

## POSITIONING IN THE LOGIC OF THE WORLD SYSTEM AND THE CONSTRUCTION OF SOCIAL REALITY

RADU BALTASIU

Faculty of Sociology and Social Work, University of Bucharest

*This paper intends to bring together the economics and the sociology (anthropology) of modern development – as a component of globalization. Globalization has a different impact on the West – considered to be the source of civilization in the East as well – the space in which this civilization is integrated. Each area has a particular sociology, anthropology and its own economics attached to it. The economics of globalization is shaped by the rationality of the dominant actors of the societies, i.e. by a specific anthropology – called “regional anthropology”. The phenomenon of globalization is reviewed mainly from the perspective of two forces that operate differently at the level of the world system: in the West, one of the vectors of globalization is hyperrationalization - the centering of organizations and the actions of individuals on efficiency and calculation at a level unmatched in the modern era. Hyperrationalization is an impersonal force, situated rather above the control of individual will, being considered a system driving force. In the East, the dominant vector of globalization is a social category with a marked ideological load: intelligentsia. Dissatisfied, and even annoyed by their societies lagging behind, the intelligentsia is often a development factor by synchronizing/imitating, sometimes with most curious effects on the historical path of those societies.*

*The issue is not new. The contribution that this article could make is that of bringing together analyses by George Ritzer, Immanuel Wallerstein, Arnold Toynbee, Anthony Smith, etc., alongside older or newer Romanian theories (from Madgearu to Zamfir and Badescu) in order to illuminate, by comparison and from another perspective, the issue of globalization in the East, especially Romania. The approach is not all-encompassing, and is not meant to be. We only concentrated on reviewing some of the effects of the two vectors of globalization.*

### THE GLOBAL SYSTEM, GLOBALIZATION, AND THE PHENOMENON OF REGIONAL ANTHROPOLOGIES. SOME CONCEPTUAL CLARIFICATIONS

Globalization, as a large scale social phenomenon, has an anthropological component as well with serious economic implications. The phenomenon of globalization encompasses not only changes in the world system, but also those regarding *humanity*, man as an actor and a subject. In what follows, we will circumscribe this component to a few of the phenomena affecting the ordering of social space, especially its definitions: hyperrationalization – at the center of the

world system, and the intelligentsia at the periphery. Even if they take place under the impact of the same phenomenon called *globalization*, the changes brought to the anthropology of social space are relatively localized geographically and socially, reported to the *position in the social hierarchy* of the world system<sup>1</sup>, hence the name *regional anthropologies*.

The theory of the impact of globalization on anthropology, which becomes *regional*, makes reference to the research into non-cumulative economic growth, also called non-cumulative stage theories<sup>2</sup>. One of the central aspects of these theories is unequal exchange. In essence, unequal exchange refers to the structuring of the world system in center, periphery, and semi-periphery, depending on the technological content of products and the related level of wages:

“If we think of the exchange between the core and the periphery of a capitalist system being that between high-wage products and low-wage products, there results an ‘unequal exchange’ ..., in which a peripheral worker needs to work many hours, at a given level of productivity, to obtain a product produced by a worker in a core country in one hour. ... Without *unequal* exchange ... it would not be profitable to maintain a capitalist world-economy, which would then either disintegrate or revert to the form of a redistributive world-empire.”<sup>3</sup>

Unequal exchange does not act as a *deus ex machina*, outside of social and cultural control. It is often possible, as shown by Hirschman and Gunder Frank, as a result of a *defective relating to reality of certain important categories of the elite*, especially at the periphery of the world system.

“As a result of prolonged relative backwardness, a general expectation is that one’s country will continue to perform poorly. ... Take the situations in which politicians who have spent the largest part of their lives in the opposition suddenly and unexpectedly gain power: all too often their actions seem almost calculated to make them forfeit that power in the shortest possible time. ...

Lack of learning is by no means the most serious consequence of fracasomania [i.e. the failure complex] and of the inability or refusal to perceive change. In a government intent upon transforming a country’s socio-economic structure, these traits can lead to complete mishandling of the political situation, from ignoring and needlessly antagonizing groups that could be won to underestimating the strength of others that cannot ...”<sup>4</sup>

---

<sup>1</sup> We are talking here about the logic of the modern world system and its structuring by centers, semiperipheries, and peripheries, by authors such as Wallerstein, Frank, etc. See also Immanuel Wallerstein. (1979). *The Capitalist World-Economy*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, Andre Gunder Frank. (1978). *Dependent Accumulation and Underdevelopment*, London: Macmillan Press.

<sup>2</sup> Ilie B descu, Dan Dungaciu, Radu Baltasiu. (1996). *Istoria sociologiei. Teorii contemporane*, Bucure ti: Eminescu, 8.

<sup>3</sup> Wallerstein, *The Capitalist World Economy*, 71

<sup>4</sup> Albert Hirschman. (1984). *Essays in Trespassing. Economics to Politics and Beyond*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 156-157.

The anthropological component of globalization interests us from the perspective of *reporting to reality*, which is a defining term for the social structure and interaction formula at a given point. Reporting to reality is a collective force, which depends on the direction of globalization, and which is, at the same time, a factor of the new global construction. We see, therefore, that social structure is dependent on the evolution of collective mental evolutions. The social layer that structures this collective mind wily-nilly is built by the *elite*.

