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Claudiu COMAN    MARX ILLUSION - Sociological essays about mindsets

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**Österreichisch-Rumänischer Akademischer Verein  
VIENA**

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## ARGUMENT FOR “MARX ILLUSSION”

With “Marx Illusion”, Claudiu Coman recalls sociology - this science of analytic and methodological strictness - to its uncorrupted philosophical dignity. Not only the theorization - that is the seduction of quality essay, Claudiu Coman demonstrating here a single ability - but the philosophy itself: a science, if we want, but as a way of cognitive enclosure of the beings of the world, firstly of those who make the world possible, but of the transcendent world that transcends them making possible - as a 20<sup>th</sup> century scientist would say - the man’s connection to an existence that is not his own, but that identifies itself with the difference. Being in the world - M. Heidegger writes (in 1928, after the apparition of the work “The Being and Time”) - it is specific only to the man - and here within the Territory of Existence I have the impression that philosophy and sociology responded together. However, working together with philosophy, the sociology extends enveloping the “world less” beings, too. These things would already been in the world as “direct” things (“handy”) being caught by the man by referring to them in the world itself.

This way, even if in “Marx Illusion” the author talks about the Union defiance or about the Leader’s reification, he is not sparing us of the uncomfortable contact with the punctual investigations and of the cruel concreteness of the graphics and schemes (in chapters like **Transition and Uncertainty**, **The “Ciucas” Beer**), but afterwards he will narrate us in the chapter **The Burden of Knowledge**. In the **Illusion of Love**

he always sets us in the privileged horizon: on the way of thinking we are privileged in knowledge, in disclosure, a revealing reference - in other words one of knowledge and also of science (referring to this book we can notice this in the sociologic research). In both registers, you surround to the things that lead you, but in the same time, you surround to the existence itself, inclining it to reveal itself, manifest and show itself.

The essay "**The burden of Knowledge. The Illusion of Love**" was printed, if I remember correctly, for the first time in its first variant in the **ASTRA** magazine in 1996. Claudiu Coman confesses that he was tempted by Nae Ionescu's commentary in **The Metaphysical Course**: "Love is a capitalization of yourself in the middle of the others". Here we can also find the sociological aspect of the knowledge in its relation with the people, the metaphysical connotation being very evident. About the love-knowledge relation, Claudiu Coman raises some questions: "I knew the other one, he/she was mine, I knew all his/her secrets, his/her soul, but he/she is gone. He/she disappeared and I cannot understand how he/she can tell me that he/she does not feel anything anymore. Is it that it was not love? What was it then? It was our static way of thinking of perceiving the world without realizing that everything is evolution that nothing lasts till eternity, which in fact the one that we enveloped in our love was a total stranger because we did not love him/her, but his/her love for us". In Claudiu Coman's opinion, in love is not important what you were proposed to do, but the existence, what "it is". In the moment of falling from the "cosmos" into the reality, he continues, the only viable alternative seems to look for

the equilibrium in the world, in the other one, in this way finding our stable shapes that we have to relate to, the “referential”. Regarding the fact of “being in the world” and the “liberty”, to exist and the existence belong only to the man. For example, the rock does not exist under these determinations, but it presents itself only in an inertial and direct way. It does not have referential - affirms the above-mentioned Freiburg thinker. Here it seems that we are talking about Martin Buber’s “you”. The soul gives us this characteristic; it is not in the self, but between “me” and “you”. It would be like a human manifestation, the man’s answer to the thing, which within his self is a “you” that defines him and authorizes him through its answer. Our self, both in love and in knowledge find its “you” that will entitle him in its relation with the world to which he approaches, voluntarily and deliberately appropriating it.

Evidently, Claudiu Coman’s work regards mainly disaffection of the Marxism and its practical consequences: wickedness, crime with which it infected and terrified the world longer as half of the last century. About its constitution and about its dissolution - its spreading under the wind of history and under the smoke body of the tired ghost - Claudiu Coman proposed himself to respond in **Marx Illusion**. He will warn us also upon the remaining danger that stands in a deceitful waiting of its renaissance (because communism was not judged and convicted yet as it was the national-socialism) on the slippery field of transition from post communism to that of the less controllable of consuming, of social and socio-economical challenges. In Claudiu Coman’s work, the anti-communist (anti-totalitarianism) pathos of its intercession is not an



aversion towards the ideological dimension. If we understood that ideology is (as in the glossary at the end of the book) “a system of ideas expressed through communication”, “the real conscience of a collectivity, the way in which it becomes aware of itself, of its conditions of existence and the directions in which it has to develop its actions”- than turning to the ideological ordering conscience is desirable: regaining the philosophical connivance of ideology that became a meaningless concept after it was discredited by the Marxism-Leninism.

Paul Ricoeur observed that the way in which we are situated in history in order to indicate and establish the passing between expectances (that are oriented towards the future) tradition and the present active initiatives functions like an imaginary social: a consciousness of the individual imagination and of the collective imagination too. An imaginary that sometimes operates under the form of utopia and other times under the form of ideology. As we saw, in the case of communism there is a pathology of the imaginary functions (promptly discovered and attentively researched by “Marx Illusion”): the ideology (in the well known acceptance that was accredited by Lenin) is mined by dissimulation (for example, when we hide our group, class or ethnic provenance and hide our position in it), ideology becoming in a conscious way a social lie (a historical lie) or an illusion meant to protect a social status and its privileges and injustices. (We can find the most eloquent example of an ill ideology at Marx and Engels in the German Ideology of 1846; here the concept lost its rank. For example in E.B. Condillac’s opinion, the real life as “praxis” in the conception of the founders of communism will be falsely reflected - as they admitted - with it is head down in the mental world which nowadays is a

distortional one. Claudiu Coman believes that ideology can be subjected to therapy, that it can be cured. There is need of ideology (as a “system of ideas expressed by communication”, as a way in which a collectivity “becomes conscious about itself ”) especially in the screwed and disordered epochs, which are decentred from the value axis and are contaminated by dangerous and killing programs. Ideology can contribute - as the author says - to the “opening of a road”. In Claudiu Coman’s vision this means (see chapter **The illusion of the Strict Determinism and of Historicity**) suppressing “the famous thesis according to which the economy determines the social”. And it also concretely means (as the author shows in chapter **Beginning or End**, which is a sum of pollster conclusions) the suppression of the “structural crisis”, that determines the absence of “short term straightening perspectives”: “The change - says Claudiu Coman - in some cases can be started or continued at institutional level. There it was proved in twelve years time that the change of mentality, that was said to be necessary, could not realize itself because, even if it was subjected to a noble purpose, this was vague and so without content.

Thus, we should leave to the poets the monopoly of explaining the social events in the terms of mentality, of Romanian people’s accommodation incapacity, of historical destiny, of little culture taken out of history, of laziness, of managing etc. When we are going to understand that these are only consequences, which are generated and are obviously generators of reality, when the elite will understand that the personal good can be maximized till eternity for the good of the collectivity and the legal and institutional system will be modified, then we will finally be able to talk about “opening a road”.

Therefore, Claudiu Coman's editorial debut "**Marx Illusion**" is a route from metaphysics to the sociological technique and science having interferences of political theory. In reality, we find ourselves in front of a single intercession - a harmonious synthesis in which practicing the science is meant to reveal (when a theoretical construction is both rigorous and attractive) some things about the man and the world's strength or precariousness.

A. I. Brumaru

Brasov, 2002

## ARGUMENT POUR « LES ILLUSIONS DE MARX »

Avec "Les Illusions de Marx", Claudiu Coman rappelle sociologie - cette science de la rigueur analytique et méthodologique - pour sa dignité philosophique non corrompue. Non seulement la théorisation - c'est la séduction de l'essai de qualité, Claudiu Coman démontrant ici une capacité unique - mais la philosophie elle-même : si l'on veut, mais en guise de clôture cognitive des êtres du monde, tout d'abord de ceux qui font le monde possible, mais du monde transcendant qui transcende leur permettant - comme dirais un scientifique du 20ème siècle - connexion de l'homme à une existence qui n'est pas son propre, mais qui s'identifie avec la différence. Etant dans le monde - M. Heidegger écrit (en 1928 après l'apparition de l'ouvrage « L'être et Temps ») - il est spécifique à l'homme - et ici, dans le territoire de l'Existence, j'ai l'impression que la philosophie et la sociologie ont répondu ensemble. Cependant, en collaboration avec la philosophie, la sociologie s'étend enveloppant aussi les êtres du "monde inférieur". Ces choses auraient déjà été dans le monde comme des choses « directes » ("pratiques") étant capturées par l'homme, en se référant à eux dans le monde lui-même.

De cette façon, même si dans "Marx Illusion», l'auteur parle du défi de l'Union ou sur la réification du leader, il ne nous ménage pas du contact à l'aise avec les enquêtes ponctuelles et de la concrétude cruel des graphiques et schémas (en chapitres comme **Transition et incertitude, La bière de "Ciucas"**), mais par la suite il va nous raconter dans le chapitre **Le fardeau de la connaissance**. Dans **L'illusion de**

**L'amour** il nous met toujours à l'horizon privilégié : sur la façon de penser, nous sommes privilégiés dans la connaissance, de divulgation, une référence révélatrice– en d'autres termes l'un des connaissances et aussi de la science (se référant à cet ouvrage on peut remarquer cela dans la recherche sociologique). Dans les deux registres, vous vous entourez aux choses qui vous mènent, mais dans le même temps, vous vous entourez l'existence elle-même, inclinant à révéler lui-même, se manifester et se montrer.

L'essai **Le fardeau de la connaissance. L'illusion de l'amour** a été imprimée, si je me souviens bien, pour la première fois dans sa première variante dans le magazine de l'ASTRA en 1996. Il avoue qu'il a été tenté par le commentaire de Nae Ionescu dans **Le cours de métaphysique**: « L'amour est une capitalisation de vous-même au milieu des autres ». Ici, on trouve aussi l'aspect sociologique de la connaissance dans sa relation avec les gens, la connotation métaphysique étant très évidente. À propos de la relation d'amour-connaissance, Claudiu Coman soulève quelques questions : "je savais que l'autre, il/elle était le mien/la mienne, je savais tous ses secrets, l'accès à son âme, mais il/elle est allé(e). Il/elle a disparu et je ne comprends pas comment il/elle peut me dire qu'il/elle ne sent plus rien. Est qu'il n'était pas l'amour ? Qu'est-ce alors ? C'était notre façon statique de la pensée de percevoir le monde sans se rendre compte que tout est évolution que rien ne dure jusqu'à l'éternité, qui est en fait celui qui nous enveloppait dans notre amour était un total inconnu, parce que nous n'aimons pas lui/elle, mais son amour pour nous. De l'avis de Claudiu Coman, en amour n'est pas important ce que vous ont été

proposé de faire, mais l'existence, ce qui «il est». Au moment de la chute du «cosmos» dans la réalité, poursuit-il, la seule alternative viable semble chercher l'équilibre dans le monde, dans l'autre, de cette façon trouver nos formes stables que nous avons à raconter, le «référentiel». En ce qui concerne le fait de «être au monde» et la «liberté», exister et l'existence n'appartiennent qu'à l'homme. Par exemple, la roche n'existe pas en vertu de ces décisions, mais elle se présente seulement dans une manière inertielle et directe. Il n'a pas de référentielle - affirme le penseur de Freiburg mentionné ci-dessus. Ici, il semble que nous parlons de "vous" de Martin Buber. L'âme nous donne cette caractéristique; ce n'est pas en soi, mais entre « moi » et « vous ». Ce serait comme une manifestation humaine, la réponse de l'homme à la chose, qui, au sein de son moi, c'est un « vous » qui le définit et l'autorise à travers sa réponse. Notre soi-même, à la fois dans l'amour et dans la connaissance trouve son «vous» qui lui donnera droit à sa relation avec le monde auquel il se rapproche, volontairement et délibérément l'approprier.

Évidemment, le travail de Claudiu Coman concerne principalement le mécontentement du marxisme et de ses conséquences pratiques : méchanceté, crime dont il a infecté et terrifié le monde plus long que la moitié du siècle dernier.

À propos de sa constitution et sur sa dissolution – sa diffusion sous le vent de l'histoire et dans le corps de la fumée du fantôme (d'esprit) fatigué – Claudiu Coman a proposé lui-même de répondre dans « Les illusions de Marx ». Il nous avertit également sur le danger restant qui

se trouve dans une attente trompeuse de sa renaissance (parce que le communisme n'a pas été encore jugé et condamné comme fut le national-socialisme), sur le terrain glissant de la transition de l'après communisme à celle le moins contrôlables de consommer, de défis sociaux et socio-économiques. Dans l'oeuvre de Claudiu Coman, le pathos anticommuniste (anti-totalitarianism) de son intercession n'est pas une aversion envers la dimension idéologique. Si nous avons compris que l'idéologie est (comme dans le glossaire à la fin du livre) "un système d'idées exprimées par la communication", "la vraie conscience d'une collectivité, le façon dont il prend conscience de lui-même, de ses conditions d'existence et les directions dans lesquelles il doit développer ses actions » – de se tourner vers la conscience idéologique commande est souhaitable: retrouver la connivence philosophique de l'idéologie qui est devenue un concept vide de sens après qu'il a été discrédité par le marxisme-léninisme.

Paul Ricoeur a observé que la manière dont nous nous situons dans l'histoire afin d'indiquer et d'établir le passage entre les attentes (qui sont orientées vers l'avenir), tradition et les initiatives du présent actif fonctionne comme un social imaginaire : une prise de conscience de l'imagination individuelle et de l'imagination collective également. Un imaginaire qui fonctionne parfois sous la forme d'utopie et d'autres fois sous la forme d'idéologie. Comme nous l'avons vu, dans le cas du communisme il y a une pathologie des fonctions imaginaires (rapidement découvert et attentivement étudié par "Les Illusions de Marx):l'idéologie (dans l'acception bien connue qui a été accréditée par Lénine) est exploitée par dissimulation (par exemple, lorsque nous

cachons notre groupe, la classe ou la provenance ethnique et masquons notre position dans celui-ci), l'idéologie devient d'une manière consciente un mensonge social (un mensonge historique) ou une illusion destinée à protéger un statut social et ses privilèges et injustices. Nous pouvons trouver l'exemple le plus éloquent d'une idéologie malade à Marx et Engels dans l'idéologie allemande, de 1846 ; ici le concept a perdu son rang. Par exemple dans l'opinion de E.B. Condillac, la vraie vie comme « praxis » dans la conception des fondateurs du communisme faussement figurera - comme ils ont admis - avec elle est la tête en bas dans le monde mental, qui est, de nos jours, une distorsion. Claudiu Coman pense que l'idéologie peut être soumise à la thérapie, qu'elle peut être guérie. Il y a besoin d'idéologie (comme un « système d'idées exprimées par la communication », comme un moyen dans lequel une collectivité « devient consciente de lui-même ») surtout dans les époques viciées et désordonnées, qui sont décentrées de l'axe de la valeur et sont contaminées par des programmes dangereuses et mises à mort. L'idéologie peut contribuer – comme dit l'auteur – à « l'ouverture d'une route ». Dans la vision de Claudiu Coman cela signifie (voilà le chapitre **Les illusions d'un strict déterminisme et de l'historicisme**) supprimer « la thèse célèbre selon laquelle l'économie détermine la vie sociale ». Et cela signifie aussi concrètement (comme le montre l'auteur dans le chapitre **Fin ou début**, qui est une somme des conclusions du sondage) la suppression de la « crise structurelle », qui détermine l'absence de « perspectives de redressement à court terme »: « Le changement - dit Claudiu Coman - dans certains cas peut être engagé ou continué au niveau institutionnel.



Là, il a été prouvé en douze ans que le changement de mentalité, qui était censée être nécessaire, ne pourrait pas se réaliser lui-même parce que, même s'il a été soumis à un noble but, c'était vague et donc sans contenu. Ainsi, nous devrions laisser aux poètes le monopole d'expliquer les événements sociaux en termes de mentalité, d'incapacité de logement (hébergement) du peuple roumain, de destin historique, de la culture peu sortie de l'histoire, de la paresse, de la gestion, etc. Quand nous allons comprendre que ce ne sont que des conséquences, qui sont générés et sont évidemment générateurs de la réalité, quand l'élite va comprendre que le bien personnel peut être maximisée jusqu'à l'éternité pour le bien de la collectivité et le système juridique et institutionnel sera modifié, alors nous pourrons enfin parler de «l'ouverture d'une route".

Premier éditorial de Claudiu Coman « **Les Illusions de Marx** » est donc une voie de la métaphysique à la technique sociologique et la science, ayant des interférences de théorie politique. En réalité, nous nous trouvons en face d'une intercession unique - une synthèse harmonieuse où pratiquer la science vise à révéler (lorsqu'une construction théorique est à la fois rigoureuse et attrayante) certaines choses sur l'homme et de la force ou de la précarité du monde.

## **ARGUMENT FOR “MARX ILLUSION”**

The knowing process is an informational process by its nature. However, knowledge is broken by our limits as well as by the way in which we access the information that is frequently processed in order not to contradict the prevailing ideology in a society or other.

In any knowing process we deal with the “knowing subject” as well as with the “known object” that “reveals” the subject. Under this method, for each interpretation of reality, we confer inherent tributary meaning to the lived experiences and to the way in which these were perceived, swept and passed.

I think that I was in the 9<sup>th</sup> grade (this was happening in the ‘80s), when the physics teacher told us among other things that one day there was an “individual” - that he called Jesus Christ - and whose destiny has fundamentally changed and influenced the faith of humanity. His birth date has demarcated an old era, the one without Christ, from the new era, after Christ. I had already learnt in the history class that 1<sup>st</sup> year of our era was considered through convention the 31<sup>st</sup> year of Octavian Augustus’ reign (we had not really understood why was that year of a king’s reign so important so much that to open a new era in the history of humanity and as long as nobody could answer this question we had accepted it as a fact). There is any doubt that Christianity fundamentally influenced the history of humanity. Its influence was not absolute and redemptive for us because in contact with the defective human nature it lost its initial valences and finally remained a guiding utopia especially on moral level.

My neighbour was telling me, with fondness I could say, in 1975 (within the period of prosperity of socialism in Romania) how good will be when we will reach communism and there will be no money anymore and we will go to the grocery store and will take all that we need; I looked surprised at him because even having my child thinking I noticed an inadvertence: how would they establish how entitled are my needs in comparison with those of the others and in comparison with my real needs. After this first contact with a reality, which I could not understand, there were also others to come, me being one of the guinea pigs on which was experimented the real social communism. As the time has passed I understood which were the illusions that were sold to us under the veil of indubitable truths and I firstly tried to discover the premise that made all these things possible and the most important false consequences that influenced us almost without realizing but unfortunately the more efficiently our way of thinking and mentality.

Even if we admit that Marxism is good in its essence and that the errors appeared due to the application method, recovering the ideology that perverted our souls seems to me meaningless as long as Christianity, that would have liked to save the same souls, could not manage to do it totally. I cannot see any reason that could justify the observance of a fail experience. Furthermore, we must not forget that repeating the same actions - even if the background is different and we expect other results - can be a symptom of madness.

I considered that there is need of a perspective change for a better understanding of the consequences inducted over our inner structure, subtle and indistinguishable perverting that was processed in an unconscious way and that is reflected in attitudes, opinions and

behaviours levels<sup>1</sup>. This is the reason for which I was very interested of the way in which the Romanian society is looked at and analyzed by the “foreign”<sup>2</sup> sociologists. The initial perspective presents the Romanian society as atomized; a society in which the order and discipline principles are not functioning well and the feeling of membership to a community is weak<sup>3</sup>. In micro level analysis, where there are being observed habitudes, attitudes and the people’s behaviour in every day life leads to an absolutely different perspective. Not only that Romanian society is far from being atomized, but also it seems to be well organized because its members know the unwritten laws and comply with them. It is true that the society is not structured at upper layer, but inwardly there are rigid institutional frameworks that are contextually ritualized, and at a deeper and more latent level, it has well defined relationship networks. There are two explanations: one that refers to the survival and transmission of some institutional models of the communist state being firstly connected to centralization and to pseudo cultural organization and secondly they are connected to the latent

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<sup>1</sup> Technically, that is exactly what the social research is doing: identifies the measurable behaviours, obviously measures them and tries to determine the causes that generated them (the cause analysis).

<sup>2</sup> I assumed and I will present Bernard Paquetteau’s point of view in a research report Appeal 1995, CNSR, UPR36, respectively “The Report of the Occidental Europe about the European Countries”, in original “Le rapport a l’ Europe Occidentale des Pays de l’ Autre Europe”. For those who are interested to see extensively how a sociologist that lived in Romania for two years perceives us, I can recommend the following work: Bernard Paquetteau, “Le societe contre elle-meme - Choses vues en Roumanie”, in “Commentaire” no. 59/1992.

<sup>3</sup> The atomization and especially the atomizing of communities would have been programmed by the ex communist power, that has led to a radically unstructured and anomic society and for opposing to disintegration there is a solution that stands in reconstruction and remobilization. The middle class and the civil society would have an important role that should have introduced a number of repartition and control mechanisms in the social level. The problem is that in our country does not really exist a middle class, and the civil society cannot be invented by someone, but it has to develop by its own; there is a long time process. If there are persons that speak in the name of the civil society and they consider themselves or are being considered as its exponents that does not necessarily mean that the civil society is configured.

contents that were developed as accommodation strategies in the communist period. These strategies were based on mystification, duplicity and festivity. If we also agree with the thesis of a very particular<sup>4</sup> national specific, it means that these models have developed on a favourable field. The harder will be surpassing the crisis. It is one thing to fix something that occurred accidentally and it is another thing to find resources for surpassing a structural crisis.

Therefore, we do not have to modify anything at macro structural level, but at the micro social level, where the relationships and aggregations are constituted. It is useless to try implementing success models if you do not consider the particularities of the surroundings and of the total dysfunctional social condition. A healthy individual that is introduced into an ill social organism will end by becoming sick under the pressure of the group.

That is why I proposed myself to survey some aspects that belong to the quotidian, some situations that we are always faced with in order to see if by identifying the less evident, hidden and latent causes of the evil, which dwell inside us, we can at least take the first step: its exorcising.

2002

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<sup>4</sup> For this, see the C. Radulescu Motru's opinions expressed in "The Romanian People's Psychology" and those of D. Draghicescu exposed in the work called "From the Psychology of the Romanian People." Referring only to the last one I have to remark the two categories of socio - psychological manifestations that the author considers characteristic to Romanians: the avoidance behaviour and the instinct of conservation, both generating adaptive strategies. It seems that is not anything new, invented after the establishment of communism, but it is assuming some habits that were handy and being practiced along history. If we agree with this continuity of the model, we could reflect upon an unprecedented sociological hypothesis: the present difficulties can be largely explained if we would consider that the period between the two World Wars "was an accident" in comparison with our normal way of being.

## **THE ILLUSION OF THE STRICT DETERMINISM AND OF HISTORICITY**

Marxism is responsible for the devastating influence of the historicist way of thinking reflected in the discourse sphere by the famous thesis according to which the economical determines the social in the context of society evolution from the first organizational forms towards capitalism and later towards communism.

Marx was a prophet of the historical course, whose prophecies have not come true, but which marked the destiny and the sense of humanity in an unbelievable manner.

The illusion that was generated was based on Marx's belief that he had the mission to set socialism on scientific basis points, think that was utopian in his time.

In his opinion socialism had to be based on a scientific method of analyzing the causes and effects that would have permitted it, in concordance with the causality laws, emitting scientific predictions. A philosophy or a science must not only interpret the world that we live in, but it must have practical results in order to obtain valid interferences with immediate applicability for changing it (the world).

The plausible argument that science can predict the future (overrating the role of science was a common thing in that epoch) only when this is predetermined and prefigured in the past made Marx to accede to the wrong conviction that a rigorous scientific method must be based on a strict and rigid determinism. In his works, the German thinker talks about the “inexorable laws” of nature and about the laws of historical development, forgetting that such a law cannot be tested or discovered, just because we are trained in observing a unique, unrepeatable process that does not have any witness but itself. Otherwise, and also as a consequence of the previous considerations, any determinism, even if expressed as principle of nature uniformity or as universal causative law, cannot be considered as a necessary presupposition of the scientific method.

