

THE CHALLENGE OF TRANSITION IN ROMANIAN SOCIETY AND SOCIOLOGY

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The post-communist Romanian transition to a democracy and market economy came about with significant challenges in understanding people's attitudes, opinions and beliefs, in poverty development and ineffective institutions. This paper explores the responses of sociology to these challenges, presented as research topics grouped into five families). a) Development and transition sociology is concerned with clustering of social problems, resources and actors development. The concepts and ideas like entrepreneurship as a special form of human capital, survival society, regional culture and development reveal mechanisms which are generating low orientation towards entrepreneurship, underdevelopment, poverty, marginalization, isolation. b) Civil society sociology deal with the cultural mix of reform analyzed in three areas: attitudes towards market economy and democracy, voting behavior and migration behavior. c) Family sociology covers the profound changes during the past decades in family patterns: family-society relationship, single youth behavior, family behavior. d) Sociology of institutions and social policy explores the post-communist projects of social policy, the ambivalence of institutions, changes in management practices. e) The internal reconstruction of sociology is related to pre-transition traditions, recapture the past of sociological thinking, theory building, and validation.

Societal challenges and sociological answers

Romanian sociology moved by waves initiated and stopped by deep societal transformations. Its emergence in the 19th century was an answer to the problems and controversies related to capitalist development. Liberal and conservative ideologies had a consistent sociological component. After the First World War, the focus of Romanian sociology was on the reform of reorganising society of the newly constituted unitary nation-state .The sociology promoted between the two world wars by the Gusti school was more than an academic approach. It was a social movement with cognitive and action components oriented to understanding rural and regional life for modernising its course. As everywhere in Central and Eastern Europe,