Our hypothesis is that, at the center of the world system, the dominant definitions of reality coagulate around a pragmatic paradigm, of social-economic organization, called by George Ritzer<sup>5</sup> *hyperrationalization*. To put it briefly, hyperrationalization represents “an extraordinarily high level of rationality”<sup>6</sup>, by extending the concern for calculation to all spheres of reality, at the theoretical, substantial, and formal level. This overrationalization, or hyperrationalization, has, however, a set of negative implications, especially on the formal rationality side, synthetically called “McDonaldization”, by reducing the phenomenology of social interaction to an issue of efficiency. Excessive rationalization leads, therefore, to putting pressure on reality, a phenomenon which we call *diminished reality*. From the sociology of social issues perspective, reality is diminished primarily in situations where the social structure and the personality of the individual cannot reach their potential for development<sup>7</sup>. The incubator-context of the development of the individual is called by Robert Putnam *social capital*, which, it seems, suffers because of the new transformations. Social capital is the sum of connections and reciprocal action based on trust. Through it, society is founded in “a network of reciprocal obligations” which is the most important asset of a modern society<sup>8</sup>. Increased “friction” in society as a result of a diminution in these interactions, the resurgence of some of the medieval ethnic cleavages<sup>9</sup>, the speed at which the component of cyberspace surveillance is invading private space (secondary,

---

<sup>5</sup> George Ritzer. (2001). *Explorations in Social Theory. From Metatheorizing to Rationalization*, London: Sage, 198-232.

<sup>6</sup> Ritzer, *op. cit.*, 232.

<sup>7</sup> The concept of *diminished reality* was introduced in the expert literature in Romania by Ilie B descu by borrowing, in a modern formula, inter-war theories on the relation between the modern social modern and personality development. Society, prof. B descu, is “diminished” or does not work “at full potential”, depending on the quality of each individual's expiation in the other Ilie B descu. (2002). *Noologia. Cunoa terea ordinii spirituale a lumi. Sistem de sociologie noologic* , Bucure ti: Valahia, 167 and passim.

<sup>8</sup> Robert Putnam. (2002). *Bowling Alone. The Collapse and Revival of American Community*, New York: Simon & Schuster, 18, 315 and passim.

<sup>9</sup> Anthony Smith points at “ethno-nationalism” as a new wave of “ethnic mobilization” all over Europe, including the West, denoting a continuous fragmentation of the so-called “nation-state” mythology established after the French Revolution. Anthony Smith. (1991). *National identity*, University of Nevada Press, Reno, 125.

tertiary, and quaternary relationships)<sup>10</sup> are only a few of the elements of diminished reality at the center of the world system.

In the East, its particular reality has as its vector a social category, which is very ideologically active, known as *intelligentsia*. The phenomenon of these elites was established in Western studies in the second half of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. One of the best known theoreticians is British historian Arnold Toynbee, for whom “the intelligentsia are a class of connecting agents [between the West and the East] who have learned the craft of the civilization that is to be adapted [internalized]”, but who are “uprooted and spiritually uncertain, without being torn physically from their ancestral homes<sup>11</sup>”. The impact of globalization through this intelligentsia often generates social systems as *forms without substance*, and at the level of the community network, effects such as the *abandoned society complex*.

In the logic of modern world system theories, this problem results in a further discrepancy, called the *discrepancy of position*, and is often harder to overcome than the objective-historical one, that of *era*.

The resulting phenomenon, *abandoned society*, refers to phenomena of unraveling of public space, and to dysfunctionalities of public authority, which is colloquially referred to as “lack of being civilized”. The dominant rationality in these societies is of a redistributive type on a chronically immature domestic market.

#### THE HYPERRATIONALIZATION AT THE CORE OF THE MODERN WORLD SYSTEM

Hyperrationalization has its “basis of operation” at the level of world economy and of organizational management. The discussion below is largely based on Ritzer's analysis, but I took the liberty, here and there to exceed the neo-Marxist paradigm in which he operates.

As a part of the functional dimension of the system, Hyperrationalization operates without much ideological debate, as a pattern of organization-structuring of socio-economic organization. From simple workers to management, this preoccupation with efficiency is considered “natural”, and, in relation to it, an entire literature was developed regarding organizational management and techniques of increasing the efficiency of the workforce. Ritzer shows that hyperrationalization has spread outside industrial organization techniques, becoming a general paradigm for the organization of the whole of society at the level of formal rationality, substantial rationality, theoretical rationality, and practical rationality. Their common denominator is *computability* – the

---

<sup>10</sup> Brian D. Loader (ed.). (1997). *The Governance of Cyberspace. Politics, technology and global restructuring*, London and New York: Routledge, 26.

<sup>11</sup> Arnold J. Toynbee. (2002). *Studiu asupra istoriei. Sintez a volumelor I-VI de D. C. Somervell*, Bucure ti: Humanitas, vol. I, 526.

quantification, or the preoccupation with quantifying reality more or less completely, which, in its turn, aims at *efficiency* – the shortest route from one objective to another.

A significant part of the success of the Western type of enterprise is explained by Ritzer through the perfecting of rationalization techniques. Rationalizing reality “increases civilization”, but can “diminish humanity”, by placing the main emphasis on quantifying the world. Increasing the degree of civilization thus become paradoxical, to the extent that development “pushes away” from people. The exaggeration of the formal component of rationality, over-evaluating the need for efficiency, computability, predictability, and control generates the McDonalidization of society – that is, the process by which the principles of the fast-food restaurant are coming to dominate more and more sectors of American society as well as of the rest of the world.”<sup>12</sup>

Phenomena that can be related to hyperrationalization can be observed on several coordinates:

- at the level of economic organization: the workplace moving outside the control of workers, decreasing loyalty towards the workplace (Mullins<sup>13</sup> and Ritzer);
- in the social construction overall: absent social interaction – *interruptions* (Friedman<sup>14</sup>), tertiary relations (Calhoun<sup>15</sup>), pecuniary emulation (Veblen<sup>16</sup>);
- at the socio-political level: the tendencies of turning democratic society into a surveillance state (quaternary relations), governance by networks (regime theory – Stone and Stoker<sup>17</sup>, “broker politics” – Loader<sup>18</sup>).

The list above is a limited summary of the effects of the strengthened function that computation has at the mental level dominant at the center of the world system.

**The first thing affected by hyperrationalization is the *enterprise***, which, in order to be more competitive, undergoes mutations at the level of patterns of organization and attitudes towards labor. Economic organization is more flexible

<sup>12</sup> Ritzer, *op. cit.*, 198.