We can accept the idea that there are sciences that are able to make predictions, but doubtlessly determinism cannot be constituted as a necessary precondition of these and there is no way to affirm that the scientific method favours the adoption of the strict determinism because the science can be rigorous anyway, without leaving from this presupposition.

In fact, not only the abstract theory of determinism led Marx to a wrong way, but also its practical influence through the consequences generated in the action and knowledge plan. The abstract idea of “causes” that “determine” the social evolutions can be harmless as long as it does not lead to historicity. Anyway, we do not have any reason to believe that among all the sciences, the social science will be the one to make the dream of mankind to come true, dream that has its roots in enlightenment and is about discovering how will our future be, relying only on the fact that in the end any effect is necessarily determined by a cause.

Impugning this point of view of seeing reality is not self-sufficient, but having to offer an alternative that would permit stopping this mechanical and univocal cause-effect way of thinking. This alternative is offered by developing science, physics and especially biology and has as a subsidiary effect the rendering of circumstances for Marx's historicity that so appears as a "normal" result of the scientific developments of his time.

The Belgian Ilya Prigogine<sup>5</sup>, laureate for the Nobel Prize, is the one that offered an amazing synthesis about the relations that are established between order and chaos, chance and necessity and about the way these connect to the concept of causality. He was intrigued by the apparent contradiction between the physicians' belief in entropy - according to which the universe contracts and all the organized forms have to dwindle - and the biologists' finding that life itself leads to a more and more complex organization.

Beginning from this contradiction, generated by the fact that entropy influences in one direction and evolution in another direction, Prigogine showed that in each complex system there is a fluctuation that does not result in destroying the system, but contrary, it creates a new structure which is superior, with a higher level of complexity called "dissipative structure". This is the basis according to which the evolution, the becoming can be seen as a process that leads to more and more complex and varied biological and social organisms, as a direct consequence of the appearance of some higher level dissipative

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<sup>5</sup> Apud Ionita Olteanu - "Dialogues about the Future", Political Printing House, 1982



structures. In this context it is considered to be a necessary but not sufficient the condition of becoming, the chance that dominates change. However, Prigogine combines the chance with necessity in a Hegelian way, considering that until a certain moment, when the structure does a leap to another level of complexity, we cannot see the form that this transformation will take. After it starts to define and systematize itself, determinism becomes dominant again.

This alternative to the strict determinism in describing reality - causal explanation, being braided with the undetermined and probabilistic one - also has its base in the knowing process that is by its nature an informational process. The growth of knowledge is directly determined by the growth of information<sup>6</sup>. We can consider knowledge as being a specific human process of exuding indeterminism<sup>7</sup>. Any knowledge

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<sup>6</sup> Carnap was the one to introduce in the contemporary theoretical thinking the notion of the semantic information correlated with the logical probability. He has the virtue of having insisted on the semantic dimension, which is defining for the information because this dimension greatly widens the possibility of engagement of the term in the plans of the theory of knowledge. The consequence of this theoretical opening could be dignified in the development of the formal sciences that have offered an environment for new practical developments.

<sup>7</sup> This statement logically results from the mathematical theory of the information. The formula around which its data gravitates is Shannon's formula:  $H = -\sum p \log p$ , where  $H$  is the informational entropy and  $p$  is the probability of the involved statistic fields. For estimating the statistic dimension within the informational field, the formula claims to total the probability of the involved statistic fields multiplied with the logarithm of that probability. All the micro structural elements of communication and semiotics are considered to be undetermined areas. The term "undetermined" functions in this case not as opposed to the ontological determination, but as an indeterminism over the relative frequency of the apparition of the events. These apparition frequencies are the expression of unity between necessity and occurrence and represent the objective probability. Compared with the objective probability, there appears the subjective probability, the conditions of indeterminism under the empire of hazard, the change and the evolution. The measure of indeterminism is measure of information and Shannon's formula - the "information quantity" formula - measures the quantity of the information needed for eliminating the indeterminism (we must remember that the evolution process for diminishing indeterminism with an increase of knowledge occurs following probabilistic laws).

product brings with itself a certain reduction of the states of incertitude. Therefore, we can say that the relation between information and indeterminism shows us the way through which knowledge can generate utterances that would bring a progress in the sense of certitude.

The strict determinism cannot describe reality in a satisfactory manner, because its theoretical developments refers to an initial set of parameters that are no longer valid in the newly generated reality whose coordinates are given by very different parameters.

This is in fact **the big illusion** that the Marx ideology has cultivated and promoted: society can be described and its evolution can forecast only by knowing and understanding of the past.

Nevertheless, society as a complex system developing according to very complex equations that are not linear and that are written and re-written in time depending on how the information (in fact the informational entropy) is related to the physical entropy<sup>8</sup>.

In any closed system, the total quantity of energy is constant - the first law of thermodynamics - but the quantity of entropy never diminishes - the second law of thermodynamics - which shows that the second principle formulates in fact the law of the irreversible demotion of energy. Clausius called entropy the thing that permits the measuring of the dissolution degree, the disorganization in an independent system, in

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<sup>8</sup> By entropy, we define a measure of disorderliness, uncertainty and the dissipation of energy, which is serviceable within a system; in thermodynamics - where this term was used for the first time - it defines a measure of energy quantity within a system, energy not being available for a helpful mechanical thing.

which there is the tendency that the superior forms of energy to fatally develop towards inferior forms of energy (the atomic or electric energy turns into thermo energy).<sup>9</sup>

The real problem that appears in our existence - which Marx omitted - is that as human beings to overcome this condition, the instinct of death being in fact the psychosomatic aspect of entropy, which can be opposed by information seen as the anti-entropy factor. Because the information increases predictability, it can be considered that the informational entropy measures the lack of knowledge within a system, so that information is essentially negative entropy<sup>10</sup>. The acquisition of information can be done only spending from this negative entropy, which means the increase of the total physical entropy of the real system. Carnot's entropy increase principle is partially affected by the anti-entropy function of the information. It is obvious that thinking creates negative entropy, because it spreads information and as a consequence, the knowing process is the process of feeding the man with potential negative entropy.

The most important finding that imposes following this argumentation is that the man opposes himself/herself to the growing physical entropy on certain time and space fragments. This battle takes place in an undetermined reality governed by the principle of uncertainty and by the

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<sup>9</sup> Denis de Rougemont - "The Power of the Devil", Anastasia Printing House, 1994

<sup>10</sup> If each partial message within a source can be anticipated, then by definition, there is no information transmitted. Through the message the uncertainty is not removed because its content is predictable, previously known. In this case, the measure of the informational entropy is zero. When any message from a source is as probable as any other one, we can observe that the prediction is minimal, and as a consequence, through the message we can transmit maximum of information. In this case, the informational entropy is maximal.

probabilistic laws, fact that leads to the impossibility of foreseeing the result or the ways that could lead to it, no matter how pertinent are the conditions that preceded one or the other of the analyzed event series.

The effective knowledge is not enough because the truth, the increase of knowledge does not change at all the natural tendency towards dissolution of the system that is under physical entropy. The potential cognitive negative entropy turns into negative entropy, which is efficient through the elaboration of the thinking products<sup>11</sup>. The unity and opposition between the informational negative and the energetic entropy can be transposed, in the case of human beings, as a relationship between the cognitive and the practical negative entropy, whose dialectics in the Hegelian conception dominates the existence. This displays under the incidence of the death instinct and the only way to fight it is through knowledge that has to be confined only by its own physical limits but not by false assignments and wrong paradigms.

Reality does not change, it is the same and it remains the same in the logic of its development. The thing that changes is the grill through which we read and perceive reality. Marx has offered an incomplete lecture grill. The partial truths (which appeared with or without intention), which were interjected in its analysis permitted - during the time, which was previous to the left totalitarian power - convenient justifications of their actions, exactly due to fragments that were proved to be valid if taken out of the context.

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<sup>11</sup> Mircea Flonta - "Cognitio", All Printing House, 1993

The illusion of historicity could function and influence the evolution of the human society because it was sustained by another illusion: the one of a certain type of discourse validity (apparent validity), which was included in an old-fashioned paradigm<sup>12</sup>.

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<sup>12</sup> I have heard for so many times expressions like: "Marx has made a mistake in that point, but what he has said somewhere else is true, it can be used" (for example the theory of alienation). It can happen that some of his assertions may seem to be true and to bring further knowledge, but this thing is absolutely accidental because the premises are accidental and the universe of his discourse is different and having nothing to do with the present domain in which the social evolutions develop.

## **THE ILLUSION OF FINDING THE SENSE OF HISTORY**

Who am I? It is probably the most annoying and unpleasant question that we can address to ourselves. We avoid doing it because we are afraid of the implications that could be generated by finding a personal answer or by the adhesion to a way of thinking. Once found, the answer introduces us in the "world". Moreover, the "World" cannot be avoided but it has to be swept.

There is not any standard intercession that would lead to finding out the answer; this will be revealed in a certain moment. Revelation appears when we manage to answer our wondering through "disclosure". The veil being removed, the thing that was hidden to us becomes handy. At the origin, the revealing of the existence was done in the present, which was deprived of the self-conscience. The falling into sin has pushed us on the way that - through knowledge and experience - will lead us to clarifications that cannot be consciously revealed. This way, spiritually we manage to win a new experience, a symbol through which we can try to apprehend the world (not to understand it).

The world is the same. We have different representations about it. The same thing happens to the universal history, within which we act and that we transit for fulfilling our existence, because around that there is the unlimited space of existence.

We cannot avoid history, but we have to sweep it. The ontological imperfection of the world, inducted by the corroboration of temporality with finitude, our imperfection and imperfectability as human beings, obliges us to purchase the conscience of eternity through this unique way. Our limits exclude certain possibilities, but do not exclude the change as an effect of the permanent imperfection of history. The imperfection of history does not exclude the reason of history<sup>13</sup>. That is why we perceive history as empirically accessible in its reason, either if this really belongs to history or if we, people, confer it in the idea of unity. We can say that humanity has a unique history and a single aim. None of them is the consequence of and can neither become the object of a knowing process, because our inclusion was always partial.

Either way, for understanding ourselves we must perceive history as a whole, leaving from the memory about which we have knowledge and till the one that we are living. It represents the stable point to which we stick for not perishing in nothingness and for participating to the human existence. In its most secure objectivity, the historical knowledge is not an indifferent enumeration of events but a moment of our lives. The way in which we think history is not indifferent, because the image that we form to ourselves becomes an agent of our will, the aim being the understanding of ourselves.

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<sup>13</sup> Stefan Afloarei - "Occurrence and Destiny", European Institute Printing House, Iasi, 1993

Comparing the long epochs of prehistory with the short duration of history (of humanity) we cannot exclude the hypothesis of history as a passing phenomenon<sup>14</sup>. Through itself, history cannot arrive to an end, but it can close (as temporality) only as a result of an inner fiasco (devastating nuclear war) or of a cosmic catastrophe. Eternal progress or catastrophe, repetition or renewal, they are the alternatives of our becoming that cannot be tested in a satisfactory way because we do not have another world to compare it with. For having a future, the exigency towards the present is necessary. There have always been very important discoveries that have totally changed our vision. This happened because people suddenly realized that there is a certain connection that afterwards became an obvious thing for everybody.

The long and hard way of history starts with utopia. According to Frye<sup>15</sup>, utopia and the social contract are the two social concepts that can be expressed only in terms of the myth. Utopia is an imaginative vision about the world, even when it deals with origins. The theory of social contract explains the origins of society and regulates the social order. It is possible that both conceptions were born as the analysis of the present, being partially ambiguous products of the imaginary. In this case, the social contract could be a particular case of utopia. However, the social contract has succeeded to integrate into sociology, making fiction appear as truth, whereas utopia has remained a speculative myth projected to be or to contain a vision of the social ideas, not a theory that would bound the social events. The attempt of the practical achievement of utopia was miscarried, leading to nihilism.

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<sup>14</sup> Idem

<sup>15</sup> Apud Sorin Antohi - "Utopica", Scientific Printing House, 1991



The utopian negation contains a double paradox: on one hand utopia denies in the name of the future, on the other hand its practical use is always out of time in battle with the past. The utopists of Renaissance were not thinking about making communist systems just in the moment of the beginning of capitalism. The utopians were projecting a universal monarchy just when anarchism was affirming. They were attaching themselves to an ascetic ideal when brilliant and luxurious cultures were blooming. It is clear that utopia does not invent, does not launch novelties, it only makes ideas become available to the crowd, but out of time. The end of the utopia subtly implies the end of history even if Marcuse<sup>16</sup> affirms that “the wishes and ideals of the society and of the individuals have changed, having not only a utopian, but a historical character, too”.

From the point of view of the paradigms through which we research history, even if the forms of discourse will be subjected to change, one thing remains clear: you have to let yourself go into the chaos, yet keeping your faith into order and reason. The different perceiving of the time by different communities indicates particular durations of history. There are communities that have a positive reference with time. These think that they can dominate it and they can get into a more extensive order of the things. Being convinced of all these things, they would try to make the ideas become facts in a permanent reality. Another type of communities is represented by the Iberians. It was said about them that they live a totally different emotion, the one of the continuous fall or of missing a great history. “For them history has become a subsequent fact

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<sup>16</sup> Apud Anton Dumitriu - “Retrospections”, Technical Printing House, 1991

of memory or one that will have to be endured”<sup>17</sup>. The Slavic people occupy a special place. For these, the faith in their uncommon mission works with the power of an instinct. There is something demonic in the power of this faith, which claims that the “Third Rome”, “The Last Empire” is not at all utopias. The feeling of destiny tends to forestall the one of eschatological occurrence.

To us, Romanians, the obsession is not the fatal progress or the regression of time, the connection to this seeming to be a negative one of long and undecided waiting. The low population worry about history itself, because seeing themselves without a backing in the future or in the past they always return to the present which they are otherwise disaffected by, burying any possible sense of time. Blaga was talking about a “boycott of history”, Cioran about a “situation outside history” which determines either the conception that history was unfairly with us, or the fact that we cannot be something else. Nichifor Crainic was saying that: “the destiny of a nation depends directly on its spiritual life, on the constant connection of a land to its sky.”

In the occidental culture appears the positive discourse about the progression of history. The general history was born to try to substitute the universal time with the local one. The world becomes a game of faith, while the unforeseeable and the occurrence of destiny were growing.

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<sup>17</sup> Sorin Antohi - “Civitas Imaginalis”, Litera Printing House, 1994

The general character of history, its universality was closely associated with the German philosopher Hegel. The historical character of evolution, sustained by Marx who was a prophet of history progression, described the communist society as the last type of society. Marx thought that his mission was to settle communism, which at first was utopia, on scientific basis. The plausible argument that science can predict the future only if this is predetermined and prefigured in the past, made Marx wrongly believe that a rigorous scientific method must rely on a strict determinism. Popper<sup>18</sup> believes that:

“When they see that their theories are attacked, the Marxists adopt the idea that Marxism is not a doctrine, but especially a method. In their opinion, even if a part of Marx’s doctrines or of some of his followers would be abandoned, his method would however be unimpeachable. I personally think that it is rightfully to insist on the fact that Marxism is firstly a method. However, it is wrong to believe that being a method is invulnerable. It must be effectively said is that anybody wishes to judge Marxism has to examine it and criticize it as a method, in other words to measure it according to the methodological standards. He has to wonder either Marxism is a productive method or a precarious one, in other words if it is capable to promote the objectives of science. The standards through which we have to judge the Marxist method are practical. Describing Marxism as the most pure historicity I demonstrated that I consider the Marxist method as a very precarious method indeed.”

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<sup>18</sup> Apud Mircea Flonta - “Images of Science”, Romanian Academy Printing House, 1994

I tried to show which are the limits of historicity and the ones of the strict determinism as a method in the first part of my essay, where I have also presented the general background that makes the functioning of its paradigm unacceptable due to its limits. The social reality outline - which was discovered there - and its functioning rules are belonging to another paradigm, which describes them much better.

As opposed to Marx, who saw the end of history because of the technological development, Francis Fukuyama<sup>19</sup> considered that this is determined by the victory of liberal democracy. This is considered the final point of the ideological evolution of humanity, the final form of human government constituting hence the end of history. In the traditional point of view, the history continues as deployment and evolution of events. The end of history is not marked by the ceasing of events, but the history understood as a single coherent and evolutionary process. It is considered that the ideal of the liberal democracy, that has no internal contradictions, cannot be perfected any longer. There cannot be any more progress of the fundamental principles and institutions because all the important matters have been solved. There are two basic reasons that influence this paradigm: the battle for recognition - which is considered the engine of history - and the logic of the modern science.

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<sup>19</sup> Francis Fukuyama - "The End of History and the Last Man", Paidea Printing House, 1995

Passing from one paradigm to another implies a change in the conception about the world. If through this we understand a change of our fundamental beliefs and attitudes, it means that by changing our theoretical supports we would modify some other profound beliefs. Opting for the quantum mechanics, we will think that the classical determinism is not sustained anymore. Then, can the political and economical liberty and equality produce a stable society in which the man would be satisfied? - or because we have changed the parameters have we also changed reality and everything starts to function according to other rules?

However, there is a paradigm that opposes both the determinist and ideological one and that calls into question that the liberal democracy - the universal and homogenous state - has solved for good the problem of recognition, by replacing the master-slave relationship with the universal recognition of equality. This point of view ascertains the fact that we are assisting the end of the Nation State era - which was brought by the French Revolution- and we enter the so-called "imperialist" era. Guehenno<sup>20</sup> starts from the premise that the disappearance of the territorial logic and the changing of nature power together with the appearance of the network world mean the "death of the political" and death of democracy as it was understood till now. Death of democracy implies the impossibility of the end of history, if it would be true that history means a battle of ideas. The relative value of Earth has become lower, while the universe has become more and more abstract and unphysical and denoting the passing to a new epoch. The

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<sup>20</sup> Jean-Marie Guehenno - "The End of Democracy", Cristal Printing House, 1995

period that is now ending it has began in 1917. The ideological parenthesis of the Bolshevik revolution has ended and we are not assisting at the end of history but at the renewal of the nations, at a rehabilitation of history, which suffered damages in the obsessive XX century. The Cold War has produced the polarization of the East-West while imposing a new order that has generated a new problem. Because we have never known anything else, the words democracy, politics and liberty define our mental horizon but, semantically impoverishing, the initial meaning was partially lost. The laws have become receipts, the right a coin and the Nation-States simple juridical spaces. The main problem that this paradigm needs to find an answer for is: can there be democracy without a nation?

Regardless our way of seeing the world, so regardless the paradigm, we can affirm that all the events are submissive to the universal laws and the principle of causality is the precondition for every science. Reducing the phenomenon that we observe to the general laws and foreseeing the things that will happen in the given circumstances, means explanation and foresight - two modalities through which our knowledge power measures its own validity and limits. Yet not everything is predictable and a causal discovery can unveil that part of reality that was not loomed.

The rigorous determinism is at one extreme and the hazard - the blindly unleashed unforeseeable - is at the other extreme. We can say that arriving to the conclusion that some events are fortuitous it is as important for knowledge as finding out that they are perfectly determined. Even if the events are or are not determined,

systematically finding out this thing means making science and making science means gaining knowledge. In Pierce's<sup>21</sup> opinion: "we do not have a collection of universes that we can examine in order to see in what proportion is a given theory valid". We cannot verify in an absolute way any of the existent paradigms. On the other hand, these can be used in combinations.

As we are living at the end of the XX century it is impossible not to interpret the sense of history and the human destiny in correlation with the most precise physical analogies.

Thus, the end of the history can come from the inside as well, by an almost indistinguishable growth of a negative, slow and depressing concept called utopia. Both spiritual and physical final action, on a long run, leads with all the strictness to the demolition of the human person and of his/her liberties. Therefore, for being able to completely answer the question: "Who am I?" we have to fight against this authentic "sense of history", this movement of time that the science wanted to prove as being irreversible.

We can fight entropy with love - "passion that degrades into warmth" - that operates against the slow degradation of the human energies being done in the favour of an indubitable material progress, of the pleasure of democracy and of the totalitarian regimes that result from here (for example, in the totalitarian regimes, love has to fight against propaganda and terror).

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<sup>21</sup> Apud Jean Jacques - "The Hazard", Nemira Printing House, 1993

Along with the final compromising of Marxism, has been gone also the revolutionary illusion of a different world in the near future, because through the suffering of millions of people it has been demonstrated that real socialism did not mean anything more but an obliteration from the real world and liberty.

1999





## **THE SOCIAL CLASSES**

When we talk about capitalism and about the division of the society into social classes, we are actually using a language that belongs to an economical-philosophical conception that we are now repudiating: the Marxism. It seems that we cannot give up the social-class collocation, hence we confer it new valences by re-dimensioning it on three levels: the lower, the middle and the upper class or the elite - replacing in this way the social-class concept that was taken over from Marx, and within which the distribution was dichotomous: proletariat and bourgeoisie, or exploited and exploiter; as a matter of fact, this situation was temporary because when passing from capitalism to socialism the social classes would have been totally disappeared.

Furthermore, we ascertain with stupefaction that while remaining tributary to this reality understanding grid - after we have built socialism for several decades - after 1990 we hurried to build capitalism, thing that seems very hilarious to me. We keep on being victims of the dialectic and historical materialism, which was deeply implemented in our mental structures. The fall of communism and the resulted situation overturn was also perceived in a determinist perspective, as an inverted passing from socialism towards capitalism considering the paradigm change. This is a big error.

We are trying to integrate in the European structures hence our mental schemes are still barred by a reality, which was deprived of significance in December 1989 and that continues to lose its meaning. We are building capitalism, passing through a stage called wild capitalism, for justifying the modality in which those who have come at power and have had access to information got rich overnight, while others that did not suffer the accident called socialism, have experimented the laws of economical functioning of the market and of the liberal democracy in the industrial and post-industrial society. In such a society, the things are relatively clear, because the economical does not determine the social as in Marxist paradigm, but there is a functional bond between them, which is mediated by the political factor. We can consider that politics is done at the institutional level and the economical processes display in an environment constituted by the laws of the market. By combining economy with politics we achieve the positioning of the citizens in the social space. As much as we would try to obtain the equality of all citizens regarding the possession of material goods, we would not obtain the equality of power, influence or position. A numerous middle class generates stability and equilibrium in economically terms and creates the perspectives of a normal confrontation for the access to the “positional goods”<sup>22</sup>.

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<sup>22</sup> According to R. Dahrendorf, “The Modern Social Conflict”, page 23, Humanitas Printing House, 1992

The political instability in our country can be explained by the weak representation of the middle class, thing that generates a powerful imbalance. The access to power is mediated by the access to the resources, but the inverted relation is not as balanced. That is why whole political class desperately fights for reaching the resources while taking advantage of the position that it holds in a certain moment. The consequence is the atomization and impoverishment of the many that are already been poor and the enrichment of the few privileged, which leads to apparition of a hiatus between the discourses about what we should do for a better living and the reality built in the same parameters. Against this background, there begins an artificial segmentation of the classes according to the well-known Marxist model, fact that facilitates the extremist discourses.

Therefore, the discussion about the bond between the theory of the classes and the one of the elites becomes important. R. Dahrendorf has the following point of view: "The classes probably determine the energy and the direction of the social change. They cannot be neglected and the content of the interest on which these are built confers clues about the direction in which things move. However, somebody must translate these interests in action and make things start working." If the elites do not realize the role that they have to play, the change will take place only in one direction and in a very slow rhythm, which can lead to strong conflicts when the capital of trust and hope is gone.

The social class could be seen as a potential generator of interest conflicts between those who have access to the resources and those who do not have. The lower class, which has less favourable working and market conditions, tends to befriend a certain mode of redistribution of the incomes and wealth as well as a growth of governmental intervention for ensuring the salaries and the jobs - this attitude transfers in the tendency of sympathizing with left parties. On the other hand, middle class prefers to conserve the situation and orientates itself towards the right wing of the political spectrum.

