. À peine après 1990, commence à prendre contours une pareille direction dans le cadre des politiques publiques, grâce aux préoccupations des chercheurs penchés sur le système politique international dans la perspective roumaine, préoccupations qui couvrent une grande variété d'études à commencer par les relations bilatérales de la Roumanie et jusqu'aux problèmes d'envergure sur le rôle de notre pays dans le paysage géopolitique européen et mondial.

L'auteur, Ruxandra Ivan, est chercheur scientifique à l'Institut Diplomatique Roumain et enseignant à l'Université de Bucarest (Faculté de Sciences Politiques), spécialisée en relations internationales et politique étrangère roumaine après 1989.

Dès l'introduction, elle nous présente une série de syntagmes, tels « le retour à l'Occident », « l'intégration euro-atlantique », « les décisions stratégiques de politique étrangère » et le « comportement de « bandwagoning » manifesté par la Roumanie », syntagmes qui seront

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détaillés et explicités dans le cadre de l'ouvrage. Par la même occasion, l'auteur fait une courte présentation de son livre.

L'étude s'ouvre sur la place privilégiée de la politique étrangère, vraie « voie royale » parmi les autres politiques publiques. Cette politique est influencée tant par le changement de rapport de forces entre les super-puissances que par les intérêts des grandes puissances. Donc, après la chute du communisme en 1989 et l'affaiblissement de la Russie en 1991, la Roumanie à la recherche permanente de sa sécurité s'est vue obligée de changer d'orientations politiques et de trouver d'autres partenaires stratégiques.

L'orientation de la Roumanie vers l'Occident s'est faite plutôt en raison de la fascination que les élites intellectuelles roumaines ont éprouvée pour l'Europe Occidentale, que par peur de la Russie. Tandis que dans la période communiste de la Roumanie, les intellectuels roumains ont été emprisonnés et exterminés, les simples paysans de Suisse s'intéressaient à la culture, à la politique en lisant les journaux. Cela veut dire que la culture, l'ordre, le progrès, la justice incarnés par les pays de l'Ouest ce à quoi s'ajoutent l'origine latine et la religion chrétienne du peuple roumain ont déterminé cette orientation de la part de la Roumanie. Le désir des Roumains pour l'Occident (y compris pour l'Amérique) a été si puissant que, à l'occasion de la signature du traité pour l'établissement en Roumanie des bases militaires américaines, le ministre des Affaires étrangères, Mihai Răzvan Ungureanu, a déclaré que : « Finalement, les Américains arrivent ! »[1] Pour les plus jeunes, il faut peut-être mentionner que pendent un demi-siècle, les Roumains ont toujours attendu l'arrivée des Américains pour les libérer du communisme. On dit que le laboureur roumain, quand il sortait aux champs – la première chose qu'il faisait, c'était de mettre la main en paravent devant les yeux pour voir s'il ne remarque pas les Américains venir de derrière la colline.

Après l'établissement des deux grands objectifs majeurs c'est-à-dire l'adhésion de la Roumanie à l'Otan à l'UE, la politique étrangère roumaine n'a rien de spectaculaire, parce que toute la classe politique a été d'accord là-dessus. S'il y a eu un consensus sur les buts, il y a eu en revanche des

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[1] p. 67.

divergences sur les moyens. Même si ce sont deux choses différentes, il y a la conviction que ces deux processus politiques sont équivalents (voir la déclaration de Petre Roman, Teodor Meleşcanu et Mircea Geoană, pp. 80-81).

Bien que les décisions en matière de politique étrangère sont prises par le triangle institutionnel – Président, Premier ministre et ministre des Affaires étrangères, dans la pratique politique roumaine il est souvent arrivé que des opinions opposées surgissent entre ces trois facteurs. Un exemple récent vise le retrait des troupes roumaines de l'Irak, quand en 2006, le Premier ministre soutenait le retrait immédiat vu les coûts matériels et humains considérables tandis que le Président optait pour le maintien des troupes jusqu'au moment où l'Irak allait le considérer nécessaire.

Le livre présente aussi l'influence que la société civile organisée a / plutôt n'a pas sur ce problème. D'ailleurs seuls 9 % des personnes interrogées croient que la politique étrangère et une diplomatie efficace sont importantes pour le processus d'adhésion. C'est trop peu, écrit l'auteur, pour les décideurs roumains.

Le chemin que la Roumanie a parcouru depuis 1990 et jusqu'en 2006 est présenté dans le cinquième chapitre, le plus étendu de l'ouvrage par étapes pour une meilleure perception de ce processus. Soulignions le fait que ce chemin vers la démocratie n'a pas été simple. La Roumanie a dû faire face à de nombreuses pressions de l'extérieur (l'adoption de la convention cadre et la recommandation 1201 sur les minorités) – connue sous le nom de *critères d'adhésion* – et à de nombreuses compromis (le traité politique en 2003 avec la Fédération russe où le traité avec l'Ukraine). Par rapport aux facteurs internes – avec peu de poids sur la prise des décisions, les facteurs externes traités dans le dernier chapitre influencent davantage la politique étrangère. Le livre traite de manière détaillée les contraintes géopolitiques et institutionnelles que l'UE et L'Otan ont imposées, élégamment, aux pays candidats.

Une étude de cas – *La République de Moldavie et l'impossible fraternité* – s'avère être très pertinente, illustrant la politique étrangère roumaine à l'égard de la Moldavie, comme une de ses priorités.

Les conclusions sont logiquement tirées de la présentation de toute la problématique de la politique étrangère roumaine. Un épilogue pose des

questions de droit international (l'indépendance du Kosovo, de l'Ossétie du Sud et de l'Abkhazie), questions qui ouvrent le chemin vers de nouvelles approches de cette problématique dans une étude future que nous les lecteurs attendons avec impatience.

Le lecteur est à même d'y trouver des réponses possibles questions qu'il se pose : sur l'emploi de la formule « d'euro-atlantisme », pour désigner l'intégration dans l'UE et dans l'Otan, concept qui « a reçu une consécration durable par son inclusion dans la loi fondamentale » p. 83. D'autre part en dépit du désir des Roumains de s'intégrer aux deux organismes ci-dessus, d'autres options auraient pu exister : lesquelles ?

Nous sommes en présence d'une recherche de professionnel par la documentation remarquable qui n'ignore ni les archives, ni les documents des institutions de l'État, ni les entretiens, nombreux, avec les décideurs pour leur prises de position sur les événements de politique étrangère. On pourrait regretter l'absence de version française pour les citations en anglais (p. 43, 52, 55, 57, etc.).

L'étude bénéficie d'un français à la fois sobre et élégant, l'auteur se gardant de tout subjectivisme. C'est une lecture particulièrement riche et utile pour quiconque s'intéresse à ce problème.

Il faut rendre hommage l'approche d'un domaine peu étudié de manière synthétique et/ou théorique – les remarques objectivantes étant issues de leur confrontation à la réalité. Même si l'évolution ultérieure des événements vont infirmer les constats de l'auteur, même si nous, lecteurs, jugeons autrement en fonction de notre subjectivité ces événements, la valeur du livre n'en est pas diminuée.

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The Editorial Staff is looking forward to receiving your papers for times per year: before the **1st of February, before the 1st of May, before the 1st of July and before the 1st of October**. *Studia Europaea* is thankful for the interest you show in this *Call for Papers* and hopes for a future collaboration.