<sup>13</sup> Laurie J. Mullins. (1998). *Management and Organisational Behaviour*, fifth edition, (Financial Times/Prentice Hall, 8.

<sup>14</sup> Thomas Friedman, „The Taxi Driver”, in *The New York Times*, 1 Nov. 2006. Thomas Friedman, „The Era of Interruptions”, in *Business magazin* 107 (44/2006): 74.

<sup>15</sup> C. Calhoun, “The Infrastructure of Modernity: Indirect Social Relationships, Information Technology and Social Interaction in H.Haferkamp and N.Smelser”, eds., *Social Change and Modernity*, (Berkeley: University of California Press), 218-219 apud Brian D. Loader, ed. (1997). *The Governance of Cyberspace. Politics, technology and global restructuring*, (London and New York: Routledge, 26.

<sup>16</sup> T. Veblen. (1970). *The Theory of Leisure Class*, London: Unwin Books, 39.

<sup>17</sup> Gerry Stoker, “Regime Theory and Urban Politics”, in David Judge, Gerry Stoker, and Harold Wolman, eds. (1997). *Theories of Urban Politics* (London: Sage Publications Ltd., 1995), in Richard T. LeGates, Frederic Stout, eds., *The City Reader*, New York: Routledge, 268-282.

<sup>18</sup> Loader, *op. cit.*, 118.

through restructuring into smaller components – with faster reflexes in relation to market fluctuations, strongly dependent upon new technologies. The workplace is more and more automated, where man, when he is present, is present mainly through short term labor contracts.

The short term contract (Mullins) and the preponderance of technologies controlling the workers – *nonhuman technology* (Ritzer<sup>19</sup>) a lot of times associates with decreased loyalty towards the workplace. As this takes up a lot of the individual's social life, decreased loyalty towards the workplace has secondary effects that spread throughout the whole of society. Responsibility turns from an implicit component of work ethics into a burden, and the feeling of *impotence* that the worker feels towards the challenges of the context gains unexpected visibility. Marx's concept of *alienation* gains new content. The hyper-rationalization of the postmodern world in this way claim less savory “resources” of modernity. We recall that alienation towards labor products and processes, as well as towards human being are the three major features of alienation as theorized by Marx<sup>20</sup>

#### **MUTATIONS IN SOCIABILITY ARE REGISTERED AT THE LEVEL OF SOCIETY AS A WHOLE**

Social contact between persons is intensified, but its content gets reduced. What increases is the number of situations in which communication gets diminished symbolic function, becoming simply an instrument for guidance, for signaling. The phenomenon is typical of what Thomas Friedman calls *age of interruption*. These “diminished” interactions are possible because the communication function is largely taken over by more and more diverse technologies, complex, interconnected, and more and more miniaturized – technological achievements of hyper-rationalization.

“After I arrived at my hotel, I reflected on our trip: The driver and I had been together for an hour, and between the two of us we had been doing six different things. He was driving, talking on his phone and watching a video. I was riding, working on my laptop and listening to my iPod. There was only one thing we never did: Talk to each other. ...

Hey, I love having lots of contacts and easy connectivity, but in an age when so many people you know — and even more you don't know — can contact you by e-mail or cellphone, I'm finding this age of interruption overwhelming. I was much smarter when I could do only one thing at a time.”<sup>21</sup>

---

<sup>19</sup> Ritzer, *op. cit.*, p. 200

<sup>20</sup> Randy Hodson, Teresa A. Sullivan. (1994). *The Social Organization of Work*, Belmont: Wadsworth, 95.

<sup>21</sup> Friedman, *ibidem*.

For Craig Calhoun, the situation described by Friedman is far from being an individual experience described by an analyst with journalistic talent, it is part of a pattern that defines more and more the space of social interaction. The hyperrationalized cyberspace is dominated by indirect relationships, mediated by technology or by power entities which are very much based on IT technology. Calhoun thus adds to the classical typology of relating socially (made up of primary and secondary relationships) tertiary and quaternary relationships, typical of the virtual space that accompanies hyperrationalization. Social life becomes *mediated*, a part of a colossal database, and often without the substance of personal involvement. If in tertiary relationships interaction happens by the agreement of both parties, in the quaternary kind the social relationship loses its significance, getting reduced to contact by surveillance, in which one of the actors is unaware of the fact that he is being made the object of interest for the one manipulating the management technology by “scanning” the social space.

“There is as much (or more) reason to think that computerization and new communications technologies will lead to, or accompany further deterioration of interpersonal relationships. A drift toward relationships of convenience might be accelerated; passive enjoyments from the mass media might predominate over active social participation. A few people might even have wind up preferring relationships based on single common interests and mediated through computer networks — or worse (from the point of view of social integration), preferring the company of computers themselves, which are dependable, don’t talk back, and don’t make silly mistakes very often.”<sup>22</sup>

By the paradigm of *pecuniary emulation*, Veblen supplies us with another facet of the diminished contemporary reality. An effect of industrial modernity of the late 19<sup>th</sup> and early 20<sup>th</sup> century, pecuniary emulation is gaining a new ground of manifestation with the increasing rationalization of social space. One of the mass effects of the continuous rationalization of enterprise is the centering, *generally*, of social interaction around (economic) *interest*. Interest often overlaps with what is considered to be *efficient* – the shortest route to a purpose in relation to the means at one’s disposal. The thesis of pecuniary emulation observes this very re-centering of everyday relationships towards efficiency- interest. The means by which social success is measured (the efficiency of the individual’s insertion in society) are money and social position.

Modern individual’s social space rationalization is, therefore, expressed through symbolic possessions – social position and money.