Nevertheless, in a society in which the middle class is weakly represented, we observe a strong polarization of the left wing and of the left wing discourse, even by parties that consider themselves rather centred or inclining towards the right. On the other hand, the right wing is very weakly represented - thing that was expected in virtue of polarization of the social classes. The question that we will have to answer in the future is connected to the way in which a vote that will probably bring the left wing to power will harmonize with the liberal measures that this vote will have to put in a total contradiction with the hopes of its voters.

1999

## THE ILLUSION OF MASS POWER

Marx took an interest in the changes in the past, changes that were in his vision strictly and unconditionally determining the future. He did not limit himself to analyzing the past, but he also tried to make predictions upon the future, starting from the premise that bourgeoisie and proletariat are the two classes being in conflict within the last form of society development (in his vision and in that epoch), the capitalism. As Ralf Dahrendorf emphasized, this type of society in which there are two combatant classes “can seem as a plausible description only to few countries in certain periods of the XIX century and the beginning of the XX century”<sup>23</sup>. The idea that Marx was launching in that time was of common sense. According to this idea the workers should organize themselves for obtaining as many rights and indemnifications as they could from those who had the power. The illusion of mass power that Marx and those who followed his ideology have cultivated is generated by the next step of his argumentation according to which the trade unions and the political parties would represent their requests in the name of the new forces of production. Yet this statement has no foundation within the world constructed by the industrial revolution, world that was pendulously delineated, but always in a positive trend within the parameters configured by the results of the battle between the economical growth and the augmentation of the citizen rights. It

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<sup>23</sup> Ralf Dahrendorf, “The Modern Social Conflict”, page 14, Humanitas Printing House, 1996

was useless for Marx and his followers to look for new production forces and to validate the rapprochement between the trade unions and the political parties, as long as only in rare moments of history were their interests equal.

For facilitating the intercession that we are undertaking - of analyzing the trade unions - we should make a few conceptual determinations regarding the type of organization in which the mentioned "movement" may be situated. Gulick<sup>24</sup> has classified the organizations into four different kinds depending on their basic orientation. As we will see, the greatest difficulty is the impossibility to strictly situate the trade union in a certain kind of organization, especially because some categories overlap themselves.

The first category contains the organizations that have been established based on a purpose. These organizations are mainly oriented towards attaining some specific tasks, but those are sometimes too far-reaching. We can give many examples of such organizations. A fire department is organized for putting-out fires; the trade unions defend the socio-professional interests of its members etc. All these organizations tend to include all the necessary functions for attaining their essential aims.

The aim was the prevailing base of the public organization. However, there are some other three categories and all of them seem to have the same importance. One of these three categories is the one of the

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<sup>24</sup> Gulick George, E. Barkley, "The Craft of Public Administration", Allyn and Bacon Inc., Boston, 1981

“process”. A “process” kind organization is not oriented as much on reaching a specific aim but on executing certain types of functions. In the United States of America, a good example for such an agency is the legal department of the city. At least in a big city this department consists of a group of lawyers that serve other departments, being employed for accomplishing a wide range of specific targets but being tied by the mean that they use: the law.

The third category is the one that depends on the place. The organizations in this category are structured for serving a certain place. Until now, in the USA only some public agencies have reached the standards of this classification. An example would be the neighbourhood Town Halls that were established by Boston and some other cities. These centres are intended for providing a variety of services to the inhabitants of a certain zone.

If we want to be less strict in our classification, we can include in this category many organizations, because almost every unit of each public agency is, in a certain meaning, oriented on the place.

The fourth and last of the basic organizations that Gulick has identified is the one of the “patronage”. The same as the place organizations, to which they are sometimes tied, the patronage type organizations were not a characteristic feature of the administrative “landscape”. These agencies are built around the need of serving a certain group of people.



The “place” or “patronage” type organizations offer very few opportunities for using the specialized services, or even for establishing a satisfying division of work. Furthermore, both “place” and “patronage” type organizations tend to become very vulnerable to the improper influences of the zone or of the groups that they serve. On the other hand, the “process” type organizations, while providing the best possibilities for the specialists to develop their professional qualities, tend to lose sight of the principal aim that is providing basic services to their members. Within a “process” type organization, the professional activities tend to be more important than the ones that are vitally needed. The means tend to be more important than the results. In conclusion, these three types of organizations tend to encourage a multiplication of the departments and a lack of unity in the problem solving action.

The most important finding after this analysis is that the trade unions can be considered as organizations oriented towards the target and of “process”, “place” and “patronage” type. As a consequence, the trade unions take advantage of the impossibility of situating them into a precise category for exercising a discourse that is convenient for them in a certain moment, easily jumping - when their interest change - even to an opposite position; this flexibility is allowed by the attribution that they suggest or undertake, being sometimes “aim” other times “place”, “process” or “patronage” oriented<sup>25</sup>.

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<sup>25</sup> In the folk language, such a situation is translated the best by the expression: “catch the blind and take his eyes out” or “find him if you can”.

The socio-political institutional system is modified by diminution of the interest in jobs. The positions of the trade unions are differentiated (sometimes they even disrupt themselves) in comparison with the main evolutionary lines. Some trade unions (those of the manufacturers that have less qualified activities) start to defend the positions of the wage earners that are affected by the socio-technological changes, sometimes opposing to these changes and requesting things that break the introduction of the modern production means, asking for the stability of their jobs, for the professional un-conversion and for the right to participate in taking decisions that regard the technological changes.

The trade unions divide themselves under the aspect of the defended interests - those of the high-qualified workers or of those that belong to the expanding economical field - and not expressing anymore the same positions that the wage earner's trade unions (that are affected by the same technological changes) share.

Many of the conflicts between the trade unions do not have the same objectives regarding the working conditions (salaries, conditions etc.) anymore. They embrace the general orientation of the factory or of the government regarding the ensemble production problems. The diminution of the industrial worker's role leads to the loss of the mass base of the socialist parties. Passing towards the post-industrial societies proves the viability of the economical trade zone and its capacity to mobilize new resources for progress and modernization, its competitive force and its possibility of ensuring the transition to a better way of life without any brutal turnovers.

On the other hand, the transformation of the professional groups of the “specialists” (scientists, teachers, new technology designers, managers etc.) into the basic nucleus of the professional structures (by a permanent growth of their share within the occupied population and especially through their decisive role in the promotion of the new directions of development) shows the fact that the worker’s parties are stalled and overdone. In reality the things are not quite so, the main blocking factor is the **remanence of the old mentalities**, carefully cultivated for 50 years by a propagandistic appliance drawn till perfection by the communist regime for managing the fooling of the “masses”. During the nine years that passes from the revolution we could observe how well the old regime managed in this undertaking. Certainly, it was not easy, but how well we can still see its effects! That is the only how we can explain the workers’ belief (even in 1999) that the most important factor in taking decisions regarding the destiny of the industry is **the production** and not the marketing, the sale or the research.

In an idealistic point of view, in factories, we should pass from the union fights for material and social conditions of life (salary, work protection, collective agreement, keeping the job, qualification schools) that foresee a collective claim (negotiations that regard the objectives for the whole collectivity of wage-earners) to negotiations that regard the personal life stile objectives. The battle should not any longer involve the collectivity for the common rights, but the individual for personal necessities, differential claims according to the profession, age,

life stile, participation and involvement level. The management should not consider the negotiation as an employer - wage-earner relationship mediated by the unions, but as a personal negotiation between the manager and the individual. For this, the management should become more complex, because it implies taking into account the peoples' personal differences, understanding justice and injustice of varied claims that are differently distributed from one individual to another. The basic claims should refer to the independence and creativity of work, to nonmaterial stimulants (the salary will not be enough to generate the satisfaction of and for work), to prestige and valuation, to human relationships and ways of promotion and to participation and involvement. As usual, there is a great difference between theory and practice, because the workers' needs and their mentality permit only basic and immediate expectances for reducing the cognitive dissonance (the distance between expectances and reality) and also the state of incertitude generated by the insignificance of status that is desiderated in a dynamic world that they were not taught to understand. This reality, in connection with the high level of making the workers join the union facilitates, makes easy their transformation into a mass of compliant manipulation, into a group of pressure that is used for conserving the state property in spite of the long-term negative effects. However, they do not even observe this thing, because the leaflet content of the messages and of the union leaders' speech is oriented towards reform and privatization, the latent content being anti-reformist, fact that was proved by the practical action of the unions.

The entire history that considered the working class as being privileged it was disassembled at the beginning of the century. Unfortunately, in our country, where the communist experiment has functioned, the workers consider themselves unprivileged by losing both the safety of their jobs and the illusory faith that they are the most important social category, the pillar of the society, without which nothing exists (see their despotism against the T.E.S.A - *translator's note: technical, economic, administrative and other specialties* - personnel and the overestimation of manual labour). This attitude is the result of a previous behaviour, learnt and cultivated by the official propaganda even after 1999. How other way could we explain the obsessively repeated speech about the fall of the industrial production - seen as a catastrophe - when in fact, we face a normal phenomenon that results in the displacement of the importance of the occupied population from the industrial sphere in that of the services? At the beginning of the century, the disillusion regarding the real opinions and positions of the working class was followed by a greater one, regarding the organizations of the workers' movement. When Robert Michels published in 1911 *The sociology of the political parties*, his basic thesis was shocking because it affirmed that the socialist parties were not essentially different from the other parties and political organizations. "The one that is always for the organization, statues a tendency towards oligarchy". The masses cannot lead themselves: but, in the moment when they create their parties and unions, a minority will lead them. The representatives control their voters and the deputies control the ones that gave them the mandate.

Michels entered deeply into the human nature and in the imperatives of the society to bring an argument for the simple observation that a party is indeed a party. He got to the conclusion that the workers' movement has become a part of the normal political process. This was the beginning of the social democracy. Its meaning was given by Georg Lukács when he opened in 1922 the process of the "real political organization", which "obliges the proletariat to return to its direct existence in which it is only an insipid component of the capitalist society and not the engine that brings it to twilight and disappearance".

The opposition between the oligarch leaders and the mass of members - that was realized by Michels - had another substratum. It was giving a hint on the new trend of the exalting description of the proletariat as a group that had no structure or culture, when in reality it was merely a mass.

The real social developments did not really help those who believed in the proletariat. From economical point of view, the period between the World Wars was rather dense, but there was certain redistribution. Consequently, a part of the working class rose to a middling existence. Anyway, Marx's thesis, which affirmed that in time the proletariat would become a big dimension homogeneous class, was rejected. The progress of industry was requiring new abilities; the difference between the qualified, post qualified and unqualified workers was more than a technical assurance formality.

The progress of industry and the general development of economy led to a massive growth of a new “middle layer” of private and public employees. This phenomenon was talked about even before the First World War and then in the 1920s, preoccupying many social analysts. The new middle status, which was rapidly growing, and the survival of an “old middle status” of independent tradesman, little entrepreneurs and farmers, obviously contradicted the presumption that sooner or later the overwhelming majority of all people would have led to a proletarian existence. It is true that the working class has continually grown; in some developed countries, it was enveloping 50% of the population, or even more. However, other layers have grown even quicker and their social positioning was not clear. Treating these considerations as valid, we can explain why was in fact the trade union’s movement totally subordinated to the leader. This fact was encouraged by the workers’ wish of having powerful organizations, which would assume the defending of their legal rights, but which would remain only beneficiaries and not participants, thing that explains why the wage earners would like powerful unions, but they would not like to get involved in their activities. That is the reason why the union is identified with the leader, that must do and be responsible for everything, but which sometimes follows its own image, power and political interests.

Arriving in this point of the argumentation, we need to return to Marx for being able to explain this outdated state of things. It seems that the collective unconsciousness cannot get rid of the “idol”, in whose conception the economy determines the social and the political. “The alliance between the political and the economical is attained in two manners. First, by attracting the managers into the governing party. The second alliance is the one between the managers and the union leaders. Thus, the social equilibrium is insured: the managers will have big salaries and they will have “tick” companies besides their own factories, which they will make contracts with. From the worker to the manager, everybody wants subventions on the account of the society. Furthermore, the leaders are sent in delegation abroad in order that the unions not to protest and to avoid the social confrontations”<sup>26</sup>. It seems to me that the mentioned double alliance is possible and it appears as consequence of an abnormality that tends to perpetuate in spite of the social costs and of the compromise of the real chances to get out from the economical slough. It is about keeping at any costs the state property under varied excuses and implicitly the role of “the economical leader of the state”. We are all feeling the effects of this totally wrong point of view, which are reflected in our standard of living and we are accepting these only for the state to pride itself with the fictive properties that in fact, cannot be controlled. (F.P.S. - *translator’s note: State Ownership Fund* - is proprietary only when it sells, otherwise each company “manages” as it can for being capable of squeezing out more money from the budget.

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<sup>26</sup> Stefan Ungurean, “The Legal State and the New Bourgeoisie”, page 31- 32, Interval nr. 7, 1999



In most cases, we cannot predict the indirect negative consequences, the perverse effects that appear when we repeatedly try to perpetuate, at any costs, an outdated and passed out situation. Before 1990, the union movement had to control the whole adult population that was politically engaged or not. Realistically, we have to start from the idea that there was no union movement for almost 50 years and, consequently, we can talk about a long suspension of the syndicalism. We, who are analyzing the phenomenon from the exterior, affirm this idea. For those directly implied, the half measures taken during all this time did not do anything else, but to iterate over the years the dictatorship, the proletariat becoming the starting point of a defiance that was thrown into the face of the civil society: **the trade union defiance.**

1999

## THE TRADE UNION DEFIANCE

The idea around which our argumentation gravitated - in our attempt of identifying those causes that helped the proliferation of an operetta trade unionism that did not have any connection with the real problems of its members and which have been used especially as a pressure group - was that in terms of desperate attempt to keep at any costs the state property mainly in economy, it was wrongly used the Marxist paradigm according to which the economical determines the social. This thing was possible due to the inoculated mentality of paternalist and communist status in which the working class was a privileged class. After 1990, when the parameters of the social reality were changed, the workers acutely felt what in sociological terms is called "the status panic"<sup>27</sup>.

In the same time, it was accredited the thesis (that it is not acceptable at all if we wish the privatization) that "the first need of an enterprise is not the accomplishment of the aim that it was created for, but its survival as a system"<sup>28</sup>. The majority of the state's enterprises and the

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<sup>27</sup> The concept of "status panic" (C.W. Mills) was developed by the sociologist Al. Deniforescu referring to the natural relationship that some people have in a situation of uncertainty, which is generated by the loss of status by allying with those who, in their opinion, can preserve their old status.

<sup>28</sup> Zoltan Bogathy, "The Conflict within Romanian Industrial Organizations", - Ana Stoica - Constantin and Adrian Neculau (coord.), "The Psycho-sociology of Solving the Conflict", Polirom Printing House,

big unprofitable jumbos are in the previously described situation. By assuming this position they define aims that contradict the targets of the private enterprises, those of other enterprises that are in the same situation and those of the society (normally, an enterprise has to be socially practical by reaching the economical aims and not by its changing into a “socially assisted” unit).

These two elements - the resistance to change of the people within the enterprises in correlation with the lack of strategy of the leading class - have led to a strange alliance between the “patronage” and the unions under the pressure of the common interest, which is surviving at any costs.

In reality, the ascertained pressure of the unions is possible due to the fact that the punt of the game is not connected with any punctual claims that can or cannot be solved, but to the existence and conservation of a non-profitable nationalist system that due to restrictive politics and contradictors of the previous governments has transformed itself into a clock bomb. The adjournment of the inevitable permits the union blackmail that means a short-term non-realistic compromise and implicitly greater long-term disaster.

As basic component of the civil society, the trade unionism was not often the subject of scientific and sociologic analysis, reason why before broaching some aspects connected with the interest games that stand behind them, I consider that it is interesting to look over the precursors

of the post-communist trade-union movement. We observe that the unionism is frequently handled as an essential part of the workers' movement, its history being equal with this until a certain point, the most striking consequence of this fact being found nowadays in the high level of unionism within the state enterprises and in the tendency of unification of the union movement in spite of all the specific differences.

We have to notice the similitude between the union movement in interwar period and the anti-intellectual and utopian movement, which naively believes that they can dissolve the social hierarchy and ignore the state institutions for solving the social problems. These injuring and fatal characteristics can be found even today within some unions that could be included in the mentioned category, even if this qualifier is rarely used. What kind of a social partner is that who considers itself above the law and who is convinced that it can negotiate "anything" with an authority, that paradoxically does not admits it? It is hard to appreciate.

This privileged position of the unions, as a somehow overstate organizations, has its basis in the way these functioned and were perceived in the period between the two World Wars and especially in the communist era, being transformed accordingly to Leninist theory in those so called "transmission straps", expression that reproduces with high fidelity the role that they had and which conferred them, besides other duties, certain privileges that were hard to refuse. (Many of them saw the change as being a modality to get rid of certain coercions inherent to the system, keeping instead all the privileges owed to the

same bankrupt system). In fact, it alludes to something that did not realistically functioned for fifty years. There cannot be any tradition where there was not authentic union movement, but only a kind of organization that was subordinated to the state-party, which had only a “hidden” role of practically controlling all the adult population, even if this was politically engaged or not.

“The reorganization and the expansion of the trade unionism in Romania have enrolled in the general democratization process of the society and in the reconstruction of both political system and civil society. The completely destroyed civil society has been scanning an extremely difficult and twisted process of construction. In this context, the unions can be considered the first and among the few civil society structures that are truly viable, no matter how heavily the political forces and a big part of the population<sup>29</sup> impugn them”. Unfortunately, the last quoted affirmation has no value of truth for the Romanian society, as long as there are two parallel realities: a private rivalry economy and an artificially preserved state economy.

From the theoretical point of view, we can talk about two functions of the trade unionism within a democratic society: one of integration and the other of control. On one hand, the unions pursue the integration of different salary categories into the specific economical structures and institutions, defending their interests in the particular condition of each moment and place. On the other hand, they take care - by the means

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<sup>29</sup> Florica Vasiliu, “The Reconstruction of the Trade Union in Romania”, page. 29, in R.C.S., no. 1, 1998

that are specific to the union fight - that the social partners do not break these rights and if they are, to be fined according to the modifications that occurred in the social and economical system. From these two functions, we can define the regulator role of the union upon the economical system and we observe that it ensures the social equilibrium by defending the professional interests of miscellaneous social groups and by ensuring their social protection and safety - especially of the underprivileged ones. Unfortunately, in our country, the trade unionism has a much bigger extension than in the consolidated democracies, precisely due to the ideological remanence that makes its functions unable to be precisely defined and coherently and consistently applied and prevailing the conjuncture and partiality interests. The most predictable consequence is the inner insignificance of the union movement and its erroneous perceiving as a mean for "here and now" and not as an aim. In the case of the present Romanian trade unionism, the precarious defining of the situation starts precisely with the wrong understanding of its consubstantiality with the factual democracy. The trade unionism should not be determined in any situation by the political will and either by the civic one, but by the structural and functional requirements of democracy and of the market economy. Accepting the substitution of their fundamental aims with short-term ones, which give illusive advantages for the union members but perceptible for their leaders, the unions will become "means" for the political powers and also for other groups that are interested in using the enormous persuasive potential that they have (we are referring especially to those that are not consolidated).

A very important element that facilitates the removal of the unions from their declared aims is the fact that unions continue to be predominantly labourer due to professional structure and to cultural models that are specific to workers. Romania has inherited an outdated socio-professional structure for the present moment, thing that obviously influences the trade unionism. The over dimensioning of the industry, especially of the hard and the extractive one, has determined the apparition of some wage-earner categories that are unsatisfied, but that were privileged by the communist system and that will want to keep or even amplify their social position that was offered to them. This is in fact the great mass intended to manipulation, which due to the "status inconsistency" is ready to agree with any alliance or any compromise that could preserve its old status. From the social structure distortions and implicitly from the predominance of the workers we can define the position of the last one in connection with the other categories, social groups and especially with the intellectuality - not rarely perceived as a more or less parasite structure or assimilated to the technical staff within the industry. The great number of workers and their portrayals about other social groups have permitted the exertion of constant pressures upon the structures of the society that were in a precarious equilibrium precisely determined by the existence of this latent conflict. (The typical example is well illustrated by the slogan: "we work, we do not think!").

Even if programmatically or through the leaders, the unions have rejected this kind of attitudes and opinions, in the union action have been kept and perpetuated practices that have their origins in the share that different groups have within the social structure and also in the

representations about the “social classes” that have become widely spread stereotypes and biases especially between the workers, but not only. This habit - that others take decisions for them - will wish to perpetuate paternalistic relationships. Still remaining the most numerous social group and being the mostly affected by the reform, it will try to defend its identity and partly to oppose the other socio-professional groups that have statuses and roles being unknown to it.

The “assisted” status of the policyholder employee of the old regime is way to comfortable for giving it up so easily and the representative status, especially that of partner, is hard to assimilate because it lacks in a veritable culture of activism and professional and social solidarity. The manipulation of the union members by offering them the needed services and goods - in other words continuing the employees assistance (that is poorer than the one before 1989, but the man judges only what he sees), leads to the perpetuation of the distorted image of the trade unionism.

Changing the proportion between the administration and the unions that have to negotiate their working relations, (the social protection having to be negotiated with the central administration) is not functional as long as there are stereotypes according to which the unions are subordinated to the leading class and the employees to the administration and the unions. This distorted image of the relationships between the unions and administration and that of the union functions is strengthened by the functional undistinguishing that persists on all levels, starting with the state and until the lowest organization.



There is possible that in the initial estate the things were like this. In the present, they do not change because the ones directly implied, rationally think that, in their case, the situation -as it is - favours them. All that is happening is possible because the state property was thought out to be as "state in state". These are the consequences that on short term favour the directly implied social actors and on long term ... make the state and implicitly the contributor to lose:

1. The managers maintain their attractive salaries without having to develop alternative programs, their enterprise being a victim of transition.
2. The members of the union keep their status. Their non-work is paid and they are waiting for their retirement, situation that is possible due to the deliberate confusion between social protection and the remuneration.
3. The union leaders negotiate their own interests and try out political adventures.
4. The political parties make any compromises for acquiring electors, even with the risk of pushing the country into a non-governable situation.

On long term, these secondary benefits will probably have invaluable repercussions upon the identity and legitimacy of the union movement. However, we must not forget that in a world where "to have" prevails "to be", a sentence as "after us the deluge!" is not only possible but also desirable.

1999

## **THE LEADER'S REIFICATION**

The lack of evaluation of the external circumstances can be - and it often is - disastrous for many organizations. When the personal interests avail themselves on the interests of the group that one represents, eventually the lack of horizon is sanctioned. Unfortunately, not only the leader who has mistaken will have to suffer the consequences, but also the group.

Anyone who was a leader has received at least once the inducement "keep your options open". This is a strategy used by the leaders of the government if the place of the power is within a legislative body or a governmental agency. The advantages of "keeping the options open" are obvious: more the leaders' options, then more potential power for them. At least until a certain moment, the union leaders did not want to put into practice this principle, being blinded by the apparent power that they had.

Leaving from a double reality: the great number of the workers that "work for the state" and the unfavourable representations of these regarding the other social groups have supplied different social conflicts, some of them being manifests, others latent.

The intolerance has appeared even at the beginning of 1990 regarding the new social groups that were being formed and especially the private enterprisers, no matter their size and economical power. This situation has perpetuated until the present moment in the workers' opinion about how certain people have become rich (the polls are clear, 90% of the workers think that they became rich using unfair/illegitimate ways.) Through the union leader, the workers have rejected this kind of opinions and attitudes, but in its actions the union has used certain practices that are in connection with the share of different groups within the social structure and also with the representations about the "social classes" that have become wide spread stereotypes and biases.

It is hard to understand that what everybody mocked in the old regime - the slogan regarding the "working class's leader role" - becomes after 1990 the reason of some people's relative deprivation. For those "caught in the scheme", liberty did not meant the acceleration towards all the possibilities, but the end of all possibilities. At first, we could not recuperate much from the local communism, because people remembered the total annihilation of the human dignity and the politics of individual annihilation. (While time has passed by, we started to talk - because we easily forget - about working places, homes and food, even if this was rationed and of a doubtful quality, for everybody. We also started to talk about the wrong application of Marxism, which in its essence was a laudable doctrine but it was wrongly applied to the particularities of our country...)

Supposing that a doctrine that is good in its essence abolishes itself by being applied to the particularities of other countries, the results are everywhere questionable or doubtful; however, we have to fight with the implicit effects that generate in the mentalities of people.

The ones that lose the most are those who regret the most a thing that they have never even understood. They did not understand, but they felt secure and somehow privileged and important. Because it was over dimensioned and because losing its status, the working class bears the hardest the consequences of transition, remaining the most dependent social class beyond the inherent stratification that imminently takes place inside it. Considering the specific tendencies of the working class of having preoccupations that regard the quotidian worries, we can explain the need of this category for organizations that would ensure its protection and social security. Nevertheless, in the old regime the working class has also learnt the lesson, which affirmed that the organizations were only created as a frontage for the leader, who was the only important one and the only one who could decide. That is how the power of the leader has naturally fulfilled the expectations of the workers, which wished for a saviour, not for an organization that would defend their professional interests.

David Lilienthal<sup>30</sup> defined the leadership as a humanist art. A humanist supervision is rather technical steering. It is based on the capacity of understanding the individuality, the motivations, the fear and hope, the

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<sup>30</sup> Apud Gulick George, E. Barkley "The Craft of Public Administration", Allyn and Bacon Inc., Boston, 1981

things that people love or hate and the things that are beautiful or ugly in the human nature. It is indeed a real performance to be able to move so many individuals, to help in defining their wishes and to help them discover step-by-step how to obtain something. However, the workers remained in this scheme: keeping the job/the growth of the nominal salary. Also being seduced by the leader's image that was supposed to take care of them, they lost track that he was firstly taking care of himself and only after of them. Because power corrupts and the "great union leaders" could only show their force in political fights, they wished for a greater audience than that of the unionists that they were representing. They perceive the threat of the general strike (knowing which the real possibilities are and what can be effectively solved) as a hidden way to get notoriety by the compulsive growth in number of those who were strained to be interested in the deployment of the events.

A very important factor - that showed us that the leaders have made unacceptable concessions only for keeping their position and for fulfilling their personal interests - consists in the way the conflicts were negotiated. This aspect regarding the negotiation of conflicts was inexistent until 1990 and it cannot be done only by the representatives of the social groups organized within the working conflicts, so by the unions through their leaders. Even if the employees were not directly implied in taking the decisions, in accordance with their image about democracy, they want to participate in the negotiations. The impossibility of this action did not even concern the leaders, who should have been the first to be preoccupied in illuminating this functional differentiation. Because of their popularity, the leaders

prefer to perpetuate this wrong representation, which is useful for them in crisis or necessary for hiding their own incompetence. This defective representation has negative effects on democracy, because it allows certain anonymous individuals (that are protected by the mass) to do reprehensible acts and to keep on cultivating the illusion of the brute power of the proletariat that solves the situations created in virtue of the incompetence of the political class.

In fact, this is all about legitimacy that the union movement can obtain only by respecting the rules of the game. By identifying the institution with the leader, by hiding this person behind the workers in difficult situations and due to the political involvement of some leaders, the field of action of the union movement could not be exactly dissociated, which led to confusion inside the working class.

The leader's reification is a characteristic of an immature, revolutionary and anarchical unionism. That is how it was and it still is in our country. The mentality is almost impossible to be changed- it is proved by the social twitches present in the nine years of transition. It seems that something could change only when the object of work disappears: the state ownership. Until then, the short German bourgeois wearing patriarch beard will equally influence especially those who know him only from the picture in the old Political Economy textbook.

1999



## THE TOTALITARIANISM STAMP

We are “somehow” because this is our stile. Alternatively, is it because of a certain road that we have walked on? In what proportion are our actions due to the ideological stamp and in what proportion would a different itinerary have generated other ways of being? Why would we be worse, more pitiful, more ailing than others? These would be relevant questions if we wanted to identify the less visible motivation of our actions.

I had the impression that the theoretical problems that concern us were solved at the beginning of the '90s. We agreed that socialism and fascism are two ideologically different manifestations, but that have as a common point the generating of both institutional and cognitive totalitarian structures. Once identified and understood, the evil will be overcome and that is a fact that necessarily leads to liberation on both plans from totalitarianism.

We start from the presupposition that fascism, Nazism and Stalinism and - why not - Ceausism represent only some “accidents” in the modern history and that they - being part of the past - do not raise any problems nowadays because they cannot be repeated. However, Granell<sup>31</sup> has another opinion. He claims that the events are not at all

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<sup>31</sup> Granell, “The 30's Are in Front of Us”, Etudes, Galilee, 1995



accidental because they represent the essence of modernity itself, because they are representing the essence of modernity itself. Furthermore, representing such essence they cannot be called monstrous because we have not exceeded the essence of modernity: “the ‘30s are in front of us”.

In Granell’s opinion, “the 30s” mean the instauration of three great powers in Europe: the consolidation of the fascist power in Italy, of the national-socialism in Germany and of the Stalinist red tape apparatus in Russia. Such “promptitude” through which a democratic and liberal system changes into a totalitarian one intrigues Granell. “What led to such a overturning?” In the same time, we can ascertain that the rapidity of transition towards what we call market economy and democracy is slower and the costs seem to be enormous.

Simone Weil<sup>32</sup> wrote that the fascist populism and the national-socialism were there to control two newly appeared phenomena in history: making production more technical and the red tape coordination. Besides all these, S. Weil emphasizes that although the fascism and the national-socialism wanted to encourage the proletariat, in fact they have had nothing to do with it. In the end, it was clear that even the socialist utopia have not had much to do with them - in the name of whose the change was provoked.

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<sup>32</sup> Apud Granell

All these come to prove that, that certain “unification” that was “the unification in the hands of the heads, of the union and of the state’s red tape”, defines the essence of totalitarianism itself. Granell warns us that this essence remained unchanged even nowadays, despite the fact that we are living in a democratic world. Certainly, the thesis regarding the impossible return to what it was seems acceptable, considering those certain phenomena mere accidents of history. For supporting this theory, there are incontestable evidences. Obviously, there is a consensus regarding the great power, which transfers into an action plan within the deployment of some coherent and consistent projects for orienting more people towards the liberal democracy models. It seems to me that the doctrinaire of this orientation is Francis Fukuyama and I would suggest looking at his writings from another point of view, that I think it allows us to discern new meanings. I consider that “The End of History...” is nothing else but a programmatic and pragmatic document, a so called book, a social command writing having a well defined role: to show the way both to Eastern and to Western fools, by enunciating a truth that is similar to Leibniz’s, that the world in which we are living is imperfect, but because it exists and does not die is certainly the best from all the existent worlds. Similarly, the liberal democracy project, with all its limitations and imperfections, is worth trying because history has proved that it is the most functional, it has passed the practical test. In other words, there is an established mark and therefore all the present suffering is justified through the gain that is to come. I think that this point of view is also a totalitarian one.

Let us not forget that we - who have passed through the experience before 1990 as guinea pigs - justify our interaction from better perspectives that we are creating for our children, and the official ideology was asking for sacrifices in order to reach the Golden Future. It is obviously the same myth, even if the initial conditions, the way and the ideological justification somehow differ: “the myth of the Golden Period”.

Regarding the consequences generated by passing through an utopia, we have the impression that from the zero moment we will not carry anymore the burden of knowing what we went through as directly involved actors and we will use only the knowledge that was produced during the deployment of the project that we engaged in and which is very easily to understand: to live better and to avoid letting happen what it did before. However, we lost track of an important aspect. Such a way is not easy. Moreover, in such conditions it is more comfortable to use functional successful practices that were previously learnt and experienced, than trying to adapt yourself to very stressful reality. It was necessary to have a conversation with a respectful sociologist, who as manager of an institution, was absolutely convinced that autocratic style of administration is the most efficient and he does not have to change it as long as it produces results. He was saying, as a justification, that people that he works with have rather reduced financial expectations, thing that was surprising even for him, and he added that if he offered salaries that were over what he called a “decent wage” and a greater autonomy regarding the attaining of their duties, he would not

do anything else but to unnecessarily complicate his existence. In other words, it would even be a dangerous intercession and that why it is preferable to practice a “steal hand management” and to keep his employees in a continuous tension under the hazy threat that a safe working place is better than any other job, even if it is badly paid. The thing that struck me in that moment was the transmission of information, saying that he did not do anything else but adapting himself to what the people in fact wanted and that in such a situation any innovation would not do anything else but to shake a tacitly accepted situation.

A colleague of mine has confirmed me accidentally the functionality of the previously discussed issue. He was very surprised that in an organizational culture study being done in a French-Romanian factory, the execution staff had unexpectedly low salary expectances.

In fact, everything spins around the work problem. If we admit that the central determination of the modern society is the fact that composes some productive bodies and the central concept of all the analysis regarding production is the concept of work, then firstly we have to clarify the ontological characteristic that imprints its brand on all the modern phenomena.

According to Granell's principle, there are two ontological definitions of work: an existential and a categorical one. According to the existential definition, work means obtaining that minimal necessity that keeps the worker alive. In the same time, - according to one of Baudrillard's ideas - the needs are no longer consumption forces elaborated by the society of

abundance that would produce them, but production forces generated by the functioning of the system<sup>33</sup> itself. Therefore, the needs do not belong to the man anymore, but to the system. There is an endless feedback that pushes the man's needs to infinity through the mass media. Production does not any longer have real correspondent within the basic and functional needs of the man for a long time. By further analysis of Baudrillard's idea, we could even say that the minimal needs are replaced by some pseudo-needs that are sustained by the media.

In fact, the production that wishes to keep everything under control is nothing else but totalitarianism that we thought we had got rid of by considering it a mere accident in the history of modernity. Richard Rorty went on with the idea of totalitarianism within democracy, showing that our "lyrical" and "essentialist" culture itself is nothing else but the expression of that fanaticism from which there is only one-step to totalitarianism.

Our problem gets even more complicated. On one hand, we are in crisis because we have to face the consequences inducted by our development within a totalitarian system and on the other hand, the model that is suggested to us is not exempt from totalitarianism stamp. Then, in the moment when we analyze the practical aspects that can be identified in everyday life, we ascertain with great success the proliferation of the totalitarian way of thinking. Therefore, we think that we cannot be substituted, that there is always somebody to take care of us, that efficiency is directly connected to autocratism.

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<sup>33</sup> J. Baudrillard, "Pour une critique de l'économie politique des signes", Gallimard, 1972

In many actions, the meaning was lost but the mechanism was kept. We go to weddings because we must, not to enjoy ourselves. We write because we are asked to, not because we really have something to say (the reign of the quantitative). We treat with indulgence those who build their personality cult; maybe we secretly amuse ourselves (an old mechanism of geminating), but we do not get outraged against such practices. Within majority of the private discussions, the political class is criticized and sworn at, but at least we feel the desire of joining the cursed ones. People go to a manifestation because they have to, maybe they get something and in an hour's time all the pubs in the area are full.

There is - and I rely on my systematic observations as a sociologist - an almost irrefutable modality of recognizing those actions that were stamped by totalitarianism when *something is done or organized because it has to be so*.

2000



## TRANSITION AND UNCERTAINTY

Lately, it is more often said that the period that we are passing is not one of transition. Those who affirm this thing accept that the passing from totalitarianism to democracy and from over centralized economy to market economy is called almost for 9 years "transition period". They also admit that the term "transition" is abusively used because it supposes the change, and according to their opinion there has not been a real change that would reflect the social structures yet. This paralogism appears probably on account of the low rhythm in which our country changes, this being hard to be perceived by an observer within the system, who perceives the temporal suspension of the functionality of the old settlements and the inefficiency of the new ones in the way they operate within the institutes. Such point of view has to catch our eyes regarding the situation that we are in. This situation settles slowly and progressively, but the actors - under the action of some unpredictable stimulation that change their existential environment from certain to uncertain and from unpredictable in surprising - have difficulties in defining the period that they are living in. The progressiveness, the successive growth of difficulties that are generated by such situations is due to the growth of uncertainty and the action of the positive feedbacks<sup>34</sup> that are specific for any self-regulating system and results either the unacceptability or the wrong perception regarding the period that we are passing.

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<sup>34</sup> Magoroh Maruyama, "The Second Cybernetics Deviation - Amplifying Mutual Causal Processes", pages 164-179, in "American Scientist", June 1936



For getting rid of the trap of such interpretations, from a sociological point of view, transition means a particular phase in the development of a society, a crossroad in its history, a time in which there are tensions and conflicts that are emphasized by the tendencies of maintenance and innovation of that particular society. On that score, we accept that transition actually defines a social reconfigure that generates an unstable and unpredictable social system. We accept the idea that Romanian society is in a triple transition:

1. towards a free market economy
2. towards the post-industrial civilization
3. towards democracy

In this complicated process of passing from a centralized, powerful and red tape system towards an occidental democratic system, the local public administration should have a very important role if it should have had the human resources being able to take stock and to use the civic initiatives, to stimulate and to orient them in order to promptly solve the problems of the community.

The public administration is a red tape system<sup>35</sup>. This form of administration is in opposition with the traditional social values and consequently, the individuals have to be socialized and taught to interact with bureaucracy, within this process the values being able to change themselves. In this regard, we can say that the public is strongly affected by the public administration.

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<sup>35</sup> Max Weber, "The Protestant Ethic and the Spirit of Capitalism", Humanitas Printing House, Bucharest, 1993

Following Max Weber, Ralph Hummel<sup>36</sup> explained that bureaucracy is in disaccord with society because it is based on a “rationally organized action” but not on a “social action”. Hummel explains the differences between this type of action and the social action in pragmatic terms.

A human being that has clear intentions and aims normally initializes the social action. This action wants to propagate these purposes and it is addressed to a social partner whose apprehension of the action is the key of the purpose. The social action consists in a human initiator, in a joint author. The bureaucratic action is reduced to the action itself. It does not have a human initiator regarding the expression of the private intention. The last point of view regarding the rationally organized action is very important. It reaches the unidirectional aspects of bureaucracy and of public administration in general. The orders circulate descendant in the hierarchy and the information ascendant. The client or the regulator provides information, but he cannot give orders. This means that the regulator or the client cannot ask the bureaucrat to modify its administrative behaviour and habits.

According to this pragmatic behaviour, the much talked mentality change is very hard to achieve by the individuals as long as it is not produced in institutions. (The process should be bi-directional).

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<sup>36</sup> Hummel, David H. Rossenbloom, “Public Administration”, Randam House, N.Y., 1986

Within the public administration of Brasov, the fact that most services offered by the Town Hall and by its subordinate administrations were considered by the citizens of Brasov as being inefficient or hardly efficient<sup>37</sup> can be quantified as following: the remanence of the bureaucratic behaviours, treating with indifference the civic initiatives, centring the attention on activities but not on result, refusing to have a transparent relationship with the citizens and the minimizing of real problems of the community.

Because of this situation, the parts of the local public administration risk to lose their credibility in front of the citizens and to become sources that generate frustration to the community.

In order to realize a coherent program for the local development, one has firstly to take stock all the problems of the community for determining the main sources of dissatisfaction and the critical points, and then to try to implement, according to the strategic planning<sup>38</sup>, an adequate development model.

Any research that wishes to identify the social problems within the community, tries to find out do the citizens perceive this.

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<sup>37</sup> According to a pole done in January 1996 at the request of A.P.D. by the Sociology Laboratory of Transilvania University

<sup>38</sup> In the 3<sup>rd</sup> number of the Astra magazine, in the article called "Whereto Brasov?" Mihai Ciubotaru presents and structures the aspects regarding the general strategic planning by offering a functional global model, thing that makes us not to any longer insist upon these aspects. In our opinion (continuing this model), maybe it would have been necessary to identify some concrete action programs in the community of Brasov.

In figure no. 1 we present the way in which the investigated<sup>39</sup> citizens of Brasov perceive their social problems (the investigation was done in 1996 according to the appreciation scale).

50-100	Very good situation
0-50	Good situation
0	Look out! Problems!
(-50)-0	Critical point
(-100)-(-50)	Serious situation

It can be observed that the main problems that the inhabitants of Brasov are dealing with are the following: arranging and sanitation of the streets, lack of public WCs, cleaning of the streets and lack of car parks, garages and playgrounds.



Fig. no. 1: *Estimation upon the problems of the inhabitants of Brasov*

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<sup>39</sup> The pole was done on a sample that was representative for the population of Brasov. The age was over 15 years old, the possible error being +/- 3% within a sample of 1,130 people by the Sociology laboratory of Transilvania University in Brasov.

For being able to evaluate the existing situation, we also have to take into account the objective factors that influence the existence of a community. In this situation the relation between the population and economy is very important. The demographic processes have various determinations: economical, social, cultural, and psychological. In Brasov, the demographical increase it was mainly determined by the motion of people, especially by the negative migration<sup>40</sup> from Moldavia.

This situation of population heterogeneity (which is a social cohesion factor), as well as the forced industrialization (which generates economical competitiveness/non- competitiveness) are the premises from where we have to begin when doing an analysis upon the local development perspectives. This thing has to be taken in account after we have determined the social problems within the community, the general background being limited by the coercions exerted by the respect for the environment, concept that can be operated as an attribute of a sustainable development.

The sustainable development has as objective the ensuring of some “normal” present and future living and working conditions. The sustainable development contains four subsystems: economical, human, environmental and technological; it supposes the simultaneity of development in all the four domains previously enumerated.

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<sup>40</sup> This kind of migration refers to migrates whose socio-professional features are weaker than that of the reference population

The dimensions of the sustainable development concept are:

- The nature-environment dimension created by the man and compatible with its natural environment;
- The socio-human dimension, which pursues to answer the peoples' necessities;
- The regional-cultural area dimension to which belongs that certain part of the city or that certain zone.

The sustainable development solves the present needs without compromising the possibilities of satisfying the next generation's needs.

We are analyzing the world that we are living in (country, city, neighbourhood, block of flats/house) from the following points of view:

- a) economically (in functional connection with the social and the cultural);
  - According to the economical indicators, "the world is in a reasonable, a good situation and the long term economical perspectives are auspicious. The economists think that the advanced technologies can exceed any limit".
- b) ecologically.
  - According to the indicators that measure the healthiness of the environment, each major indicator shows a deterioration of the natural systems (the urban space - the pollution of the air reaches levels that threaten peoples' health).

Passing to the ecological era (that firstly has to be characterized and set to the existent economical and social reality) implies the materials recycling, drastically reducing the sweepings, changing the products and the peoples' reaction, giving up the society of dissipation. Along with all these, people should find a strategy for reorganizing the urban transportation.

Beside the technological revolution within the infrastructure, there is essential to achieve a new way for conceiving the urbanization, so that the cities to be created for people. All these imply the revision of existent politics background.

For each urban space, we should start from the premise that there are different denominate problems that have to be analyzed with the help of the four dimensions of the sustainable development (for achieving a perspective, coherent plan).

The investments in protection of the natural environment attract long-term positive economical effects. Unfortunately, although the effects of pollution are irreversible, they are neglected on short-term. People wish to live better now; "prompt" is not an indefinite period of time (pervert effect introduced by the communist ideology that was asking for immediate, present sacrifices by promising a "golden" future). As an immediate effect, one can notice the attempt of reducing the costs by giving up the pollution reducing equipments.

As we have seen, the sustainable development answers to the present needs.

We can identify the following basic needs:

- Firstly, the minimal individual and familial requests, such as adequate alimentation, habitation, clothes, equipments and furniture and job;
- Secondly, a number of essential services provided for the global community: drinkable water, cleaning, public transportation, health and educational facilities.

Thus, one can identify the needs of the community (from a subjective point of view); this thing can be achieved by using a social investigation that would cover all the objectives.

Beside the problems of the community regarding the urban endowments, the other problems are the following: poverty, high prices, inflation, low educational level, low social protection, unemployment, increased delinquency, corruption.

By correctly identifying the existent problems and by being aware of the importance of the local development, (that implies the communitarian spirit that has two main dimensions: the participation and the partnership) one can use two basic strategies:

- Education for development
- Cooperation for development



The economical development has multiple influences upon the population, upon the age structures or on the qualification grades. According to these features, the perceptions upon the social reality are totally different (the inertia of the social perception regarding the strict determination of the social by the economical), the people having difficulties in detecting the importance of the political decisions that they perceive as a traffic of influence having aim of preserving some privileges but not as a decisive changing factor.

The present situation of Brasov must be seen as a re-equilibration of the industrial development and of the massive population growth employed in the field of services (outlet/alternative for reducing the economical growth). Anyway, as general law, we can enunciate that the increase of population does never exceed the economical growth.

Such a project could be started in Brasov by starting the construction of an airport, which would lead to the concurrent development of the infrastructure. An important long-term consequence of building the airport would be the conversion of Brasov into a euro-centre and into a powerful economical and financial pole of Romania.

Another viable project would be “Brasov, the centre of the Romanian pragmatic culture”, that starts from the premise that the values of the past can be resuscitated in the present by dignifying the local history<sup>41</sup>.

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<sup>41</sup> See the article called “Brasov-the centre of the Romanian Pragmatic Culture”, Astra magazine, no. 2, 1997, by the same author.

For reducing the industrialization and for the cultural development one can try a multitude of programs that should pursue the transformation of Brasov into the town of festivals.

It is obvious that such programs, that are alternatives for development, are nonexclusive.

1998



## THE QUEUE VOCATION AT ROMANIANS

The nonplus feeling that we frequently experience when faced with apparently insignificant things, could probably explain some of the dysfunctions of the social system.

We have hardly woke us up from the conscious numbness of our senses - that the majority of us have when passing from the old year into the new one - that surprises started to appear.

Those who were waiting for the growth of the price of petrol have not anticipated things correctly, so that the petrol supply that they made has only blocked an amount of money that could have had another destination. The fact that, when this book would be appearing, out of a medium salary one would be able to buy only 100 litres of petrol instead of 200, does not justify (maybe only symbolically<sup>42</sup>) the blocking of those certain resources used for maximally filling the tanks of their own cars.

This conscious delay of an “announced death” was recouped by other “wonders” and inadvertences - certain ones being zestful.

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<sup>42</sup> Probably that the most who did petrol stocks are pensioners, and the majority of them will not use their cars until spring, fact that will allow them to say that: “See? - I was right! They are raising the price of petrol!” hence without understanding that their anticipatory counting was wrong because of time. These kind of calculations are done both because maladjustment to the new realities and the lack of trust in the governors. No matter which is the reason, the lack of trust produces the frequent inconsequence of the decisional factors. A pervert effect that can appear in this case is the lack of respect for the rules, which is directly caused by the lack of trust in the institutions of the state and in their capacity of accomplishing their mission.

It is not very Christian what we will do, but let us enumerate some facts that happened in our proximity:

- inventing a tax whose quantum varies depending on the number of chairs in a restaurant. When hearing this news, instead of seeing if this tax is entitled, a restaurant owner said (with humour) that he would change the chairs with little chests;
- the recalculated excise tax for fields and houses; the negative impact was not basically generated by its increased value but by the aberrant way how administration wanted to gather the money, without announcing in time the derogations regarding the penalties, fact that led to the apparition of monstrous queues, that were facilitated by the lack of trust in the system<sup>43</sup>;
- the impossibility of paying the “Basescu” tax, because on one hand the Government was declaring its “money hunger” and on the other hand it did not seem to hurry in issuing the methodological rules for cashing it;
- the shocking swarming up of the working conflict in Valea Jiului and its transformation into a political movement used by extremist forces for their own interest (I have used this collocation for being delicate), which proved once more to the people that were blinded by power that the national interest fades when facing their miserly interests and that nobody could do us a greater wrong than we do to ourselves with such a disarming fineness;

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<sup>43</sup> It is not amazing that such things happen if the decisions are being modified from one day to another and what a decree establishes the next one abolishes; if what is clear today for everybody tomorrow is not the same anymore. In my opinion, the lack of consequence is the biggest mistake that the present power is guilty of.