---

<sup>22</sup> C. Calhoun. (1986). “Computer Technology, Large-Scale Social Integration and the Local Community” in *Urban Affairs Quarterly* 22: 2 (1986): 337 in David Holmes, “The Fallacies and Fortunes of ‘Interactivity’ in Communication Theory”, <http://www.cem.itesm.mx/dacs/publicaciones/logos/anteriores/n58/dholmes.pdf>

“It becomes indispensable to accumulate, to acquire property, in order to retain one's good name. When accumulated goods have in this way once become *the accepted badge of efficiency*, the possession of wealth presently assumes the character of an independent and definitive basis of esteem. ...

... The end sought by accumulation is to rank high in comparison with the rest of the community in point of pecuniary strength. So long as the comparison is distinctly unfavourable to himself, the normal, average individual will live in chronic dissatisfaction with his present lot; and when he has reached what may be called the normal pecuniary standard of the community, or of his class in the community, this chronic dissatisfaction will give place to a restless straining to place a wider and ever-widening pecuniary interval between himself and this average standard. The invidious comparison can never become so favourable to the individual making it that he would not gladly rate himself still higher relatively to his competitors in the struggle for pecuniary reputability.”<sup>23</sup>

Of course, it is hard to pinpoint how widely spread is the expansion of the behavior described by Veblen. It does not necessarily, and completely, illustrate a negative phenomenon, it rather draws our attention to the secondary effects of social structuring around the competition *for* goods outside of the human being, which can hardly fulfill the needs for spiritual achievement, typical to humanity.

Nowadays, Robert Putnam draws attention precisely to such a secondary effect when he talks about weakened neighborhoods – which he calls “social units”<sup>24</sup>, which in their turn are a part of a strong cohesive factor called “social capital”. For Putnam, cooperation between individuals as neighbors-neighborhoods represents “accumulating social capital”, which will create a social network of “mutual obligations”, based on trust, and which benefits everyone, directly or indirectly. Social capital in its most visible expression – as *civic engagement* – is eroding, registering important decreases from the generation of the 1960s to this one, the “generation of TV” and of computer access. The correlated phenomenon, also noticed by other theoreticians of the “health” of social space, is the “privatization of social space”, more precisely its fragmentation. Brian Loader shows that the “rationalization” of individual space with the computer (the new social space, *the individual cyberspace*), takes the form of the de facto narrowing of the social interaction area. The individual involved in public issues – the main actor of the social capital, is about to become obsolete:

“The *Homo politicus*, the *citoyen*, is no longer the dominant actor. Systems are becoming more and more intelligent and at a growing pace are better at several things. ... Reality is the unintended result of decisions, increasingly taken by machine. And the individual in cyberspace is fragmented in databases and

---

<sup>23</sup> Thorstein Veblen, *The Theory of the Leisure Class* (New York, Berlin: Globusz Publishing, n.d.), <http://www.globusz.com/ebooks/LeisureClass/00000012.htm>.

<sup>24</sup> Robert Putnam, *op. cit.*, 19 and passim

networks. As a result of this fragmentation, the individual as a meaningful entity becomes decentered and multiplied. ... We become postmodern.”<sup>25</sup>

**At the socio-political level**, the rationalization of power based on the new information technologies is reconfiguring the role of networks and interest groups, which have gained the capacity to manage their access to resources completely autonomously, becoming *self-steering or self-organizing societal actors*<sup>26</sup>. Classical democratic governance overlaps and intermingles with an entire infrastructure of entities with decisional autonomy, more or less transparent. At this entire level, the role of government is reduced, politics becoming a space for the “brokerage” of power, where legitimate authority through voting has mainly a procedural function. The entities with power autonomy which constitute themselves in informal power structure with access to institutional resources, which, although not democratically elected, have a word to say in the governance of local communities, and even of society as a whole. We recalled here the phenomenon of *regimes* described by Stone<sup>27</sup>. The issue is not new, as sociology has a good theoretical experience regarding lobbying groups, pressure groups, etc. before the postindustrial technology revolution. What is truly new is the fact that the political actor is perfecting the techniques of power with the aid of the completely new infrastructure of cyberspace. Stoker and Loader have noticed that, with possibilities of strategic knowledge, of extraordinary organization and propaganda with computer matrix support, the policy of regimes can detach itself in a manner unimagined since the French Revolution from the popular support of the act of power.

On the other hand, the real time management (rationalization) of public space turns it into an area quasipermanently monitored by electronic-informatic means. As a result, a new species of social relationships emerges, called by Calhoun<sup>28</sup> *quaternary relationships*, in which private or public entities *know* about the movements in the public space, sometimes even those in the citizens' private space, without their knowledge or consent. *The Economist* suggested in 2007 that British society was the most monitored in the world, where each citizen could be recorder as much as 300 times a day<sup>29</sup>.

---

<sup>25</sup> Loader, *op. cit.*, 125.

<sup>26</sup> Loader, *op. cit.*, 118.

<sup>27</sup> Clarence Stone, „Urban Regimes and the Capacity to Govern: A Political Economy Approach”, *Journal of Urban Affairs* 15: 1 (1993): 1-28, in Gerry Stoker, loc.cit.

<sup>28</sup> C. Calhoun, “The Infrastructure of Modernity: Indirect Social Relationships, Information Technology and Social Interaction in H.Haferkamp and N.Smelser”, eds., *Social Change and Modernity*, (Berkeley: University of California Press), 218-219, in Loader, loc. cit.

<sup>29</sup> “Learning to live with Big Brother.”, *The Economist*, 27 September 2007

**THE NEW REALITY AT THE PERIPHERY OF THE WORLD SYSTEM. THE ROLE  
OF THE CULTURE OF DEVELOPMENT**

At the periphery of the system, the situation is different. If at the center of the system reality is faced with the complications of “overrationalization”, at the periphery it sometimes takes on the formula of the “evolution without social growth”. For instance, even if Romania recorded a sustained *economic growth* in GDP terms over the last 7 years, it is not clear if the social structure got a significant improvement. The contemporary French sociology coined the term of the “diminished society” for Eastern Europe, in order to emphasize the deep social destructure of the former communist countries<sup>30</sup>. Our hypothesis is that here the dominant phenomenon is called *intelligentsia*, and its most important consequence is the *abandoned society*, with the entire constellation of behaviors that are more or less anarchic (also called “uncivilized”). Although also consumption oriented, for reasons of the domestic market being underdeveloped, and, subsequently, buying power being underdeveloped as well, of the lack of competition, social action is less affected by the issue of hyperrationalization. Hyperrationalization, where it exists, could be uncovered mainly at the local sources of some of the large transnationals, in relation to what some theories of development call “enclave economies” (enclave enterprises)<sup>31</sup>.