- the queue formed by “Steagu” workers in front of the Brasov Prefecture. This happened because the F.P.S. confirmed that there are foreign partners that were interested in privatizing the factory only after the conflict broke out, even if the local authorities have requested a declaration the days prior to the conflict in order to stop it while being in its infancy; they were listened to only after the conflict burst out.

In fact, a reason for which that certain action was requested was in connection with the fact that the miners’ leaders were presenting the Brasov workers’ movement as solitary with theirs.

The previously presented facts are unfortunately true and are part of the dramatic reality that we are living and that some of us bear more and more hardly. The main consequence of the inconsistency of the decisional facts is socially reflected by berthing people in conservative thinking schemes, which are valid in a previous, long practiced reality (even if these schemes are not up to date, they are surely functional, - fact that offers them a great practical value by being reached the aim for which they are used for: the surviving at any costs and in any conditions, even the self-esteem being sacrificed).

The main conservative mechanisms used for maintaining a relative equilibrium in a frustrating reality are the following: the propagation of the susceptibility - exaggerated to the most absurd forms and “doing for the sake of doing it” as a way of life.

- We daily see in the TV opinion polls news done on the streets. As through magic, when somebody appears with a camera nobody wants to be the main character. However, when a courageous one is found, all the others crowd behind him and start to make comments, repeating the same sentence louder and louder. When lastly, the microphone turns curiously to them, they repeat the same phrase (without a subject or a predicate<sup>44</sup>) then they go, leaving some millions of Romanians witnesses of a rebellion worthy for respect.
- During this period of the year of many of us happens to slip and fall down. Many people pass next to the fallen one, look, keep their hands in their pockets or hold their satchels and wait for another one to come and help the fellow. Then they start talking upon how dangerous is such a fall, about ankle or wrist sprains...and the rave continues between the two strangers until the first street corner.
- The large audience TV shows wait from callers in live shows to ask questions on a preset topic or addressed to the invited guest. Instead of formulating the question, the Romanian TV viewer takes advantage of being live and starts talking until he/she forgets the question (if he/she formulated it before the call).

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<sup>44</sup> E.g. At the question: "Which will be the effects of raising the price of petrol?"  
"Disastrous ones!"

All these examples illustrate a sad reality. Not the wish (or need?) of becoming helpful for the others or for ourselves stimulates us to be in the middle of the events, at the crime scene, on TV...but our deplorable and malignant disease: “doing, for the sake of doing it”. What is more severe from this point of view is the need of those around us to see under the same coercion the others, or at least the ones that they directly interact with. If equality and prosperity are not possible, at least we should all suffer. This mentality, which is indeed harmful, imposes a working style where the competence and efficiency are no longer important, but the thing that matters is the presence. It is not important to do something, it is important to be there (this surely means that in that time one would not be able to do something else, thing that is important for those who are not able to do something else anyway - but to “do, for the sake of doing it”- and who wish that all the others to be alike them).

Tempted by mediocrity and equality, people wish to compensate their condition of uncertainty that they daily deal with by generating certain contexts that would standardize, atomize the individual; this is the temptation of the queue.

The queue has the role of dissolving and invalidating all the inequalities that are indifferent to its function, establishing only an apparent equality of those who compose it. The queue turns over the hierarchy



system<sup>45</sup>, because the functional inequality through which the queue replaces all the other inequalities that it suborders, does not produce a hierarchy.

Pavel Campeanu says: “referring to the present system of rules, the queue really produces an equalization of those who join it. By invalidating the general inequalities that dominate the macro-social organization, this equality dissimulates the discrete particular inequalities that the queue itself produces. However, before establishing its own inequalities, the queue equalizes all the purchasers based on the movable unit: all the potential buyers are there, and they stay, animated by the same uncertain hope of becoming effective buyers. A second source of inequality is an instrumental one: all the buyers have minimal quantities of money and time requested by this waiting-room of change, and they are ready to spend these amounts”<sup>46</sup>.

When we are facing competition situations, the premise that we start from is that we all have the equal chances for the moment we engage in it. The queue that was produced by the penury of resources until 1989, does not disappear now when the offer exists in this field, being only transferred in other domains: queue for unemployment or social assistance, queue for purchasing the treasury notes, and especially, queue in places where one cannot purchase resources, but he/she keeps in line in order to pay for certain taxes.

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<sup>45</sup> The concept of hierarchy is used by the sociologist Pavel Campeanu in his work called “Romania: the Queue for Food, a Way of Life”, page 40, Litera Printing House, Bucharest, 1994 - when analyzing the relationships established within the queue.

<sup>46</sup> Idem

The idea that, when in such a particular competing situation, we are afresh equal regardless the age, sex, culture, education or occupation, makes the attempt of abolishing the queue inefficient by allocating order tickets - these were contested in order that all the people engaged in the competition to stay and suffer the same coercions and to lose the same time<sup>47</sup>.

We have discussed the reason that determines the proliferation of the queues, the so-called equality temptation seen as an inherited equality and not a gained one. There are at least two factors that facilitate the phenomenon: the lack of culture in services and the perception upon the free time as a valueless time, as a time that can be lost<sup>48</sup>.

Good luck, and see you in the next queue!

1999

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<sup>47</sup> . A frequently met commentary is the following: “you have gone to solve your problems, meanwhile we have stood here as fools and now you want to get in front”; in other words, the one that abided the order ticket has not felt the same suffering and anguish, which are in fact self provoked by the other members of the group.

<sup>48</sup> . It can be explained due to this perception on the apparition of leisure and of symbolic queue in front of TV, watching soap-operas: there is a lack of common presence in the same space, but the solidarity exists: we are watching instead of doing something else, so we are the same.



## **THE EXCLUDED PRESENT**

Obsessively, at each beginning of the year, celebrating the union of the Romanian Princedoms silently imposes a moment of reflection. Do the years that passed over us oblige us to a more responsible and mature look upon what should we be doing and what we are really doing?

One can find the answer, leaving from the premise that we can reseat the present history on an older reality, by reevaluating the past values, because HISTORY should be known for giving example and for being a guide for the future. There were three crucial events for our becoming as nation: The Union in 1859, the Declaration of Independence in 1877 and the Great Union in 1918, which could happen being in fact the transposition into practice of the wish of the political class, which was continually becoming stronger, both ideologically and organizationally. This thing was possible because of the concentrate action of the intellectual elites that actively engaged itself into political life, by subsuming to the model of the cultural determinism, which affirms that, in fact, the development of a society is powerfully conditioned by the cultural factor.

The Union of the Princedoms was - both politically and spiritually - the idea that animated the political and intellectual elite of the time within the period following the revolution in 1848. The unionist movement took place in a difficult international context under various foreign

occupations<sup>49</sup>, which were hostile for both Romanian national aspirations and internal political liberalization. The problem that arises is whether we can capitalize this action model nowadays, especially because within a democratic regime the social development would suppose the apparition of a spiritual emulation. However, as long as the way of approaching the reality does not change and there will not be a functional bond between politics and culture, we cannot talk about the existence of any political elite, which, in fact, should be the motor of change.

The wishes and ideals of the society and of the individuals is changing, by having a historical character, the forms of the discourse themselves are submitted to change, but the values are perennial and we should learn to know what to do for becoming what we should be<sup>50</sup>.

The problem does not consist in the aim, but in the way, or better said consists in the practical modalities of application. We are always excluding the present. Certainly, it is hard to motivate ourselves when the discourse that is served to us stands in brilliant examples of the past or in sacrifices that must be done for reaching the future happiness. This is what always strikes me at us. We do not talk and we are not glad

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<sup>49</sup> We must not forget that the czar and the sultan were arrogating the right of nominating the rulers and being in this situation the Princedoms were again occupied by the Russians in 1853, after the beginning of the Crime War; and after that the Austrians from August 1854 until January 1857.

<sup>50</sup> . I have presented a desideratum. From understanding it and until developing some action plans there is a hard and winding way. The first condition for solving a problem is admitting its existence. The practice teaches us that when one wants to arrive somewhere it has to find a way, a modality to do it. The practice also teaches us that here come the difficulties. But at least they begin.

of what we have, but we always prepare for the future. This discourse is not new at all<sup>51</sup>. The pervert effect determined by using until saturation this theme stands in the diminishing of the Romanians' expectancy level. Constantly cajoled with the threat of a better future, people started to wish very little because they think that his way they will recuperate their present. However, the least you wish the least you will obtain, fact that cannot produce the presumed condition of equilibrium.

If we are still talking about the past, we should remember by heart some marks from the totalitarian experience in fact. From a dualist point of view, socialism could be considered an element of control for capitalism, a regulating factor regarding the way in which the used social consequences of the political strategies have been treated.

Maybe without the permanent comparison with the socialist experiences, capitalism would have been different. The sociologist Krishan Kumar<sup>52</sup> thinks that, in fact, capitalism needed socialism; if this would not existed, then it would have been necessary to be invented. Maybe this is an exaggeration, but the idea stands: it is much easier to adjust your attitudes when you have at your disposal real models for comparison. R.W. Johnson<sup>53</sup> pointed the powerful consolidation of socialism regarding the values and the East-European practices.

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<sup>51</sup> "We have to do more sacrifices because this is the only way that we will succeed. This time only, and after that everything will be in parameters. We have to make a last effort. The future will be golden. The future will be better. We know that it is not easy but... Our day will also come" etc. But we don't say anything about the present; nothing about now.

<sup>52</sup> Krishan Kumar, "Is it the End of Socialism? Is it the End of Utopia? Is it the End of History?" in "Utopias and the Millennium", London, Reachan Books, 1993

<sup>53</sup> Apud Krishan Kumar

Socialism, as well as capitalism, has become an important factor when we are talking about the foundation of the European society. Along with the disappearance of communism, the requisite role of socialism becomes obvious in a society and economy dominated by the institutions of the private property. Once again, the practice kills us. From here to innovations, such as “socialist market economy” is a long and doctrinaire unfounded way. The fall of Marxism as a system is paradoxically able to decontrol suppressed Marxist elements, such as the theory of alienation that could regenerate the system (but not here where the history was already sampled). It does not matter anymore that there are also good things; the stereotype effect functions and relying on it there are rejected all the ideas connected to the failed experiment. Regarding the social facts that individualize our experience referring to others, I would try a muster<sup>54</sup>:

1. The division of society into action zones and social categories framed by guild institutions (there were certain social groups that were approved by the system, marked with specific symbols: the motherland’s falcons, the pioneers, the workers etc.). Uniformity was the feature of each such a group and these were not directly communicating with each other. The direct consequence of this segregation was the creation of a series of non-associative and parallel societies. After 1990 the apparition of certain tensions between the groups became obvious (ethnic tensions, tensions between the workers and intellectuals). As an

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<sup>54</sup> This structure model was taken over from Bernard Paqueteau, “The Report of Occidental Europe about the Countries of Another Europe”, intercourse that was presented in Bucharest in 1995

indirect consequence, the privileges were preserved; in other words, those who had money, information and power before 1990 had all these after 1990 too.

2. The existence of the subterranean society built through inter-individual relationships and exchanges, which formed networks that would not submit themselves to any prescribed rules. “We are far from being in the presence of a totalitarian system; we are more under a gang system that exists under the mask of a petrified ideology”<sup>55</sup>. In this way we can explain the construction of the great fortunes, the continuance of stealing from the state’s propriety (legitimate until 1990, because they were stealing the system), the “art” of doing nothing at work, the continuance of “insignificant” practices, the generalized corruption, the acceptance of the principle that anything can be solved if one knows where to intercede and the way of living according to the saying “let me in order to let you”. This kind of social compromise led to the transformation of the rule of verity, which is necessary in the law of the objective lie, to the adoption of some individualistic strategies in which the impersonal relationships are functioning only negatively. It is not peculiar that we are always suspicious, that if somebody asks us about our life standard we involuntarily protect ourselves and start to hide in order not to raise envies that we could have avoided. It is symptomatic the fact that only starting with 2001 the rich ones pride themselves in public with their success.

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<sup>55</sup> Ibidem Bernard Paquetteau



3. The fact that, towards its end, the system relied more on the compromise with the subterranean society than on achieving the initial objectives, has led to the beginning of the reconstruction process, which put its basis on the cracks of a state that was functioning with the help of the networks and that was already corrupted (including even the project of the communist society). This tacit complicity has resulted in the incapacity of building a powerful civil society and has led to the construction - according to experienced success model - of a real mafia network.
4. Covering up what happened in December 1989, the absence of wrongdoers has led to the preservation of the past habits and behaviours. In fact, we can observe that the decay of the communist ideology and the leading system did not pull along to the disappearance of the subterranean networks. These have even developed and from here the apparent "wild capitalism", where everything is permitted.

Nowadays, because both history and we have been marked and intoxicated by the communist episode, we cannot recuperate the past. At least we have to understand that we can recuperate our present.

1999

## **CHANGING THE PERSPECTIVE: BETWEEN HOPE AND DESIRE**

The finding that each of us experiences and that in a certain moment can be considered by us as identity supplier, is the fact that within us and around us as well there is something instead of not being anything.

Around the 80s, being a teenager, I was convinced (yet I did not gain the habit that was to come later, of doubting everything for searching the absolute certainty) that in 2000 there would be nothing left, that I would not exist anymore and either the world.

The idea did not cross my mind because of a teenager's crisis, but because the pressure that was exerted in the social field by the propaganda of the totalitarian regime. The anti-occidental or anti-capitalist discourse did not matter so much, but the one that mattered and that insidiously sifted into our minds and in our thinking structures, was the discourse about the Cold War.

Ceausescu, in his megalomania, wished to be awarded with the Nobel Prize for peace, so that the atmosphere of the concentrationary universe where the being became more stifling because of the imminent danger that was watching us: the death of the entire humanity. (I am talking about the parallel reality created through the propaganda).

However, the saviour, the hero, was watching and punishing the unconscious state leaders, who due to his intervention were acknowledging the danger as the disappearance of humanity because of the nuclear winter.

The official propaganda was trying to reach more objectives with whose help to thank the “superstar” president:

1. building the saviour hero’s myth
2. maximizing the importance of the country on the international political stage
3. giving too much importance to the leader
4. transferring the interest from the inner problems to the external ones
5. limiting the people’s expectance horizon by generating false ‘idols’

The direct consequences that were unpredicted in the moment of adopting this scenery (the so called pervert effects), were the best illustrated in the rich wisecrack collection that had as main characters two important country rulers (by choice) and the inland leader. Meanwhile, the population filtered the information that was given to them and rationally reacted, by not accepting a beautified reality that was in a flagrant opposition with the one that they were actually living. Obviously, the ordinary citizen did not know that the epoch of dictators was the epoch of disinformation, however, in the end the common sense prevailed. It is more and more difficult to accept the fact that a peace-fighting champion can do his work well without electric power

and heating, by eating soybean salami and going to work only “for the sake of doing it”. It was more and more difficult to accept the idea that somebody who wanted to save the world does not really (not only formally and declaratively) do something for its own people. This kind of propaganda, which was successful on short-term, on medium and long-term, was subversive for the regime, firstly because exaggerating the Romanian people’s qualities and the country’s role within the international context (the leader’s genius image had to be connected to positive features).

The indirect consequences are harder to detect, but are equally interesting. They appear in a subtle territory, in the thinking structures. Here the change is slowly and I did not hear about any way of surgically speeding it up by grafting another mentality. What perfidious effects of the propaganda could enunciate the following sentences, which are absolute truths for many of us?

1. The Romanian people is hospitable and laborious;
2. The Romanian people did not oppress anybody;
3. We are good performers but we need somebody to guide us.
4. The nuclear winter would have meant the end of humanity.

Further, I will refer only to the last assertion that was the excuse for this text. I do not insist upon the idea that the nuclear winter would not have been the end, because is very generously presented by Revel<sup>56</sup>.

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<sup>56</sup> Francois Revel, “The Epoch of Disinformation”, Humanitas, 1991

There was infiltrated in our souls the idea that there might not be any future for us, and so, there is no reason to fight. Unexpectedly, there were many that sustained this idea, as Nostradamus in his prophecies and Malraux in his famous phrase “the XX century will be religious or it will not be at all” etc. As secondary benefits we at least had the satisfaction of being the witnesses of the End, of being the last, especially that there were no other satisfactions. (In our country, the field is favourable for such intercessions. The positioning in Romania of the fourth Rome proves this.)

That is why it is hard for me to believe that we can so easily pass from such a traumatizing experience of accepting the end of the existing and non-existing things towards a new spiritual revival, having as landmark the new millennium. I think that entering the new millennium will be consumed without giving too much importance to it. It will be as an initiation stage, because of the mere fact that we have arrived here (this utterance is not even used for not to waken the Gods.) I think that this is a long practiced survival strategy used by a nation that has little because was used to have little.

Renaissance is an initiation notion, which individually or collectively implies birth, life, death and, of course, the resurrection of that or those voluntarily and consciously engaged in the cycle of transmutations for obtaining another type of superior and regenerated existence.

Renaissance must be firstly taken for in the European context. Our common destiny, historical solidarity, unique but multiple being - that should oblige us to behave, as a whole hoping for salvation - is not obvious at all. For being able to talk about Renaissance we have to surmount these two difficulties: one that is in connection with our stupid modesty and lack of courage, and another that regards the answer to the question if is there a common European destiny or is there Europe only a multitude of individuals who hazardously live in the same geographical space and who chaotically and absurdly develop in the present of the conjuncture interests, without any common past or future in a liberty, which is perceived as anarchical.

“For an Eastern European, being a European means to find or to recover his/her place in a history, which is considered to be positive, a history that contrasts with the recent experiences”<sup>57</sup>. So, the West imposes itself, no matter its attributes, as the mark of modernity and normality, even if facing with a limit, we can say that we do not do anything else but to change the socialist utopia with that of the capitalist consuming. However, only the ones that live in a consumption society make this sensitive distinction. The ones in the east are not interested in how alienated could they be, they only wish to be like those and then will they see what happens. It is natural not to be able to understand what kinds of problems are generated by the presence of an attribute when you do not have it. In these conditions, we can explain the manifesto orientation, which is observable and measurable as pro capitalism, pro market-economy, pro European Union or pro NATO and which is identifiable for the majority of

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<sup>57</sup> According to M. Kundera, “A Kidnapped West”, Le Debat, 1985

the population. However, pay attention! This does not happen as we love the others or we know what a United Europe means, but because these stages are automatically associated with a better living. In fact, a better living and implicitly a healthy economy should facilitate those certain processes and not the other way round.

Deliberately or not, we see ourselves in the situation of having to talk about the Western Europeans versus the Eastern Europeans. Those in the West are “good” and impose to the Eastern ones their standards. It is an asymmetric situation between the evaluator and the evaluated one, where the last one must comply with the requests of the first one, and has to justify his/her actions in order to receive assistance. In some cases, this can lead to the appearance of an inferiority feeling, which is compensated by a discourse about the national identity<sup>58</sup>.

Once we enter the new millennium, maybe we should at least try to ask ourselves the following question, even if it will not be easy to give an answer: Which is the salvation that we are hoping for and which is the aim that we are following and that could give a meaning to our lives and which once reached could fulfil our destiny?

That will be a start.

2000

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<sup>58</sup> It offers a possible explanation for the apparition and even for the proliferation of the nationalist discourse: it compensates the frustration provoked by the fact that the presentations that we are operating with are built by the West and they have to be accepted as positive ones only because they come from there.

## THE "CIUCAS" BEER

The televisions and the publicity seem to be a step ahead of the other economical activities. This evolution that is correlated (one depends of on the other), seems to appear due to an extremely important feature of the Romanian consumer. This spends more time in front of the TV than any other eastern or western European does<sup>59</sup>. As long as the economy does not produce and the peoples' power of purchasing is low, this evolution may be haphazard. A possible explanation for such a TV exposure level is given by the lack of money, which is correlated with a weak expectancy level and with a poor leisure culture. As a completion of this sociological explanation, we can also formulate a psychological one. The frustration felt throughout so many years when the access to TV programs was strictly limited, generated contemplative behaviours that offer the Romanians a wide space of manifestation of the specific critical spirit<sup>60</sup>. After the events in 1989, these analyzing and evaluating tendencies became more obvious, because the Romanian TV viewer was faced with a new dynamic reality, social and political various, which was hard to cross. This fact led to the need of running away from the own-quotidian into the real or imaginary one of the others<sup>61</sup>.

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<sup>59</sup> The statistic data that we have from Calin Anastasiu, Imas, reflects the fact that 85% of the Romanians habitually watch TV, in comparison with maximum 75% of the Europeans.

<sup>60</sup> It is easier to criticize than to do something, habit that was practiced for a long time during the party meetings.

<sup>61</sup> It is a common fact our aptitude for catastrophic news (so, it can be worse) and for soap-operas (in spite of the difficulties, the good always wins).



We are facing with the question: how do the old habits influence the consumption? The consumption represents the process of using goods and services for satisfying different type of needs. The consumer's behaviour refers to the totality of actions, options and decisions regarding the use of the incomes for buying merchandise, services and economies. The purchasing behaviour generated different types of consumption. Trying to formulate a definition of the consumption, Jean Baudrillard perceives it as an active relationship (not only with the objects, but also with the collectivity and the world), a way of systematic activity and of global answer on which it is based our entire cultural system. Through the "seduction theory", Baudrillard warns us upon the fact that not being a material practice or a phenomenology of "abundance", the consumption cannot be defined through the food that we digest or the car that we are using and not even through the oral or visual substance of the images and the messages already built in a more or less coherent discourse. It is the activity of the systematic manipulation of the signs, because firstly the object has to become a sign. The coercion of consuming it is not produced by any psychological fatality or by any prestige constraint. If therefore the consumption seems invincible, it is because it is a total idealistic practice, which over a certain threshold, does not has anything to do with the satisfaction of needs or with the reality principle. Baudrillard considers that this systematic and undefined process of consumption rises from our exigency, which is disappointed by reality. In their ideality, the objects, the signs are equivalent with each other and can multiply to infinity: they even have to do it, the author says, for filling in every moment the hollow of the lack of reality. The gigantic informing and publicity

apparatus does not condition the people in a unique way by starting from their material needs, in other words from the object of their needs. This apparatus can focalize on the products, but not only: it continually creates other needs, permanently spreading a discourse about need, so this does not stay only as a material and economical phenomenon, but it transforms itself into a cultural and ideological product: it is a sign, a code, a language, a cultural impregnation, which is considered dissimulated but efficient. Therefore, while consuming we are actually responding to our needs, we collectively participate to this ideology of the need - a discourse, which is constantly kept in the disadvantage of the consumer. The need cannot be analyzed outside its essential reference field, the desire. Our fundamental needs are few, even if our publicity system can produce them infinitely. There is a limit of the need: that of the own saturation, but the desire does not know any limits. It unrolls in a continuous temporality and space, because it does disappear only through death.

The need is an objective function and it has a real role that cannot be substituted. The object of the need transcends the imaginary in and by its reality: we cannot substitute the activity of eating with something else, because "eating" sends us towards a precise physiological function that has its own necessity - we cannot replace bread with a piece of wood. Consequently, we say about the object of the need that cannot be permutable and it cannot infinitely vary in its rationality of need, because it has coherence, reason and finality. The desire is a significant function and the objects that satisfy or frustrate it do not have a real, defined or final function. It is a game of significant facts that entirely

forestall the object of desire, and the object of consumption joins this link, where desire cannot find its limit. The object of consumption, in opposition with the object of need, is interchangeable based on the continuous mobility of desire founded on the logic of privation and not on the one of satisfaction. We can say about the object of consumption that is in a perpetual run, in a flow of significant facts within which it can be blackmailed and permutated: the object becomes language no matter its utility and functionality; it leads to other things that are not connected to the order of need, but by the logic of the sign or symbol.

The consumption does not end, because desire always sends us beyond the object of consumption, to privation and non-saturation. Consumption does not stop because desire does not have limits. Therefore, the consumer is caught in a significant system whose signs are unlimited: there is a threshold of need saturation, but we cannot talk about saturation regarding the signs. If they, the consumers, would limit themselves to consuming only for satisfying the real needs, they would consume less and would produce less<sup>62</sup>. Therefore, the consumer does not stop at his real needs, but by interposing the signs, he continually aspires to imaginary need, which is determined by publicity and is whipped up by various fee systems. The consumer is the one that consumes the imaginary and it is submitted to the sign of consumption as the consumption society is submitted to the reality of production. With the help of some cultural and value determinations and of certain behaviours, in our country, we identify many types of consumption:

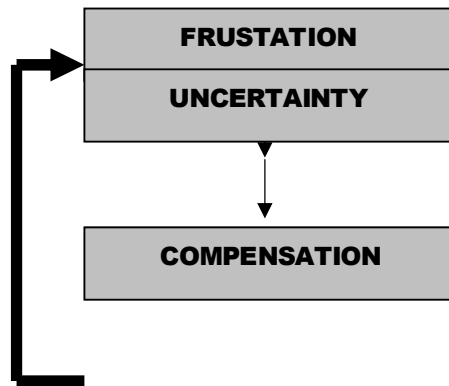
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<sup>62</sup> The Romanian paradox is that we consume more than we produce, a phenomenon that alters the normal logic regarding the product promoting politics.

- The ostentatious consumption represents an exceptional way of competition consumption in which the consumer evidently posts a higher social status than the real one.
- The competition consumption is a way of consuming in which the goods and services are bought from the individual's need of obtaining a better social appreciation in comparison with the others who are part of the membership group. It comes from the consumer's irrational desire of competing with others for proving the financial superiority through his ability of paying higher prices.
- The compensation consumption takes places when the consumer's acquisitions are done for compensating the frustrations or the need of hiding the social status and it is dictated by the social conformism and by the normative group. Therefore, a behaviour reactivation process is produced regarding the low needs (the basic ones, according to Maslow's motivational pyramid), that the person does not recognize, but the person sublimes.

Following we will refer to this kind of consumption, which is characteristic to the constant beer consumer category to which we referred in this title, The "Ciucas" Beer, a popular beer produced by Aurora Ltd. The indicators of this type of consumption (oriented on short term) are the incomes, the family's estate and the investments and on long term the consumption habit and the positive appreciation regarding the brand as well as the association of the consumption with past events and adventures.

The following scheme presents the mechanism that in the end leads to the behaviour that reduces frustration:



Being institutionalized the festivity symbol consumption in a period of crisis generated by the totalitarianism, by the individual's alienation and by the free expression lack, there could we talk about the manipulation of frustration before 1989. The compensation consumption, which appears in crisis, represents a form of indirect compensation by reducing the uncertainty regarding the future. This is the consumer's motivation, a favouring factor that permits gathering a big group of people that would spend their free time together in an organized manner, pleading for the participation to artistic manifestations, but remembering the past times when the picnics and beer drinking were the few moments of escaping from reality. The constant consumers can be held through such a modality of organizing some festivals that change into repeat actions for the sake of "the past times". As well, appears in these contexts a contagion phenomenon that leads to attracting new consumers. In fact, - without knowing it - the

constant consumers are promoters in attracting other consumers. Their single problem - because we must not forget that they are leading compensation consumption - is connected to the appearance of other frustration motifs. The inferior positioning in comparison with the others gives the most important source of potential frustration. Being traditionalists, firstly they wish to be like the others and to be proud of the products that they are consuming. Then, they have to boast with a story that is known by everybody: the advertisement and the slogan. The reputation of the brand makes the product more important. This reputation is obtained by the publicity made to the product, by promoting its image in order to give the consumer the possibility of identifying itself with the message.

Finally, I confess that I am guilty of inventing the slogan: "Ciucas, a beer you can count on!" When building this slogan I had to consider the consumption particularities about which we have previously discussed:

1. The message had to aim at least 50% of the consumers;
2. It should not have got negative connotations;
3. It should be identified on a market full of standard messages;
4. It should be easy to remember and to understand;
5. It should produce a subtle plan of positive associations;
6. It should be easy to process in other combinations;



## **THE BURDEN OF KNOWLEDGE. THE ILLUSION OF LOVE**

Squaring up to the problem of love and of the relationship between love and truth, the first difficulty is the feeling of incapability that one experiences when noticing that it cannot express his/her thoughts, without diminishing their meaning and value. The language is too poor for expressing them in their whole profundity. In this moment, one is tempted to use poetry that has a more adequate symbolization level regarding its experience, its feelings and thoughts. Hence, you sadly realize that not even the poet can overpass your thoughts. In such a disparate situation, when love transcends the thoughts and the words, you have only one choice...the silence.

However, the value, the uniqueness of silence cannot be perceived only by the one that is able to put him/her in the shoes of the object that must be revealed, this way producing a deeper knowing of that certain object.

In the present situation, the object that must be known is the author himself/herself, who wishes to express his/her opinion about love seen as the answer to the problem of the human existence.

Our every day life goes on in an almost total self-hypnotism. It is lived accordingly to our own laws, within an inexorable temporal link and without any thinking effort. This temporality of our existence "fatally



produces pain and anxiety”<sup>63</sup>. Neither the world nor the experience is part of the absolute entity, being created and destroyed in time; hence, they are illusory.

The spiritual phenomena can be shared with the others through two ways. The first way is a psychological one, which is inadequate in this case because it studies the individual in precisely defined time and space, presenting certain processes or phenomena that are considered to be important.

The second way is to sublime certain processes, taking them out from their context (from time and space), in order to study their own essence and their immediate finality. This way, the empirical phenomenon can be generalized or at last typified. In other words, what I see in love it is not properly love, but the general phenomenon of love. This modality is phenomenological and shows us that the world does not reveal itself through knowledge but through our experiences, passions and fears.

Does love and affection represent the same thing? It can be a problem of simple convention, assignment or designation. I subscribe to the opinion that considers love an activity and not a passive feeling; loving somebody is different from “to be in love”.

Love is not necessarily represented as a relationship with a certain person; it is an attitude, an orientation of the character, which determines a person’s way of correlation to the whole world and not only with one object of love.

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<sup>63</sup> Finkelkraut, Alain - “The Wisdom of Love”, Anima P.H., 1994

Taking into consideration only the relationships, the man needs the love and the woman for getting rid of the existential anxiety and for giving a meaning to his life.

The bipolarity of the act of love permits the use of love as a way of knowing and experiencing reality as it is. As a fundamental premise, I consider that we do exist just as man or women, “the love for a woman being the mean that leads the man to supreme liberty and beatitude”<sup>64</sup>.

Once we have agreed what love is and we have determined the domain that we referred to, we naturally ask ourselves the following question: “How can we recognize love?”

A common and stereotype answer is that love can be recognized “by the profoundness of the relationship, the liveliness and the power of each person involved”. Another intuitive answer is the following: “I know love even before I experienced it; the certainty of loving is always a recognition”. I say - risking of paraphrasing Nae Ionescu - that love does not have to be proved, but it must be experienced. Even if existence is a burden and not a condition of grace, in the moment when we refuse love we prove that we are not afraid of death, but of living.

We can consider love the individual’s “faculty” that depends on the influence of the cultural pattern. More than in the East, in the West the

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<sup>64</sup> We can notice that the gender discrimination, as an effect of the gender stereotypes that are culturally supported and that affirm that men are the ones that configure the world, while the woman is only an attribute.

modern man is alienated of himself<sup>65</sup>. In the majority of the cases, the man will find in “love” only a refuge when faced with loneliness, which represents an egocentrism in two. It seems that the West “cursed” love in its whole expression. Everything is false. Everything is mystified. In the “new amorous disarray”, the authors<sup>66</sup> sustain the following: “Until recently, we were suffering because of the exorbitant obligations imposed by the masculine condition (honour, courage, violence, toughness). Today we are suffering from the obligation of genius excitement of constraining the hedonic efficiency perceived as erection, as permanent ejaculation”. I can give the example of the Germans who think that is imperiously important to learn the way of “courting” a woman; the proof of repressing the feeling when having sex. In the East, in our orthodox spirituality, according to Nae Ionescu, the love is considered a mystical instrument of knowing. Through love we reveal not only God but also our own soul. Within the eastern religious act there is an inherent connection between body and soul, while in the protestant religions “in front of God, the man is spirit”.

“So, in the East a man means sin”. “I love you because you are my fellow” is sustained in the classical theory of love. “Love your fellow as you love yourself” says the Bible. However, we cannot love each other because we are not only spirit, but also a corrupted spirit; body and spirit together. For loving the others, firstly you must dearly love yourself, to hold yourself dear, to believe that you exist as an individual with full rights. Just that I do not love myself, and for surpassing this

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<sup>65</sup> Nae Ionescu, “Lectures about the Religion of Philosophy”, Apostrof Library P.H., 1994

<sup>66</sup> Pascal Brukner, Alain Finkielkraut, “The New Amorous Disarray”, Nemira P.H., 1995

condition produced by the corrupted spirit, I have to escape from myself, to give myself a different importance<sup>67</sup>.

“Love is not a positive bond, is not a management rule in the eastern religious metaphysics, but it is simply your own capitalization in your relationship with the others”.<sup>68</sup> The base of love is the desire and the faith in something, in somebody; this way one can discover the object that he/she wants to know by identifying it with him/her. The knowledge appears as result of love and not as its purpose, because love exists through itself, having an ontological reality that you cannot avoid. In other words, you do not need the other person because you are restless and you need to calm down. In reality, your intercession could cause you a great deal of frustration and pain. I look for the other not because I am anxious, but because I cannot do otherwise. I can be anyhow in this world as long as I do not think about its sense and about the truth of existence.

What is important here? The project, the thing that you want to accomplish, or simply the existence, in other words what does exist? Which are the limits within whom you can slide, comparing all the things that happen to you with the things that you wish to happen? Being lost in the labyrinth of your own illusions, in one moment you can realize that you have wasted a just virtuosity, which if you would have

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<sup>67</sup> There are two problems here. If we are the way we are, because we are orthodox, or the fact that we are orthodox determines us to be this way? The second refers to duplicity; what did communism do us: marked, changed, corrupted us or fitted us as a glove? And in fact, how are we and why are we like that?

<sup>68</sup> Nae Ionescu, “Metaphysics Course”, Humanitas P.H., 1991

chosen before than it could have had consistency and life. Yes, this is possible. Nevertheless, what guarantees us that after the presumed adjudication, the real treasure that could have given our equilibrium and harmony in the world, is not buried in the most hidden places of our own being?

Surely, we can find our equilibrium in ourselves and through ourselves - the case of the asceticism - but this interferes with own decisional liberty: "I can find the equilibrium in myself, but I do not feel like it, I do not want to." Thus, in the moment of falling down from "cosmos" into "reality", the single viable alternative seems to be the searching of the equilibrium in the world, in the other person, this way finding the constant forms that we should follow, the referential.

I used to know the other one, he/she was mine, I used to know all his/her secrets and soul, yet he/she is gone. He/she disappeared and I do not know how he/she can say that he/she does not feel anything anymore. Was not this true love? What was it then? It was our static way of thinking, of perceiving the world, without realizing that everything changes, nothing is eternal and in fact, the one beside us, who we have veiled in our love, was a stranger that we did not even know, because we have only loved his/her love for us. This is the moment when we understand. Perhaps, now we are really open for love, which could begin with the common pain that we feel.

Maybe, no matter what we will do, we will not be satisfied and we will not realize that happiness is beside us because it is given to us<sup>69</sup>. We do not realize this thing until we have lost it. We sink into the quotidian banality - according to the well-known utilitarian model - forgetting about our spiritual life, which is the only one able to exceed reality, harmonizing us with the world by finding our authentic being.

When our affective dispositions lead us in front of the existence, they hide from us the “nothing” that we are searching for. We can prevent our fear for “nothing” and we can manage to exceed the existence only by transcendence. In fact, finding the authenticity of life, the truth of the existence, is the adequate solution to forget our fear of life. This happens in a subtle plan, where the psychical processes dissociate from the parallel organic ones. That is when we find the authenticity of our being; when we eliminate the thing, which I call “dead time” - that time during which we cannot find our place in the world. As an exterior manifestation, this time is the period during which we aimlessly wander on the streets, we cannot find our place, we are always unhappy about something, unhappiness takes over our soul and we get the subtle feeling that we are useless.

In other words, this means that in those certain moments we are far from what I call the authentic being, the real being. Traditionally, the truth is defined as the matching between the utterance and the thing.

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<sup>69</sup> Continuing Mircea Eliade’s idea about “The Art of Dying”, Moldova P.H., 1993

“For reaching the truth, the man has to submit himself to the existence, hence, where men are free to do this, they also have the liberty of not doing it - this is when the man does not let existence to be itself, but it covers and blocks the access to it; therefore the appearance will dominate our minds and the inessential of the truth will possess us”.<sup>70</sup> The untruth is not contrary to truth, because the first is not the result of the intellectual’s maladjustment to things. The source of both truth and untruth must not be searched in “the unhidden estate of the being, but rather in the correctitude of the utterance”. Therefore, the criterion of truth is no longer the unhidden of the being, but the way of seeing things. Truth will stand in our way of seeing things and in knowledge. The man will relate to existence through love.

Through love, we try to obtain “the certitude” as if this it would be something that can be possessed. We know in fact that our only “certitude” is death, our mystery. However, each of us thinks that he/she has discovered the pure, fantastic, real love and because we are not afraid of death anymore, we are ready to die caught in the partner’s mirage because this makes us feel that we are the happy possessors of other “certitude” than death. Hence, in the moment when we have the ‘certitude”, we cannot be certain anymore. Then, we enter the myth, the fairytale and the specific form through which the traditional world expressed the ultimate significations of the being. Our behaviour becomes “exemplary”, fact that gives space to untruth, because we are no longer ourselves, we want the one beside us to like us at any costs, we always stay close to him/her, eventually we even stress him/her,

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<sup>70</sup> Heidegger, Martin, “Marks on the Road of Thinking”, Political Press, 1988

forgetting that we are not loved for one or several of our qualities but because our being. Thus, we mystify the whole reality and we get to the barren feeling, to the hiding our real emotions because of the wrong way of looking at things.

Trying to find rational arguments to justify the existence of love, we forget that in fact love has its reality beyond any rationality of its existence. Besides, even if we are well intended, we manage to kill the things we love, because by possessing the authenticity without knowing it, we start the pursuit and at the end of it we get to dissolution and then to despair and finally to sadness. There is no true love, but only love. "You two cannot love!" they say to you<sup>71</sup>. You do not know what to say in that moment. You only realize that, that surely "you two" include "you". You are unbalanced. Until now, you thought that everything was clear, there is not anything more to say.

You knew that you once loved. Or, maybe...was it something else? You do not know anymore. Maybe it is true that you do not know how to love anymore. This fact supposes that once you knew how to love, but now you are incapable of doing it because of the way you are. That is to

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<sup>71</sup> It happens to us systematically in our activities; the things "We" do are worse, have less value than those done by the others. We always make mistakes that others would not have done. If we will say and repeat until infinity "a German car is a German car!" then is clear what we think about the Romanian one. I cannot figure it out exactly how much did these attitudes influence the aggregation of two directions: the one that sustained through the official propaganda how "cool" we are and that which was circulating in subsidiary under the brand of Radulescu-Motru and Draghicescu, which was even abolishing us in essential points. In my point of view, there was an induction phenomenon of assuming out of commodity a prescribed role, which was not the result of statistic data, but that of some suppositions and generalizations of some case studies. Let us not forget that the text makes history and if we will keep on complaining that we are lazy, we will not do anything more but to develop this kind of behaviour. The addict behaviours are always easier to assimilate, so there will not be hard for us to do it.



say that once you felt but you cannot feel anymore. This thing is reproached to you directly. You desperately try to define yourself. You know the way you are and you also know that you cannot be otherwise. You think about your life and you are not sure that you would like what you discover, but at least you would find out that you “exist”.

You have realized that you love only after it was over. Even for you the only paradise is the “lost paradise”. And, in the moment you lost, when you chased her/him out of your soul and you sent her/him away, then you have started to love the image that you have formed yourself about what your love should have been. That is why you cannot love. That is why you cannot live and you do not have a clue about how to react. In a doubtful and suspicious world, it is hard to have an authentic behaviour because, in fact, you have never known and you do not even want to know how to do it. It is enough for you to live inside<sup>72</sup> the image that you have built yourself about love. In fact, you were never interested in adventures, but you always longed for Love, even if, as consequence of your choice, you sometimes are veiled in sadness.

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<sup>72</sup> As a parenthesis, I cannot go on without noticing that no matter the invented banalities, lots of people believe they are the grandsons of Noica and at each two sentences that they tell they cannot avoid saying the word “intru” (*translator’s note: preposition “intru” derives from the Latin adverb “intro”, which means “inside”; Noica identifies a philosophical understandings of this word, which would be “within a horizon, within a system and aiming towards something”*). All these can be also understood in terms of influencing techniques: by criticizing others I automatically exclude myself from that certain category and I suggest that I am different; being in opposition with such practices, by using them means that I have the right to do it and I really have it because I am different, I am as I should be. We can go further. It is possible that I have done this addendum precisely for preventing such a reaction of others regarding me, while that certain mention excuses me for anticipating right. The fact that I could infinitely continue with such pleas is, as I think, an indicator of how sick of suspicions we are; we do not like direct, clear messages. We like to “go round our tail” only to show to the others that we have a tail. This is really a mentality problem, which is latent and hard to acknowledge and which seems to have catastrophic effects regarding our actions. Even if that is what we are, or we are like we are...etc.

If you can say about somebody or something that you love her/him/it - fact that is already very much to say because love transcends thinking and words - it is sure that you want to include him/her/it in your life. Any love passes through the phase called "falling in love", but here are many situations of "falling in love" which do not conclude in an authentic love. These kinds of "love" are mere style exercises; facts that are hazardously cut off from contingency and do not belong to your life because they belong to the outside world. What belongs to everybody is not interesting for you, even if theoretically you know how to act for adjudicating your "slice". You know that love supposes care, responsibility, respect and knowledge. Everything is simple and clear in everybody's world. However, you long for your own, well-determined world, because only this way your being can become authentic, generating a growth of power. At least this is your individual love and within the subjective sphere of your feelings. Illusion and reality are equivalent.

We cannot perfectly know the world. According to a typology elaborated by Kant, cognition is perfectly judged by its quantity, its generality and its quality - if it is distinctive, true or doubtless. Albeit that we admit the truth of the object's concordance with the knowledge, we must also admit that we do not understand, that we do not know anything for sure with an absolute certainty. The understanding and the intellect are vaster than the rational; it directly results that we may not know something, we may not be able to love, and in spite of all these, we can understand love. There is no doubt that reality is an objective property of knowledge. It is also true that when related to the intellect or to a particular subject, the judgment, through which we represent something true, is subjective.

There is no knowledge if there is not a direct contact with the objective content. That is why must live love - even if we do not know how to do it<sup>73</sup> - if we want to understand it. The entire real existence is the meeting. Living means to find or to be found by another person that can be integrated in our world, as we comprehend it. This supposes the fact that his/her answer and our rapprochement to become the only satisfaction that we can have and his/her absence to make us suffer enormously. I said "the only satisfaction", because in an authentic personal meeting, the other things disappear. Without this answer our world does not exist anymore. Implicitly, the authentic meeting imposes the limits of the world, as our world exists only for this meeting.

The existence of love is not conditioned by knowledge, but by itself. The authentic meeting is the moment in which love owns a total ontological reality that you cannot avoid. It is the single moment when, practically, any relationship between love and knowledge is cancelled. If we can say that judgment is the link between two concepts - love and knowledge -, results that the dissolution of one term implies the insignificance of the judgment and its suspension. There is a common life and a common reality, but there are also unique moments, when the suspended judgment makes us feel that everything that we know is insignificant; it does not work anymore; love is perceived as a relationship between dream and death. There is a moment when we are immortal; a moment when we know everything and in the same time nothing; a moment

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<sup>73</sup> We have the theoretical advantage that we have lived through socialism, even if we did not know how to do it!

when I achieve knowledge through my union with my partner and not by thinking. This way you find yourself, you discover yourself and finally you get to certitude, but you cannot remain there. It is the moment when you start thinking, asking yourself questions and because you know very well that the world is changing, that we are changing, you are trying to conserve this estate - eternity - through something else than vows. You want to be retentive of that moment and to live it repeatedly until eternity. You feel that you will not be able not to scramble the past by asking yourself where you have failed. You cannot believe that you did not fail, because even now you are making a mistake, by existing. It is hard for you to accept the existence of questions that have no answer, because they all had an answer "then". Your wish to have it all is growing stronger when you start to realize how little you have. Then you steal, because sometime you have had. You return into the past, although you have never liked the people who lived in the past. That does not matter now, but the pain is growing bigger and bigger as the distance between what it was and what it is now is growing. You cannot help not to return in time - you do not know what to do there in order that both the past and the present to be different - but you would return just once, for living what you have lived then. Now it would be different, you would live differently because you would know that it would end...now you know that everything ends someday.<sup>74</sup>

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<sup>74</sup> It would be interesting to imagine that we could return to the period before 1990; we could use this premise for making some qualitative researches by imaging alternative sceneries and by analyzing them in order to identify some role stereotypes that would permit us to make a systematic analysis of the mentalities and of the structural change.

However, you do not care that through love we go beyond the idea that we have about the other one. There is one thing that you cannot deny: knowledge is the result of love and not its aim. You accept conscience, but you ask yourself what is it good for if the other person does not belong to your reality, to your destiny anymore - because you do not know how it happened, but you killed something you loved. Acknowledging this thing marks the death of your illusions and of your ignorance, followed by the understanding your own existence.

“The meeting” is the crucial event of your existence. It is preceded by a road, which is forgotten when we arrived somewhere, even if we were looking for something else. This step is followed by your capitalization as a revealed authentic being. “Looking for” the other one, the way that you follow for reaching him/her, is generated by the desire for achieving knowledge, way that you will get through love and you will lose because of love.

We could accept the validity of the hypothesis that “men are the ones that want to conquer, while women let themselves conquered”. The image of the “hard to get” women or of the men who want to be conquered by the women is apparent; both sides (consciously or unconsciously) adopt nonconformist strategies for attracting the other one; the general typology does not suffer any changes. If you do not accept the existence of this difference, then you will find yourself changing the other one in somebody that he/she is not. The woman “loses” you if you let her seem different than she really is; she is not more evil than the man is, but she is easier to be cheated. She is

bereaved by form and if the man adores her, he cuts in fact her support, permitting her to transform a simple role into an irremediable fall. Regarding the women's nature, the evil is not inherent - as it is in the case of the men - but it stands in the woman's capacity of cheating herself when deceiving others, being convinced that, here and now, she is different. In reality, there are no typical cases; there is always something more or less, but the general trait remains the same. "The things that the human beings know when they feel attracted to each other, when they love and bound to each other, will be given back to the vaster totality from which all these are part of."<sup>75</sup>

Passing through the period of falling in love, the way until love supposes the existence of an apperceptive about the other and a personal way of assuming your existence (we have already discussed this idea before). When you get to "the glade, the way does not matter any longer", you even want to forget it. However, until then the question is: "does falling in love bring additional knowledge or do we compensate through cognition the remission caused by falling in love?" If we accept the idea that we love as much as we doubt the knowledge - the other one not being as he/she is in reality but as the image that we have created about him/her - then we really compensate through knowledge the momentary lack of lucidity. However, this happens only when you do not love him/her anymore<sup>76</sup>.