Our hypothesis is that the role of elites in shifting from one position to another in the world system is decisive. They are, however, the most vulnerable area at the same time, exactly because of their role as media distributors of the new behaviors necessary for progress, through administrative policies (administration can serve development), fiscal policies (through taxes and incentives certain economic activities are encouraged, while others are discouraged), school policies (here social attitude and identity models are distributed), cultural policies (by cultivating certain definitions regarding social success, social identity, personal success techniques, collective dignity, etc.). These behaviors are a part of the culture, and this, in turn, selects social order, the failure of manipulating cultural vectors being able to pull along processes of social retardation that are hard to overcome.

---

<sup>30</sup> Alain Tourraine, in *La retour de l'acteur* (Fayard, ed. 1989) pays a special attention to the phenomenon of the society engulfed by the formerly communist state. Society has no real structure, only dominant and regulative institutions.

<sup>31</sup> Synthesizing research by Frank, Rostow and Hirschman of this problem, an enclave economy is that part of a society with tighter relations with the world financial, commercial, technological, etc., circuit, where there is a salary coefficient above the national average, but which is not strong enough, or not interested enough in producing relationship effects, to multiply its success into the rest of society. Frank showed that enclave industries or activities are only a relatively perfected means of draining the local surplus production. Development, according to Hirschman, occurs when successful businesses generate *relationship effects* beyond themselves, building a network of growth effects in the entire social whole. See Albert Hirschman. (1984). *Essays in Trespassing. Economics to Politics and Beyond*, Cambridge: Cambridge, 65-67.

### A FEW CONCEPTUAL DELIMITATIONS REGARDING THE INTELLIGENTSIA

The anthropology of (European) periphery is dominated by the elites by a fairly sinuous historical road. The intelligentsia is a specialized social class in backwards countries, whose predominant social function is that of *link* between the civilized world and their own society, with a predominantly ideological function. Toynbee describes it briefly as “a class of linking agents that have learned the craft of the civilization that is to be adapted to the extent that it is necessary to allow their own civilization, through them, to integrate into a new social environment, in which life is no longer lived according to the old local traditions, and is lived more and more according to the style imposed by the expanding civilization on the foreigners that fall under its influence”<sup>32</sup>. The contact between the developed society and the backwards society occurs, of course, upon the initiative of the expanding one (the developed society). The main mediator on the side of the backwards society is the *intelligentsia* that manages the connection between the two types of society, most of the time by imitation, by importing legislation, and of through democratic institutions. The dominant notion of these elites is that backwards societies only have access to progress by 'synchronizing' local structures with the Western ones, development being from form to substance. The substance, meaning the whole of aptitudes and behavioral predispositions of the masses, even if it is foreign or 'inadequate' in relation to the imported superstructure, has to change in order to match the profile of the new institutional matrices. Development is not possible by their own means, hence the name *synchronization* of this type of evolution by imitation. There is, therefore, a single model, the Western model, and backwards countries have no access to it save by imitation. The process has been theorized in Romania by Eugen Lovinescu<sup>33</sup> in the first half of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, and it is generally known as *the paradigm of synchronization*.

In our hypothesis, the elites, therefore the intelligentsia, are important because of their role in *defining social space*. The elites can fundamentally change the perception framework of tradition, just as they also disseminate in society the models for relating to reality: the frameworks of sociability, the typology of individual success, the 'project' of progress in general, etc., all these being subordinated to the definitions issued by the elite at a given point.

*Backwards societies* will incur additional costs in the effort to effectively integrate into the new era, with costs related precisely to the behaviors and perceptions ancillary to overcoming the effects of a *backwards position* in relation to the era that one wishes to integrate in. Anthony Smith showed that local elites have to make huge efforts for their own societies to overcome the status of 'subject communities'<sup>34</sup>.

<sup>32</sup> Arnold J. Toynbee. (1997). *Studiu asupra Istoriei. Sinteza a volumelor I-VI de D.C. Somervell*, trans., Dan. A. L. z rescu, Bucure ti: Humanitas, vol. I, 526.

<sup>33</sup> Eugen Lovinescu. (1997). *Istoria civiliza iei române modern*, Bucure ti: Minerva.

<sup>34</sup> Anthony D. Smith. (1991). *National identity*, Reno: University of Nevada Press, 61.

In what regards contemporary Romania, an original analysis of the relations between the intellectual and the political elites, between them and the evolution of society, is to be found in the recently published work by Liliana Pop-**Democratizing Capitalism?**<sup>35</sup>

Starting from the quoted work, we shall develop upon certain topics that seem relevant to our subject matter:

– The intellectual elite have truly taken upon itself the role of *mediator* between the West and the society in transition (Romanian society).

– Aside from this role, the intelligentsia took upon themselves also the function of *moral censors* of society. The main targets of the effort to ‘purify’ the economic, political, cultural, etc. space were the politicians, but also the intellectuals that are considered to have been ‘Securitate agents’, ‘nationalists’, ‘communists’. The problem of this effort consisted mainly in the lack of legal support, but especially in the absence of a doctrine that is unequivocal and accessible to the public regarding the ‘harmfulness’ of the actors of the ‘old regime’. The public could not assimilate in their entirety the labels proposed by the intelligentsia in the context in which the political configurations supported by them were considered responsible for the sharp drop in the standard of living, especially after 1989<sup>36</sup>.

– In the relation with Western donors, and with their approval, the intelligentsia has turned into a gatekeeper with the function of ‘guarding’ the contact with the civilization chosen as a model.

Contact with the backwards societies, traumatized by communism, with the model of evolution of the era (the West) was thus not only *mediated*, but also *filtered* by the groups defined by the intelligentsia, because they had also assumed another function, that of *social labeling*. In this way, the intelligentsia groups proposed ways of modernization according to a relatively limited definition of *civil society*, in which the issue of reconstructing social space became limited to a few topics, and the ones that did not ‘fall in line’ with the vision considered ‘acceptable’ could even be placed within the area of ‘public condemnation’.

Paradoxically, the humanistic elite meets in the same space of vehemence of language with the resentful discourse of the groups in government considered neo-Communist. This situation largely defined public communication in the first few years after 1989:

“The field was initially dominated by humanists, who had some room for development under the communist regime. They were an important political force after the 1990 and had a gate-keeping role in creating a representation of the state

<sup>35</sup> Liliana Pop. (2006). *Democratizing capitalism? The political economy of postcommunist transformations in Romania, 1989–2001*, Manchester and New York: Manchester University Press.

<sup>36</sup> After the 2000 elections, the coalition supported by the ‘humanistic elite’ disintegrated. The National Peasant Party, with the most vehement discourse regarding ‘restoration’, disappeared from the Romanian political scene.

of affairs in the country, both internally and in relation to foreign agencies and donors. Their position was similar to those of other local groups in the region which channeled foreign aid ... Their lack of social science training encouraged a propensity towards sweeping, usually negative judgments about the state of the society and the economy, and a preference for – p.51 metaphor at the expense of analysis. It cultivated an uncompromising style based on essentialist and elitist idea, of conservative and libertarian inspiration ...”<sup>37</sup>

- The intelligentsia has taken on the role of ‘defining’ society, often *in opposition to the state*, which they saw as a limiting factor in relation to *civil liberties, private initiative*, and with the imperative of *moral purging*. This ideology was strengthened by the fact that that particular ‘humanistic elite’ saw in the leftist governments in power in Romania after 1990 only offshoots of the communist regime;
- The limits of ‘definitions’ regarding the modernization of society, the function of *authority*, the state, relations between society and state, and the relative self-isolation in the ‘ivory tower’ had important consequences on the rest of society. The reform and institutions suffered, often becoming the field on which were performed political disputes or the acts of rewarding personal or party loyalties. Although situated close to certain public needs strongly neglected by the communists, the ‘humanistic elite’ stayed fairly isolated from the ‘public at large’, and did not manage to initialize a long term relationship with the political class, which was thus left without doctrinary ‘guidance’. We are thus able to explain in this way the shortcomings of the projects for internal and foreign policy of the political act<sup>38</sup>. In the absence of effective collaboration between the intellectuals and the political class, Euro-Atlantic integration was one of the few landmarks on the political agenda in post-December Romania. The cumulated result of failure to reform institutions and the incoherence of the political act was that, for a long time, the state administration proved ineffectual, and the governing act was manifested through executive orders (emergency ordinances).

“During the 1990s in Romania, when the boundaries between the economy and politics were still in the process of being drawn, we would expect to find evidence of how ... would argue, institutions are established through an act of political delegation. Elster, Offe and Preuss (1998)<sup>39</sup>, also anticipated that weak political authority would lead to weak

<sup>37</sup> Liliana Pop, *op. cit.*, 50.

<sup>38</sup> We are tempted to say that, aside from Euro-Atlantic integration, political actors have been without projects, and political parties did not have projects or platforms as such, but lists of priorities which they followed more or less closely.

<sup>39</sup> Elster John, Claus Offe and Ulrick K. Preuss. (1998). *Institutional design in postcommunist societies: rebuilding the ship at sea*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press in Liliana Pop, *op. cit.*, 101.

delegation, decree-ism and reversals. This hypothesis is confirmed by the study of change in state and marked institutions in post-communist Romania.”<sup>40</sup>

- Romanian society, however, has progressed. In time, the humanistic elite has reformed itself, and has reinvented its discourse, which has become more solid, more applied in relation to concrete challenges of society. Especially from the private economic space and certain public institutions came a managerial corps able to answer the challenges posed by the liberalization of the economy and the Euro-Atlantic integration of society. This is the new elite, called by Liliana Pop ‘pragmatic’, but which also has the role to link the backwards society and the Western model, nevertheless the process of bringing them closer occurs ‘as we go’, in comparison with the local requirements, and ‘bottom to top’.

“From near a complete dominance over debates and practices, the heroic model<sup>41</sup> of action ... was slowly replaced by more pragmatic and limited evaluations of success and failure. This process is parallel to that of the constitution of politics as democratic and the consolidation of democracy.”<sup>42</sup>

#### BURNING STAGES AND THE ‘MIDDLE CLASS’ DEFICIT

**Passing from one stage to another means progress, first and foremost for the societies initiating a new historical stage.** Progress means society manages successfully to enter a self-sustained process of social and economic development, with beneficial effects for all strata of society<sup>43</sup>. From an attitude point of view, the progress of societies with initiative in history is centered on the *spirit of savings* (versus consumer behavior) and on *productive activities* (versus speculative ones), and from an institutional point of view, progress associates with the emergence of new institutional and social configurations based on the success of *start-up activities and industries*<sup>44</sup>. The new stage reached by advanced societies will mark the entry of the world system in a new *era*. There are situations when

---

<sup>40</sup> Liliana Pop, *op. cit.*, 101.

<sup>41</sup> The phrase ‘heroic model’ is insufficiently explained by Liliana Pop. We accept it with reservations. Heroism, personal sacrifice for the collective interest, has not been often found in the social area to which she refers.

<sup>42</sup> Liliana Pop, *op. cit.*, 36.