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<sup>75</sup> Ibid Pascal Brukner, Alain Finkielkraut

<sup>76</sup> Emil Cioran, "The Sadness of Being", Dionysos P.H., 1992

If we accept instead the idea of additional knowledge, you will find that you are wondering about the authenticity of your experience, because when your judgment is suspended the only thing that matters is your loved one. It is indeed better to forget the way because it is only important for meeting each other. After the meeting, it does not matter anymore what happens in reality. The leap is produced in the spiritual world. However, the main function of love is the knowledge and not the action. Cognition is perceived as the identification of the subject with the object. This is why you do not see the reality, you see yourself, as you desire to be. That is why you can better understand somebody that you love, even if you do not apprehend him/her. There is no art or science of loving somebody, it just happens all of a sudden. You will manage to “become” because love subjugates before you can even realize it. From this point, only exceeding through love can produce knowledge, because it finally implies understanding the real you.

The attempt to bond to another person through love does not start with the conviction that there is somebody predestined to you, but it is generated by the idea that the other one, the unique one, is a point where you can reach an activity, a sense that already exists inside you and without which you cannot manage it. You have and you do not have your own world. Everything is connected to the other one; your soul is with him/her, he/she is not happy: what should he/she do with two souls? You want his/her soul but he/she does not give it to you, so you try to steal it. However, this is not the only problem: he/she does not want your soul, but you do not want it back, either although you need a soul. You desperately need his/her soul and sometimes you are

thinking: God, what happens if somebody puts his/her soul in the empty space inside me? Maybe this is the key of the problem. We do not want to accept that every end is a new start. We thought that the end of a single utopia is the end of all utopias but in fact, the only way to a reasonable survival - as much as we are allowed to obtain knowledge - stands in replacing the failed utopia with another one.

If the passing by the supposed catastrophic threshold of 2000 towards the third millennium gives us the right to hope, the utopia gives us the right to wish. We have only one alternative left: we have to fall in love with the perfect society for being able to do everything that stands in our power to reach it.

The end of the Marx illusion has generated the need of a new illusion instead of announcing the death of the illusion. Another illusion, the same people, the same mentalities. This story about the mentality change has become puerile. It explains things but it does not help. Do we really know how to love?

2002





## **END OR BEGINNING?**

*1. How would you characterize the present situation of the Romanian society?*

Deplorable, disastrous, absurd, endless transition, poverty, pitiful, bad, declined, masquerade, pauperism, humiliating. These were the answers that we have got (without taking into account the frequency of each word) from the students that are in the 1<sup>st</sup> year of studying the sociology in Brasov in the autumn of year 2000, when asked to characterize in a single word the present situation of Romanian society. I made this intercession because I was surprised by the fact that I could find only negative words to answer your question. It seems that due to our cognition and information limits we cannot take into account mere suppositions and sceneries for explaining a really unsatisfactory situation. Are we the victims of a collective illusion that does permit us to see the reality only through a distorted grid of presenting - through all the media channels - our failures and inconveniences or the things are indeed serious? Both variants have the same consequences, because the way in which we describe reality becomes reality itself.

For seeing how do our citizens perceive the future, I will present the data of a personal research done in November 2000 upon a number of 1,169 un-institutionalized people, which was a nationally quota sample.

	Frequency	Percent	Valid percent	Cumulative percent
Lack of jobs	133	13	<b>16.3</b>	16.3
Uncertainty of tomorrow	119	11.6	<b>14.5</b>	30.8
Lack of money/financial situation/inflation	139	13.5	<b>17.0</b>	47.8
Personal and family's security	140	13.6	<b>17.1</b>	64.9
Aggravated situation/diminishing of welfare	59	5.7	<b>7.2</b>	72.1
Death	13	1.3	<b>1.6</b>	73.3
War	29	2.8	<b>3.5</b>	77.3
Next elections	15	1.5	<b>1.8</b>	79.1
Disease	70	6.8	<b>8.6</b>	87.7
Natural calamities	23	2.2	<b>2.8</b>	90.5
Economical insecurity	23	2.2	<b>2.8</b>	93.3
Lack of perspective	9	0.9	<b>1.1</b>	94.4
Losing faith	1	0.1	<b>0.1</b>	94.5
Inefficient administration (local/national)	15	1.5	<b>1.8</b>	96.3
Corruption	5	0.5	<b>0.6</b>	96.9
Transition	3	0.3	<b>0.4</b>	97.3
Lack of humaneness/education	12	1.2	<b>1.5</b>	98.8
Other things	10	1.0	<b>1.2</b>	100.0
Total	818	79.6	<b>100.0</b>	-

**TABLE NO. 1: Which is the thing you are most afraid of?**

I think that the present situation of Romanian society it is described well-enough by the people's fears. It is possible that the motivation theory may offer a coherent explanation even for the voting behaviour. As people say, the problems would be: the unemployment, the lack of jobs and the uncertainty of tomorrow, poverty and health. By analyzing the distribution of the answers, we can observe that people fear the close future and they organize their actions according to instrumental values and not according to final values, fact that can be explained within a negative and uncertain social field.

*2. Which are the main causes that have generated this situation?*

The cause was the aggregation of some uncharted moments. I would start with the flunk of the year 1990, when a "sincere" onset would have been appropriate. Then 1996, when we have omitted the public collective welfare to the detriment of the personal interests. Probably 2000 will oblige us to reinterpret things. I consider that the guilty ones for the present situation are the members of the political class, who missed various obvious favourable moments. We talk about corruption as being a factor that has to be retained, as if it would be the cause of all the evil, while corruption is a consequence of the institutions' functioning mode and of the legislative system. Another consequence, which derives from these legislative imperfections, is the unlimited possibility that the parliamentarians have once they are elected in a political party, of moving from one party to another. The effect is

amplified through the media and leads to the diminishing of people's faith in the institution that these represent.

*3. If you consider that the Romanian society passes a crisis, which do you think that would be the perspectives of overcoming it and the main directions for solving and straightening it?*

The crisis is structural and there are no perspectives for straightening it on short-term, which is difficult to be accepted by the population that does not benefit from the side advantages (situation which is produced by the lack of the loisir culture, of the services, by the incapacity of foreseeing the clear perspectives in one direction or another), so that the difficult situation which we pass through is even more amplified.

Change must be started or continued within the institutions. It was proved in eleven years that the needed change of mentality could not happen by itself, even if it is subordinated to a noble but vague and insignificant aim. So that we should let to the poets the monopole on explaining the social facts as mentalities, Romanian people's adaptation incapacity, the historical destiny, the poor culture set beyond the limits of history, the laziness, the "managing" capacity etc. When we will understand that these are only the consequences generated by reality (and also reality generators) and when the elite will understand that the personal interests cannot be maximized for eternity while neglecting the common interests, and when there will be changes within the legislative and institutional system, then will we finally be able to talk about a new way.

I doubt that these things will come by themselves or that they will be acknowledged. There were used too many slogans in the last years, fact that has semantically impoverished everything that we could say. As long as “we must do” has remained a name, I cannot further see concrete solutions; and I ascertain that anything I would say it would sound as an electoral discourse/speech.



## ADDENDA

Talking with...

A.I Brumaru - writer

Claudiu Coman - sociologist

Gabriel Stan - painter and publicist

.... about "Marx Illusion"

A.I.B. - Claudiu Coman, how does your book relate to the Marxism follower Jacques Derrida's work called "The spectrums of Marxism"? His book was published in France at the Galilee Publishing House in 1993 and in 1999 Bogdan Ghiu and Mihaela Cosma at the Polirom P.H. in Iasi translated it to Romanian. I certainly do not refer to a direct influence, especially because I know that you have published the first essay with this title - *The Marx Illusion* in Astra magazine - in the same year and Gabriel Stan suggested it to you. I suggest you to relate to Derrida's book in a different way, though I know that the answer is already given in this book. I know that you could have your own retort, hence this is what Derrida sustained: "The capitalist societies can stay relaxed saying themselves that communism finished together with the demolition of the XX century totalitarian systems and not only that has finished but there did not take place at all. It was only a phantom that never dies but it always returns. Has Engel's and Marx's communist phantom indeed passed over a part of the world just like Derrida's ghost, which being only a phantom, an existence without beginning, is it in the same time eternal?"



C.C. - I think that I have a rather analytical answer; I am sure that Derreida's refers to those ghosts who haunt us and they will always do it. If you get rid of one ghost other will inevitably haunt you. In other terms I think that we deal with a utopia. Maybe the end of one utopia means the end of all utopias, or do we generate new utopias due to our nature? In fact utopia means illusion. And there were also other thinkers who thought about this problem. In my book, I quote the English sociologist Krishan Kumark, who has also analyzed this matter. From a pragmatic point of view, there would be another interpretation and through the answer, firstly I would like to understand my way of relating to Derreida's text. I hope that my book shows the idea that it depends from which point of view we see the things. This is the paradigm with which you can try to interpret reality. According to the Marxist paradigm there exists a capitalist society and if we consider this fact as correct, then the capitalism can "laugh", because socialism disappeared. However, the problem is different: if we do not see things according to Marxist paradigm, then there was never a capitalist society. There were industrial societies and now there are post-industrial societies.

A.I.B - Derreida said that there was no communism....

C.C. - Not only that it did not exist, there will it never be. It exists only for those who tried to interpret reality through this point of view. If you remember, until 1990 we learnt that philosophy is divided in two big parts: materialistic philosophy and idealistic

philosophy. If we talk to a pupil or to a student in year 2000, he will say: "What is this nonsense?", because the text makes history and they learn different things. Therefore, this distribution of the system, that was trying to inoculate certain ideas, was arbitrary. This is why I adopt a more trenchant attitude telling you that in my point of view we cannot talk about this antagonism capitalism-socialism; we can only talk about the end of a utopia. The question that rises is "can this utopia be replaced?" Is it necessary to be replaced? On the other hand, are we the ones that need to replace it with another one?

G.S. - I am convinced that it is not only a utopia, because the great social organization ideas are very old. People were talking about communism and about different state organization methods even in the Greek antiquity. In my opinion, that things were consumed in history. However, as you said about philosophy, this naive classification led to a trap. It was the time when came the dialectic and historical materialistic doctrinaires, they split the world into social classes and they tried to discover a historical structure, fact that seems to me false because the topic, which is discussed in your book, is more complex. We are talking about an abuse, a social rape that is pointed against certain nations, against some very large communities. It is about a disease in which the nations fall by undertaking some insignificant ideas that were used by both right and left doctrinaires. We can even talk about a totalitarian monarchy that in the name of some beautiful ideas (in which the hierarchy structure starts with God), produces abuses.

There were abuses also made in the name of the materialistic and ideological philosophy. For being able to analyze the tragedy that the so-called communists or we went through, you have to adopt a logical way and to rely on the common sense. In the moment you come and try to make an analysis of what we experienced, you really have to separate, to get out from this mess, from this disease, because it was really an illness for us. I accuse communism of schizophrenia starting with the schizophrenic leaders - they were decorating the Christmas tree at home, and after a while, they were giving anti-religious discourses on TV. The schizophrenia was mixed with paranoia, as you say in your book - you could not live in an ill society without being contaminated, because it was affecting you anyway. We are passing through a revenge of history, because precisely the ones that were contaminated by the red plague, the ones that survived out of it, become immune. I consider myself immune, I feel myself capable of looking objectively at a disease that is unknown to those in Europe that were outside the system and I refer less to Germany, because it was also contaminated by the Nazism. They cannot talk about the complexity of this disease, because they did not experience it. We know such social disease that has not appeared from the air as a phantom. Marx was a simple man who was suffering from tuberculosis and who "slipped" some crazy ideas that have become words and the words have become facts that created sick characters. Hence, this was not the only thing that caused the disease, but all the energies and forces that exploded within the human being and which without any moral code

changed into a virulent action against the nation. It was a conducted hypnosis; the ones that took advantage out of it, they brought the disease. This is what you find in each totalitarian system. This happened with Hitler and Ceausescu; everywhere we find an extraordinary powerful and thought propaganda apparatus. This apparatus does nothing more but to produce tension and to brainwash the people's minds by infecting everybody. In the system, even if you are not sick, you mime the illness only to rescue yourself. Recovering from this kind of disease can be done only acknowledging it through returning to awareness. There are no psychiatrists or psychologists that can cure this social disease. It was a mental illness, which even led to a physical disease. Communism was a continuous crime. The fear that was produced with the help of the lies and the lie is the first sign that should make you suspicious in any of the forms of social organization. When there is a lie, it is clear that things go in a wrong direction. Leaving from the lie one can get to theft, prostitution and from here to the depravation of the society and to a continuous crime, to violence that cannot be justified either by history or by any form of maintaining the organizational dominion. It is very easy to live in Paris and say that communism have not existed, but you cannot say this to me, because I have eaten it on bread and I still remember the rationed food, and I know how it feels when all the people around you are depersonalized. For understanding a system, you should have lived it.

A.I.B. - Do you think that illusion approximates with nostalgia?

C.C. - It is the irony of destiny - the experiment that we all lived but which cannot be measured in what we feel every day. There are some effects are connected to the relation between mystification and power. However, this mystification has deteriorated us as individuals, even if we realize it or not. This is the problem of mentality; and the irony of the destiny makes that the present occidental society, which we have to integrate in, saved itself precisely due to such experiment that others passed through. From this point of view, it is excellent for the society, hence for each individual separately is disastrous, the effects that we have all experienced cannot be analyze by strangers who have not had the knowledge about which Nae Ionescu has spoke; it is very hard to put yourself in other people's shoes when you have very different living conditions.

G.S. - Speaking about what you said..., in 1985 in a group of friends from Germany, the left side German intellectuals while talking about the situation in Romania, were trying to persuade me about the fact that we do not know how to apply the communism. They have saved themselves until the fall of the Berlin wall, but they will still be the victims of this illusion, they will also get to build a form of distorted socialism or whatever will they call it. This communization will happen; our chance (I am talking about the ones in the East that have saved themselves) is that we will not repeat it. This is our part of salvation; we are saved, but they will be the victims of the sickle and the hammer and of the laurel branch. I was born in such system, I have lived in it and I always

tried to discover a symbolic plan that the communists held on to the most. In the moment when you abolish religion, the traditional moral codes of a very profound religious nation as ours, you have to replace such space with something that shines more. Remember the laurel that was cultivated in each symbol - that was present round the PCR (Romanian Communist Party) escutcheon. There were laurel branches everywhere as being the symbol of a laic authority. They tried an academic projection; they were always acting accordingly to the positive sciences; you could not come and contest communism, because you were put into a bad mental plan. They could not have deep philosophical discussions about religion versus Marxism. There was not a dialogue and it could not be because the Marxists did not accept this dialogue and, on the other hand, they would not have understood the profound metaphysic language of the opponents. The pragmatism that they were trying to engrave was also an illusory form, the proof that *the Pragmatism*, if we are talking about it as a science, is American and it developed in the West. If the communism had been really a science, then the pragmatism should have appeared in Moscow or somewhere in the East.

C.C. - It could not have been scientific. Socialism has appeared in a society that did not have at all the attributes that Marx described; it was an almost feudal Russia and China as well. Romania not being far from this new political religion, has smoothed the way towards power of some individuals that otherwise would not have ever had access to it. Moreover, to answer to your question,

it is clear that there is not nostalgia without nostalgic people. In my point of view, there are two kinds of nostalgic people: the ones that had the most to loose - the ones from the inside and the ones from the outside - as Gabriel Stan was saying - who are nostalgic because they did not experience it on themselves for seeing which are its human and inter-human consequences and, as the first doctrinaires, they are thinking about how well would function another utopia...

G.S. - Nostalgia cannot exist between the torturer and the victim. The victim arrives to a supreme humiliation act, when he loses its dignity and starts to love and idolize his torturer; this happened in all the totalitarian forms. A patient that was hypnotized will be in a dependent relation with the one that played with his will. This is the situation in which find themselves all the ex Communist countries; a paralysis, a kind of political aboulia. This also happens with us and with other ex communist countries. There is a lack of will, certainty and coherent discourse. There is not anything planned in this moment and the irony is that nobody surcharges this fact. How do you want to lead a country without a plan? Who does this thing? Precisely, the second line of the party. It would have been normal to apply what they have learnt for years at the party's school; it would have been normal to have a plan. There were plans made for 20 years and now we cannot make a plan even for 2 years. I feel that the decisional facts have remained in the old schizophrenia, miming a kind of capitalism.

A.I.B. - I return to Derreida - you relate to him anyway, you do not have other choice. How do you relate to people that have lived in the real socialism?

C.C. - I relate to them saying that “who has not passed through the storm does not know the real face of the Sun”.

A.I.B. - Derreida still has some bitterness, he is an inconsolable person. Here are three of his disaffections:

- He has not read well the “The Manifest of the Communist Party”- he observed only when reading it for the last time that Marx’s lesson appears today to be more urgent because Marx and Engels have “called” to a “future transformation of their own thesis” (which means that these thesis still exist).
- The second refers to the “redoubtable earnings” that were brought into the world’s thinking by the “Manifest”. Derreida says: “none of the traditional texts seems to be equally lucid about the international political dissipation regarding the technical and media irreducibility in the evolution of the deepest thinking. However, the power of the railway, and of the newspapers printed in that period, was incomparably the fact analyzed in the “Manifest”.
- “Few texts offered such an irradiant explanation regarding the right, the international right and nationalism”. Therefore, we ask ourselves: was the abolition of the property equally irradiant?



Derreida also says about the Marxist obsession, which haunts him, that: "In the moment when a new world-wide disorder will try to install its neo-capitalism and neo-liberalism, there is no negation that would get rid off Marx's phantoms." In this case, how would you sustain your negations in "Marx Illusion?"

C.C. - Extremely simple. I would cite the psycho-sociologist called P. Ilut, which affirms very pertinent things about the illusion of localism and the localization of illusion. We can observe that Derreida localizes an illusion and tries to find some arguments with the help of which he considers that that certain text, which generated the illusion that we can find many extremely important and up to date things by reconsidering certain concepts. He reconsiders the things that were not correctly applied or understood. I observed that when things do not come out as we anticipated it is easy to find the guilty one: the mentality. Anything we would do, mentality is the guilty one. Before undertaking something, it would be desired to change our mentality. When we achieve something, we say that we did as the others, for example as Germans do. The problem is real and very serious indeed. I think that a sociological onset would permit us to make an analytic analysis of certain facts, actions and behaviours. We characterize ourselves as being one way or another too easily without a well-founded and systematic observation of our character. The consequences are disastrous because through a perverted mechanism of causal circularity we act as if it was true.

Furthermore, the mentalities indeed influence our characters. Moreover, the impact of these influences will be stronger if we do not acknowledge the real causes. The passing through a utopia has left marks that are hard to detect in our cognitive structure. In addition, if we do not know that we are sick, we do not have any rational reason for making therapy. There are two onsets: one refers to the survival and transmission of some institutional models of the communist state that firstly depend on centralization and organizational pseudo-culture; the second onset analyzes the consequences generated by the latent contents developed as adaptation strategies in the communist period. These strategies were based on mystification, duplicity and festivity. If we agree with the thesis of a very special national peculiarity, it means that these models have developed on a fertile field. If this happens, escaping from crisis would be even harder. There is one thing to repair something that happened accidentally and it is a different one when you have to find resources for overcoming a structural crisis. Therefore, we do not have to change the macro structure, but the micro one, where all the relations and aggregations bound. It is useless to try implementing successful models if you do not consider the environment's peculiarities and the dysfunctional social condition. A healthy individual, being introduced into a sick social organism, will end by getting sick because of the group's pressure.

G.S. - In connection with what Derreida says, we can get to Aristotle and to quickly change the paradigm regarding Marx's personality that was cultivated and invented by the Marxists. Derreida is not an observer, he tries to save a text; if there have not been applied forms of Marxism during history, and then people would not have talked about them. Nobody will take out Marx from the history of philosophy, but he has to be put in the place that he deserves, in a very little corner. People give him too much importance in comparison with what he has given to them. There was a Gutenberg galaxy to which clearly, we have all belonged or we are the last ones that still appertain to it. This literary form of existence in which the models were romantic projects created by art, fashion and all intellectuals, has changed. In the present, there is a disruption that we experienced in 11<sup>th</sup> September 2001, but not only. The world has irremediably changed. We do not talk about an individual evil but about a collective evil. There have appeared new forms of survival; the world is thrown into internet, into a globalization, which is in the same time civilizing. However, the opportunity for change was not what we thought for a very long time that it is, the mutation of the signs (we always said that we will change the symbols with other ones). It is not a mutation of signs. I am convinced that now we are witnessing a total change, because "coming out" from literature throws us into a primitive iconography. The African's tattoo, the nose and navel ring become already signs of fine taste. The people escaped from the canons of the library, from tradition and are thrown into a

“eudemonic” projection in which the being’s ego finds itself lonely. The answers are egotarchic and eudemonic within a sexual or financial stamp. The imbecility complex leads us to a modern primitiveness. Nobody turns to a model anymore; the chance for survival of this worldwide spreading will only be cultural. I am convinced that the answer to this should be given by culture. It was a trap, which was thrown when the Marxist doctrinaires said that the third millennium will be a religious one or it will not be at all, because its beginning will be eudemonic. We are in the phase of the individual’s primitive manifestation, which will be surpassed by culture. When this will happen, there will be new schools and new ideas and the future will give a cultural solution.

C.C. - As Gabriel Stan was saying - it is about a text and me too I will discuss about this semblance. If we refer to Jesus, besides the symbol, there were also texts and people. Unfortunately, not everybody has understood Jesus’ message. We must not enter into a political philosophy as Derreida does, and he enters in his own illusion...

A.I.B. - Is it illusion, nostalgia or consolation?

C.C. - It is a game of ideas...

G.S. - In his case, it is illusion, hallucination!

C.C. - It is a game of ideas, it is his pleasure of playing with words and that is why he makes a political philosophy exercise.

G.S. - He cannot be accused by nostalgia because he did not live in communism; he is a fake nostalgic man. He is the nostalgia of an act that he has not consumed; it is a false projection.

C.C. - From all utopias, I am not thinking about the Marxist utopia. My great dissatisfaction regards the fiasco of the Christian and of other religious utopias. This is why I agree with Gabriel Stan when he says that the way we are it makes us look for our salvation rather in culture than in religion. In Derreida's case, it is also a religion, a political religion.

G.S. - In its action, communism was a profoundly religious - as Eliade has proved it. Let us remember the party meetings and those red tables and all the ritual...

A.I.B. - Ignoring the detail that your essay is also a sociological work, I should ask you how much did you turn to the political science and how much to the metaphysics? I know that at first you started with the philosophical essay. You have published essays in "Astra" magazine, and then you had a political analysis between 1998 and 2000. One of your articles was called *The Union Defiance*: "the unionism has always produced the left wing in the politics; it will always lead to socialism". In the post-communist world, in which we find ourselves even if we like it or not, the proletariat's capacity of producing real and administrative socialism has ceased. Even you say this in your book. The present world's (if it wants to be a world and not an underworld) objectives are others. Before urging you to repeat what you have said in your book, let us see what we should say today about this world's location. Along with other analysts, I have the impression that firstly we need to relight the interest for the social involvement, both of the politics and of the civil society, for stopping the "left" from returning, for blocking the

unionist defiance, whose punt is precisely this baleful return, (see the Romanian miner's insurrection) if is not worse: the returning to anarchy and totalitarianism and those extremist promises. For opposing these "revenons" it would be necessary to make a "social partnership"- as you say- a transfer, a delegation of governmental duties to the civil society. Then there would not be decisions but co-decisions. Nowadays, the social forces are not as the last century powers - what does today proletariat or working class mean? Not even H. Marcuse understood them as "prebendary" in the 60s-70s. On the other hand, can we characterize them as old reactionary? Do the proletariat, the working class, the social action agents and the political determination still exist? As we observe, they are prevailingly if not even exclusively fixed on the state of provenance - this must not be tolerated, because there is no possibility that it will function again. Let us talk about these aspects...

C.C. - There is a saying "nobody can harm you more than you can do it yourself". This is the problem with the civil society in our country.