<sup>43</sup> The concept of progress was defined from this perspective by W.W. Rostow, in *The Stages of Economic Growth* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1960), the French Edition: *Les Etapes de la croissance économique*, Editions du Seuil, Paris, 1963). We only considered the stage called by Rostow *takeoff*, meaning the capacity for economic growth at a constant pace, and therefore for ‘self-sustaining’ the internal relationship effects, Rostow, *op. cit.*, 18.

<sup>44</sup> A savings rate of under 5% of the GDP is typical of underdeveloped societies, see Rostow, *op. cit.*, 19, 66, 73, 81.

**underdeveloped societies shall *burn stages* in order to keep up, without necessarily managing to expand progress to the whole of society.**

The concept of *burning stages of historical development* – the stages followed by the West – was introduced at the beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup> century by the analyses made by Stefan Zeletin regarding the development of backwards countries, such as Romania, under the impact of introducing British, then French and German capital in the Lower Danube area:

„With financial capitalism, our society makes a leap directly from mercantilism to imperialism, from developing national production forces to organizing them under the supremacy of big finance. The political consequences are immense; in truth, ... **Romania no longer goes through an intermediate stage of liberalism, of decentralization and real democracy** [the emphasis is ours]... This type of evolution by leaps and bounds is not unique; it characterizes all late bourgeoisies that tend to shorten the stages of the development of capitalism, and is found first and foremost in Germany and the United States... the organ that acts as an intermediary between nation and industry, gathering the savings of the first, is the bank itself. Thus, the development of late bourgeoisies leads straight to financial oligarchy.”<sup>45</sup>

It seems that, in order to burn stages, the backwards society needs two types of ‘fuel’: a ‘project for development’, and room for adequate social maneuvering – to encourage social mobility and the formation of the ‘new middle class’. Thus, burning stages presupposes support provided to the new bourgeoisie by the local *intelligentsia*.

After 1989, based on the hesitant evolution of Romanian society, we realize that the ‘significant project’ – in the sense of point of orientation for the social body – was less relevant than required by the acute need for progress.

Although Romanian universities, with the help of mainly European programs, have sent a multitude of young people abroad for studies, once returned to their country, they did not develop an ‘ideological project’. The social success in Romanian society was measured rather as a sum of individualized results, either as initiatives at the level of the new capitalist enterprises, or by the financial success of individuals. The best representatives of the young intelligentsia, sent to study abroad in order to resume intellectual and spiritual ties with the West, have opted massively to stay abroad.<sup>46</sup> This ‘defection’ is attributed to the political class, who

<sup>45</sup> Stefan Zeletin. (1991). *Burghezia română. Originea și rolul ei istoric*, București: Humanitas, 181-182.

<sup>46</sup> After 1991, Romania had massive emigration, especially among young university graduates, which make up about 12% of the 2 million Romanians abroad. Of them, 50.000 are considered ‘exceptional’, or ‘gifted’ individuals. After the 2001 liberalization of circulation towards the West for Romanians, there were further waves of emigration, dominated by qualified labor or workers from other areas. Sources: “Tinerii se frământă să plece în străinătate”, *Cotidianul*, 12 septembrie 2005. Academia Română, Institutul Național de Cercetări Economice, Centrul de cercetări demografice “Vladimir Trebici”, Vasile Gheorghiu, *Declinul demografic și viitorul populației României. O perspectivă din anul 2007 asupra populației României în secolul 21, Raport* (Alpha MDN, 2007).

did not know how to attract those young people to their country, especially the havoc in the mechanism of appreciating values in the economic system and that of public institutions.

The middle class acts as a social relay, as the main catalyst of the forces that make up the market and technological progress. In terms of income and ideologically, the middle class overlaps only partially with the *intelligentsia*, being rather a strongly aspirational social structure, tied by the perspectives of improving social mobility, economic growth, and job creation. In essence, the middle class represents a liberal lifestyle, with average to high incomes, which includes a large part of the *professions with high technological content*, or with *important social responsibilities* (for instance, the technocrats in government)<sup>47</sup>. With regard to Romania, after almost 20 years of reform, the middle class is still *in statu nascendi*. Depending on income and the category of occupation, in 1999 the middle class was estimated to be 9 to 10% of the population<sup>48</sup>, and in 2006 it was estimated at around 16,000 people<sup>49</sup>, depending on income.

In terms of jobs, some of the recent estimates indicate that around 30 to 35% of the population would fall within the type of occupation typical of the middle class: intellectuals, entrepreneurs, administration clerks, foremen, etc. From our point of view this estimate is less relevant, as in a society still in transition, the occupational categories taken into consideration only partially represent the middle class – a social category characterized first and foremost by entrepreneurial spirit and a relatively important economic success. The middle class, from this point of view, is a social layer that *transgresses the statistical-occupational categories* used by the Statistical Yearbook in Romania.

Alarmed by the evolutions of the reform that risk to consume the main driving factor of development, the Romanian Association of Business People defined the middle class in the following terms:

- „it is the most important taxpayer group, therefore the essential source of social income for redistribution at the national level.
- It is an important source of financial resources for investment feeding the sustainable growth of the nation. Putting in danger the potential profit of the

---

“Patru din cinci tineri vor să plece în străinătate. Următoarea destinație a muncitorilor români va fi Irlanda”, *BloomBiz.ro*, <http://www.bloombiz.ro/article--Business-Economie-Patru-din-cinci-tineri-vor-sa-plece-in-strainatate.-Urmatoarea-destinatia-a-muncitorilor-romani-va-fi-Irlanda--1250492.html> (14 Decembrie 2007).

<sup>47</sup> Our conclusion is derived from the synthesis of theories of social stratification and the middle class from the following works: Ramona L. Ford. (1988). *Work, Organization and Power. Introduction to Industrial Sociology*, Boston: Allyn and Bacon, 259-266. Ioan M. Rădulescu, Maria Larionescu, Gabriela Neagu. (2006). *Constituirea clasei mijlocii în România*, București: Editura Economică, 2007.