G.S. - I think there is more. In Marx's state, the governing power was the Marxism. It had a certain direction that it could not be applied but in its period of glory, the start towards this direction was provoked by anarchy. We were thrown into a post-revolutionary anarchy in which the communist bourgeoisie took over the power. The state is almost suffocated by corruption and mafia and the parties cannot communicate coherently. If you

belong to a party, you are in a fanatic relationship, because the political opponent considers you an enemy. There is no political dialogue - it is the primitiveness of the social relations.

C.C. - Let us hope this it is not a world of appearances...

G.S. - I do not think it is a world of appearances. If we talk about the world's big corporations, we get to the same autarchic forms, to groups that want a monopoly and produce only facade ideas. They do not have any solutions for saving the world of poverty, for giving people something; it is only a fight for interests. In this fragile equilibrium, there is indeed a continuity of what once functioned in the industrialized society. Hence, my opinion is that we already are in the phase of an implosion.

A.I.B. - Is it better to have a determinist illusion? In each complex system there is a fluctuation that does not destroy the system but it creates (as Prigogine would say) a more complex structure!

C.C. - We deal with an issue of entropy. Knowledge means a gain for the system, even if this cognition, metaphorically speaking, attacks the system taking from its power. However, it is very hard for me to talk about the civil society and this is a problem if after so many years we talk about the civil society and its role, about social partnership. As a sociologist, I should be able to say something intelligent about this civil society but in fact I really do not know what it is and I do not know where it is. Moreover, why did this thing happen? Because of the melodramatic discourse that is not connected to reality. This is the source of my perplexity and frustration. Theoretically, I know that I am a

member of the civil society, hence I do not know of which one. Why was I talking about the unionist defiance? Because of some simple meanings that are not abided. By definition, the union is a professional organization that has the role of insuring social protection and that has certain rights for accomplishing this duty. In our country, the leaders tell the unions what to do. There are other stupid situations - the union makes an alliance with the patronage and asks something from the government etc. And this is again a problem of mentality; that is how can this happen, when after 50 years in which we were taught to think dually, now we are making alliances that are not justified or justifiable anywhere.

A.I.B. - After years, the proletariat dictatorship will be reiterated and it will be the beginning of defiance against the civil society.

C.C. - The main consequence of an improper alliance is to lead to the dissolution of the civil society. Everywhere there are persons that gain - the leaders. There are countless examples and this social class becomes a mass of manipulation. It has a great power, which is centralized and conducted. This is the illusion of the governors, of the extremist party leaders. They will use this mass of people for achieving their own interests. However, they do not know when this implosion will happen. These people think that there are always sceneries by which you can control the people (which they call electorate), people that they fool every day through their discourses. There can be moments in history when it does not matter how many information Ministries you have, you cannot control this movement.



G.S. - Are not there in history any astral moments of an almost transcendental metaphysic relationship between collectives and supernatural? If we observe the history of the Jewish people, nobody can exclude God out of it. Why was it possible within the history of other nations, continents or civilizations? Communism fell by itself. It has destroyed and bankrupted itself through a lack of conscience, because it had to rely on a multitude of labour or political consciences that did not function. Four millions of party members did not claimed themselves as members of the party in a critical moment, which could have been overcome no matter the international political games. Is it not the conscience the biggest problem of people? No matter if good or bad, were not these leaders such consciences? I am talking about those who made something for people - were they not the great consciences of humanity? The progress and all the positive things in the history of humanity were not a sum of great value consciences and here we do not have instruments to operate with. Here is done almost nothing. I am convinced that a man being in a normal spiritual gradation should climb 12 steps of conscience until the final consciousness. It is a thing that is almost impossible to imagine for the human mind - as you were writing about Jesus: to love your friends and your enemies too. This thing might happen after another hundreds of years.

C.C. - As a sociologist I can tell you that such things that happen are the result of certain strategies that are made for short-term. The following saying has always fascinated me: "after us, the deluge!"

- G.S. - Everybody assumes and flees in this stolidity of not involving themselves in the social life... Each leader knows that he lives the moment, very few build their eternity.
- C.C. - This is what I do when I am smoking. I smoke even if it is not good for me, precisely because I am thinking on short term, 3-4 years and not 20 years. This is at micro social level, but in the macro social life it is more complicated.
- G.S. - Creating such an image means duplicity and it functions even politically and socially. Is this not a way of introducing new illusions?
- C.C. - Illusions appears all the time. The problem is different: we put the cart in front of the horses. It is right to create an image of yourself when you really do something. I could also come up with the arguments of other sociologists that I know and who worked in election campaigns. I was not informed about what was done for adjusting their image in order to "sell" them more effectively, but we were told that we had to go for winning. This is the problem: people do not think about the action but only about selling the illusion. You can do everything and if you find an adequate message, you will win. There is said in advertising that a good stuff sells itself, but no matter how good the image, the low quality merchandise will disappear.
- A.I.B. - The end of your essay is extraordinary: "Good luck, and see you in the next queue!"- in the chapter called *The Queue Vocation at Romanians*. This happened because of the lack of good service and because of the conception of the valueless time. Your book, Claudiu Coman, is sociological, political but also philosophical.

There is a chapter called *The Burden of Knowledge. The Illusion of Love*, which marks the end of the Marx illusion. However, passing into the third millennium gives us the right to hope. My Sir, there are some memorable sentences: "Utopia gives us the right to wish. The ultimate alternative: we have to fall in love with the perfect society for being able to do anything that is necessary for reaching the end of the Marx illusion"; "generating the madness of a new illusion instead of leaving the old one die? - Another illusion, the same people with the same mentalities" or "This thing about the change of mentality has become insipid. It explains but it does not help. Can we really love?" Please...

C.C. - It is obviously a metaphor. It was easier for me this way. I have tried to make a micro social analysis from a sociological point of view. From a philosophical point of view, I made a phenomenological analysis, trying to explain based on my personal experience, on how I see the world.

A.I.B. - Has this comfort you?

C.C. - The more you know the more frustrated you are. I cannot be consoled; but you know as well as I do that in a certain moment the knowledge for the sake of knowledge is a sufficient motive for going on. For going on you have to seek perfection. If you do not exceed yourself for becoming better, if you do not discover anything new that makes you feel the pleasure of living, then nothing has sense anymore. Without being hedonist, I return to the concept of pleasure, because when not, we risk moving only inside some theories that do not say anything as long as they do not describe reality. We do not have to avoid the simple words,

our experiences and our feelings that make us wishing of living in this millennium.

G.S. - However, do you not feel that the beginning of this millennium is turbid? I know young people in the West, and in Romania too, who has not read even a book...they study some courses, get the licence diploma and get into the leading apparatus. They are our future. They will lead us. People having no culture or having a superficial internet, virtual culture. The effect of such change that happened gives some atomized echoes, as you well said, but they still remain subdued to the lack of culture and to their stupidity, because if you take such person out of his/her professional domain, he/she is an analphabet. Humanity has a slow spiritual progress.

C.C. - It is our fault that we have not imposed our will.

A.I.B. - But you talk about the reification of the leader. How to impose your will? Who? Not you!

C.C. - Others like me.

G.S. - In the romantic, literary society, when a common conscience appeared, this was recognized and put in its right place. There are valuable people having great intellectual, moral and artistic capacity, but they are hidden treasures that we cannot see, because they were thrown in the swamp of the ego-damned. I am convinced that many years will pass until these consciences of humanity, these citizens of our planet that should build modernity, will be able to make themselves heard by people.

- A.I.B. - Claudiu Coman analyses very well and very severely the communism.... In "Marx Illusion" we can sense the critical and ironical spirit of the author.
- C.C. - These are some consequences over which we cannot triumph immediately. This is why I expressed myself so toughly. In my opinion, the social system that developed itself in such manner that it allowed such individuals to lead the country it has great limitations. Hence, maybe in this consumption-based society, this is what the market asks for.
- G.S. - Is not that collective cooperation the answer to a future society? Do you not believe that there will be new organizational forms and structures that we are not even thinking about now? The book has an extraordinary span. This book does not attack Marx but it politically disassembles him.
- C.C. - No matter that certain irony, it is an extraordinary thing that we are in the third millennium. All the things that I experienced, after all the garbage that was brought by communism: dual thinking, adaptation, obedience and so on and so forth, and along with the whole psychosis about the end of the world, which was predicted to happen in 1000 and then in 2000, made me believe that if it will exist the year 2001, then it will be an interesting year; not as a new start but as a proof that there is a future.
- G.S. - But do you not think that this collective madness should end? Do you not think that when escaping this labyrinth there will be other illusions and other state forms?

C.C. - If I knew the answer of what will happen in 50 years, not in 100 or 200, I would be genius and proud to be able to give such an answer. Unfortunately, I cannot anticipate this thing, because the society is in such a great change that it is impossible to anticipate it both sociologically and philosophically. I do not even know how the society will look like in 10 years time.

G.S. - Two or three years ago, I tried to do such a projection: I think that there will be a eudemonic explosion followed by hundreds of years of searching in labyrinths without being able to win. Only 300 or 400 years later humanity will find its cure. Your book may point out the apparition of a new form, a new science that will be preoccupied by the health of collectives. Maybe they, along with other specialists that will study profoundly, will be able to heal society. Do you not think that this is in fact the idea described in your book?

C.C. - Somehow, yes. This is one thing that we must understand: to have the freedom of thinking honestly, without mystification. This is our main problem. We continue to lie ourselves, to develop transitory survival strategies and we do not understand why are not there any positive changes in our lives. Until we will not exorcise the evil inside us, we will not be able to achieve more.

Brasov, September 2002



## GLOSSARY

# A

**Alienation** - psychological, sociologic and philosophic concept that defines a certain relationship between the individual and its world, which is characterized by the fact that the man does not recognize anymore the world that he has created himself, perceiving it as alien and hostile.

**Anachronism** - that contains an anachronism - a discrepancy, confusion between facts, events etc. and the epoch in which they are placed; stale custom or opinion.

**Anarchism** - political doctrine that rejects any authoritarian idea that opposes the principle of individual liberty and the state's authority

**Anomie** - concept that defines the social system's or the subsystem's malfunctioning, which is due to the disintegration of the laws that regulate the individuals' behaviour and that ensures the social order



**Apperceptive** - term that was introduced by Leibnitz for defining the conscious perception that is different from the unconscious "small perceptions". Kant affirms that this concept means self-consciousness; mental process that consists in the integration of perceptions into the previous individual experience

**Autocratic** - that is based on a governing form in which the state's entire power is concentrated in the hands of one person; tyranny, absolutism

## **B**

**Bourgeoisie** - the term defines the capitalist spirit; he bourgeoisie is seen as a progression force that wants to eliminate the feudal way of production and its replacement with the industrial one supporting the capitalist domination

**Bureaucracy** - organizational method that is characterized by continuity because of the existence of series of impersonal rules that define the competency spheres, everybody's rights and obligations by the hierarchy of the jobs and access according to the qualification degree that is ascertained in a public way (exams or courses). This way of organization is specific to the public administrations and to the industrial and commercial structures of a certain size, being considered superior to the traditional organizing structures.

# C

**Capitalism** - ideological and economical system that is based on the power of the market (selling/buying the merchandise) but not on the state planning, which is a communist feature

**Causal analysis** - methods of research and analysis of the social phenomena. The main hypothesis of the causal analysis supposes a relatively complete inter-determination between the variables of the analyzed process. Between these variables, there are cause-effect quantitative and dependence references. After identifying the univocal and reciprocal determination mechanisms between the variables, one can establish the temporal order in which the variables get into action. One can establish the model of the process and can predict the future evolution.

**Cognitive dissonance** - theory that was approached by Leon Festinger; it appears when the present cognitive elements do not psychologically involve each other, fact that produces the acute feeling of psychological discomfort. This disharmonic personal or impersonal phenomenon is experienced as an unclear and tensional situation, which produces the need of reducing and avoiding it.

**Collective unconsciousness** - concept that was introduced by K.G. Jung for defining the deep layer that has a trans-individual content that is concordant with the general human scheme and with the cultural models that are specific to the correspondent ethnological community.

**Communism** - organizational way based on collective property forms regarding the production methods and on an equal distribution of the resources. Communism represents one of the oldest aspirations characterized as a reaction to the severe social crisis and to excessive social inequalities

**Community** - a socio-human entity whose members are connected to each other by living on the same territory and by sharing a constant and traditional social relationship

**Comprehensive** - the term is used in psychology instead of the word "understanding"

**Concept** - a mental image or construction formed by generalizations, which result from the features of a class of things. The concept is abstract and it is marked with a descriptive tag. This tag can be applied to the individual members of a class to which the concept refers.

**Conflict** - open opposition, battle between the individuals or groups; the conflicts are the manifestations of some open antagonisms between entities (individual or collective)

determined by some momentary incompatible interests for detaining or managing some financial or symbolic goods

**Conscience** - the dynamic organization of the human psychical life manifested in the person relation with himself/herself, with others and with the environment. To be conscious means to deliberately be in an alert, wondering, problematic or in reflection estate and to consciously analyze real and possible, past or future, events and experiences.

**Consumption** - food, clothing, home, health, transportation and free time activities define the consumption domain. The consumption features depend on the social rules, the group's values or culture.

**Crisis** - a period in the existence of the dynamic society characterized by the exaggerated accumulation of difficulties, tensions that explode at a certain time, fact that blocks the normal functioning of the system and that provokes a powerful pressure for change.

**Culture** - an ensemble of behavioural models, which are appropriated and socially transmitted to a society. A social group's culture is developed and transmitted through learning, language, knowledge, folklore, beliefs, traditions, official and unofficial institutions - through the totality of the social experiences.

# D

**Democratic** - that is based on democracy - the modality of leading a social system by the participation of its members - "leading the nation by its people".

**Demography** - discipline that studies the human populations pursuing the problem regarding their size, structure and specific phenomena, both statically (their estate in a certain moment) and dynamically (their change, evolution).

**Determinism** - a theoretical relation between cause and effect  
Examples: the economical determinism (the position of the social classes develop depending on financial hierarchical relations), ideological determinism (the social effects of an informational channel: for example the television, which would produce linear and predictable effects.)

**Dialectics** - is the system of the most general laws regarding the development of the nature, society and conscience; it also defines the general methodology of acknowledging reality. In the antique philosophy, this concept defined the art of having contradictory discussions in order to reach the truth.

**Dichotomy** - the division into two parts of a concept, without losing its initial sense.

**Doctrine** - the sum of principles of a political, scientific or religious system

**Dysfunctional** - that produces perturbations, a reduced adaptation or integration of a subsystem into the system that it belongs to; that implies dysfunctions that tend to produce disintegration and disruption.

## E

**Elite** - something in one activity that is appreciated as to be the best; the individuals or objects whose performances are considered as being superior compared with the media of the class that they belong to.

**Enlightenment** - the name of the century of lights (France and Germany in the XVIII century) and of the enlightenment thinker's movement for disproving the religious obscurity and dogmatism and for fighting the oppression by spreading scientific truths about nature, society and the man in order to obtain the people's liberation and cultural development.

**Eschatology** - the sum of religious principles regarding the final destiny of the world and man.

**Ethnocentrism** - understanding the ideas or the practices of a culture from the own culture point of view. The ethnocentric judgments cannot acknowledge the other culture's real qualities.

The ethnocentrism manifests itself as the belief that the own culture is superior to other cultures.

**Expectancy** - state of waiting or anticipation, characterized by the estimation of certain results of the social activity, of the social interactions or of the own and other one's behaviours.

## **F**

**Fanaticism** - it defines the dogmatic adhesion to an idea or to an orientation and the activity for achieving the aims and the conditions that are imposed by such certain idea.

**Fascism** - political ideology that inspired several political parties and movements in Europe of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. It has the following features: racist nationalism, intolerance regarding other political ideologies (especially communism), the existence of certain mass parties being centred round a powerful leader, orientation towards the middle class and glorification of army and masculine virtues.

**Feedback** - (retroaction, inverted connection) is the main adapting principle of any system to the environment, by the reaction of the effect over the cause and by the curdling of the self-regulating reflex circuits, generating a dynamic co-equilibration and in the same time the system's auto-delimitation from its specific environment.

# H

**Hedonic** - that is characterized by hedonism - an antique theory that imposes the avoiding of any kind of displeasures, by ensuring minimal conditions in which the human actions can be pleasurable. The personal pleasure would be the single aim of the human action and behaviour.

**Hiatus** - figurative - discontinuity within a system, interruption, emptiness

**Hierarchy** - generally it defines a priority system; the classification of certain objects regarding their importance within a preference scale. From a social point of view, it defines the positioning of certain persons depending on their prestige, authority, influence and power.

# I

**Identity** - the central dimension of the individual's self-perception, representing its position in society, which derives from its membership to social groups and categories, from its status and role and from its "social detonation".

**Ideology** - system of ideas expressed by communication; the ideology defines the "real conscience" of a collectivity, the way in which this becomes conscious about itself, about its life conditions and about the directions towards which it should take action.



**Inference** - a conclusion produced by a previous conclusion or evidence through reasoning. It suggests a plausible way, but does not establish the deducted conclusion.

## L

**Liberal** - that is connected to liberalism - a modern political, social or economical doctrine that is based on the idea of individual rights and on the peoples' freedom.

**Liberal democracy** - democratic system based on parliamentary institutions, which are connected to a liberal market system of economical production.

**Loisir** - free activity, which is different from the obligatory activities and corresponds to the subject's authentic wishes and proclivities.

## M

**Macro social** - the level of the social institutions, structures, systems, contexts, collective actions and cultural tendencies on a large scale.

**Mass media** - the communication industries and technologies that include the newspapers, magazines, radio, television and film. The "mass" term refers to the communicational capacity of sending messages over long time and large space distances for getting to more people.

**Megalomania** - socio-psychopathy characterized by the alternation of the self-appreciation regarding the growth of its social importance

**Membership** - the actualization and developing of a certain wish, intended for satisfying a financial or spiritual need; preferential tendency

**Mentality** - way of organizing the intellectual activities considered from the point of view of the logical and the directive affective value structures (as the convictions and beliefs) as an intermediation between the social ambiance and the interpreting of facts

**Methodology** - it mainly defines the scientific theory of the research and interpretation methods, the ensemble of principles by which a discipline guides and constructs itself; it is the concept regarding the means of development of a cognition or an action domain.

**Middle class** - social class that is mainly composed of “white collars” or inferior managers

**Monarchy** - governing form in which the supreme power belongs to one person and it is transmitted hereditarily

# N

**Nazism** - political fascist doctrine and movement that is associated with the German Socialist Worker's Party. Adolf Hitler established it in 1920; most of the socio-nationalist ideas have their roots in the social thinking of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, when the ideas about voluntarism and elitism (that was capable of illuminating the masses) were imposed and when the theories about the role of the charismatic personality were sustained.

**Necessity** - requirement imposed by the functioning of a system (individual, group, organization, collectivity); in a functional perspective the necessity appears under the form of a technical denomination called "functional requirement"- that is necessary for the functioning of that certain system

**Negentropy** - in the present thermodynamic, cybernetics and by extension in every science that use the informational analysis, it defines both the presence of an energy that is able to produce a certain thing and the potential energy within the parts of the small entropy. It leads to a growth in the organizational estate of a system by the acquisition of information (it also results in a growth of the probability degree with which we can make predictions about the future).

**Nihilism** - it is the negation of the values, actions and social structures. It exists both in what it is real and in the things that are still projects. Its main feature is the incapacity of suggesting variants, constructive solutions for replacing what it remains.

# O

**Oligarchy** - it is the leading of an organization, community or society by a little group of persons. The iron law of oligarchy postulates the following idea: the more bureaucratic and bigger a society is the strongest the concentration of power in the hands of a reduced number of persons.

**Ontology** - it is a branch of philosophy that studies the pure existence, the "existence as existence" (Aristotle), in other words the features and principles that are common to any form of existence.

**Opinion poll** - way of finding out the public opinion by using the questionnaire and the sampling.

**Organization** - the term defines both a social situation and a central problem of the action sociology. The social object is well known: the public administration, the industrial, economic and service enterprises, the political parties and a series of associations where the individuals are wage earners, members/militants and clients. The organizations are ordered in hierarchic human ensembles that cooperate and coordinate their members for achieving different aims. It is an activity system organized round explicitly formulated finalities containing a differentiated subsystem with organization, leading and coordination functions training a sufficient number of individuals.

# P

**Paradigm** - is a model, system or perspective, which is used in academic activities and that supports particular research theories and methodologies, sometimes excluding the competing onsets.

**Paralogism** - false reasoning produced by the lack of knowledge, not being generated for inducting anybody in error.

**Phenomenon** - (social) relation, process, organization method that are sufficiently delineated for being susceptible by the scientific description and explanation.

**Pragmatism** - philosophical doctrine that doubts the existence of the impersonal and variable truth, proclaiming as a supreme criteria the practical utility and advantage, no matter if the gained knowledge correspond or not to the reality.

**Proletariat** - mass of workers with a relatively diminished standard of living that for earning its existence sells its labour force for a little salary.

**Propagandistic** - that is based on propaganda - systematic activity of transmitting, promoting and spreading certain doctrines, thesis or ideas of certain social groups or ideologies, in order to influence or change certain attitudes, opinions, convictions or behaviours.

# R

**Reification** - process in which the social relationships are seen as relationships between concrete objects; the man itself becomes the subject of the social relationships and being perceived as an object.

**Representative sample** - social research method that tries to concord a group with the population to whose features it matches; an applicable statistical and methodological technique that can be used in the social research in order to choose from a population of entities (persons, organizations) a part (sample) that will be analyzed for facilitating the elaboration of inferences for the whole population.

**Ritualism** - exaggerated obeying of the rules and procedures with a strong accent on the means and less accent on the aims; according to Merton, the ritualism represents the situation in which the individual abides the laws that define licit means of the actions, deserting the culturally prescribed aims or lowering them to such a level that the aspirations could be easily satisfied.

# S

**Social class** - group of people categorized according to their relative economical and social positions

**Social inequality** - concept that marks out the differenced between the positions that are occupied by the individuals or social groups within a hierarchy, positions that are attached to a social feature or variable.

**Socialism** - set of political ideas that mark out the co-operant nature of the modern industrial production and that supports the idea of building an egalitarian social community.

**Sociology** - science that is preoccupied with the study of describing the structure and physiology of the society, of the human relations within the social groups as well as the institutions within the given society.

**Status** - the place that an individual occupies in one of the social system dimensions; the profession, the professional level, the sex, the age etc. It defines the social identity.

**Status panic** - a natural reaction that people have in a certain moment, reaction being generated by the loss of status and by the incertitude of allying with those who in their opinion can give it back to them. (C.W. Mills)

**Stereotype** - convictions about the psychological or behavioural features of certain categories of individuals, social groups (sex, age, nationality, religion); such beliefs are fixed in stencil, durable and prejudice images; they do not rely on the direct and "fresh" observation of the phenomena but on aprioristic ways of thinking, which are frequently arbitrary and do not have any connection with the evaluated individuals or social groups.

# T

**Totalitarianism** - political regime that wants the absorption of the civil society by the state, until the destruction of the human conscience. Totalitarianism results both from the durable victory of the ideological power or from the fall of ideology, in other words from the impossibility of keeping its promise of building a new and reconciled humanity.

**Transition** - term that entered the scientific language after the fall of socialism and it designs the passing from the socialist way of social organization to the western capitalist method.

# U

**Unionism** - a system of organizing the workers with the mediation of the unions; unionist movement (anti-capitalist doctrine at the end of the XIX century and the beginning of the XX century, which considered the union as being the most powerful organizational form of workers and the single organization that is needed for constructing the new society).

**Unionist** - that sustains and propagates the idea of union; that represents the merging tendency.



**Utopia** - impracticable, impossible and unreal project; orientation that transcends reality and that breaks the bonds of the existent order.

## V

**Values** - expressions of some certain general principles, fundamental orientations and especially of some collective preferences and beliefs. The main values are dominant, deviant and unstable - the last two features mark out the individual's latitude on that certain scale and the plasticity of the system in which they are put into order.

## W

**Working class** - social class that is composed mainly of "blue collars"

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