<sup>48</sup> “Poziția Asociației Oamenilor de Afaceri din România (AOAR) cu privire la Starea economiei românești – martie 1999 – Document adoptat cu ocazia reuniunii Senatului AOAR din 29 martie 1999”, published at [www.aoar.ro/pozitii/3/r2.htm](http://www.aoar.ro/pozitii/3/r2.htm)

<sup>49</sup> “Upgrade de viață”, *Business Magazin*, 13-19 December 2006.

middle class is the last thing wished by the economic decision makers.

– Within the ranks of this class are the majority of those that are concerned with developing the labor force of the nation (educators in the widest sense of the world, scientists and people of culture and mass media). Their voice is decisive not only because they know how to express themselves, but they also have the possibility of influencing public opinion”<sup>50</sup>.

From an attitude point of view, *the middle class deficit* has implications on *the lack of landmarks* in terms of *work ethics and consumption*. We say that that society is 'uncivilized'. The middle class is the main repository for motivations and attitudes that increase work productivity, savings<sup>51</sup> and investments for the future. Of course, at least in the Romanian case, consumption higher than income is also the expression of correcting some historical disbalances, regarding access to elementary consumption goods for contemporary society, through easy loans. Inflationary pressure will be stronger, however – a currency not covered by goods and services – where consumption is the expression of a cultural deficit, the disbalance between expectations and attitudes.

This *deficit* can explain partially the excessive duration of the takeoff of transition, and reveals the non-productive character of the relation so far between the project of reform proposed by the intelligentsia and its political operationalization by the power factors in Romania.

#### THE ABANDONED SOCIETY AND BEHAVIORAL MUTATIONS: POLITICIANISM

In our hypothesis, an abandoned society is the expression of a deficit of reform, and, implicitly, of the merely partial integration in the system of civilized order. The main characteristic of the abandoned society is the *dysfunctional character of the state and administration*, in general. The state administration gains irrational accents by the *predatory* character of *taxation*<sup>52</sup>, *grave shortcomings in*

---

<sup>50</sup> AOAR, idem.

<sup>51</sup> Compared to the average EU savings rate of 11%, in Romania this was 5.2% in 2006. Only families with their own business had a higher savings rate than the European average, namely 17%. Generally speaking, 40% of Romanian households had higher spending than income. Romania's situation is not unique among transition countries: the rate in the Czech Republic was 5.1%, in Latvia it was 1.1%, in Lithuania it was 1.5%. It seems that Western Europe is also registering a fall in the savings rate, together with a wider European phenomenon of 'degradation of the middle class' (see Louis Chauvel, *Les classes moyennes à la dérive*, Paris, Le Seuil, 2006), but the reasons are different, and we shall not analyze them here. Source: „Est-europenii încep să pună banii «la saltea»” (Eastern Europeans are starting to 'stash their money under their mattresses'), *Capital*, 19 June, 2007.

<sup>52</sup> “Countries in the former Soviet and Eastern bloc account for six of the bottom 10 countries in terms of the number of tax payments [96] a company has to make. Romania, Ukraine, Uzbekistan and Belarus are ranked the bottom four in the world on this measure which is reflected by the sheer number and variety of taxes a company is required to pay in these countries. In two of these countries,

*the justice system*, and the *social retardation function* that it exercises in relation to public interests. At the level of the political system, one of the manifestations of the abandon of society by the elites is the phenomenon of *politicianism*. **Politicianism is the subordination of public interest to the interest of persons who gain positions and functions, and the parties giving up significant concerns, of a directional ('doctrinary') nature regarding the evolution of society.** The party is a vehicle, accepted by public consciousness and by 'Europe', used, however, for getting rich quick. The political idea, which should have been the link between collective interests and the administration of power within the state is strongly diminished, if not absent entirely.

Under these conditions, capital becomes a factor of civilization as a result of the exceptions in the system, due to the international layout in which the backwards society is included (NATO and EU member), either by entrepreneurs taking on the functions that the state fails to carry out, and by the 'classical' ideological components of civil society. The disconnect between the 'real country', 'of those who work'<sup>53</sup>, and the 'legal country' – of those who rule, involve great medium and long term risks, typical of weak governments. Given the growth of the local market without any apparent fostering policies, it seems that the market has its own powers to develop, but for how long without a stable and visionary politics and judicial system?

In one of its regional analyses, *The Economist Intelligence Unit*<sup>54</sup> observes that the Romanian market is undergoing a rapid process of growth- maturity (by the evolutions of purchasing power and of competition), new enterprises are standards of efficiency for the whole of Europe (at the level of perception of some investors, "Romania is one of the tiger markets of Europe, with the biggest market potential after Russia and Ukraine. The Romanian plant is close in efficiency to Poland, the European benchmark."), the rate of investments in capital products (fixed investments), which is critical to ensure the base of development, with growth rates between 15% (2008) and 25% (2007) per year, considering the fact that **the justice system is still a serious obstacle for development (,implementation of laws is as usual the main headache"), and political action is chaotic and inefficient ("political ineptitude is more of a risk ...")**. The latter cast uncertainty on economic growth, which is still 'under the protection' of capital initiatives (generally foreign) and of the 'perverse effects' (unintentionally)

---

Romania and Ukraine, flat rate corporate profits taxes have been introduced, but the number of payments required and the contribution of other taxes are significant and so mitigate the perceived benefits of the flat tax system." – Source: „Paying Taxes 2008. The Global Picture”, The World Bank, PricewaterhouseCoopers, 38-39.

(<http://www.doingbusiness.org/taxes>).

<sup>53</sup> „The country of those that work” – a slogan from the communist period of Romania.

<sup>54</sup> Dr. Daniel Thorniley. (February 2008). “Romania – The business outlook”, *The Economist Intelligence Unit. Corporate network*, electronically distributed material.

positive<sup>55</sup> emanating from the political apparatus. The economic and social background of growth is, however, the most fragile in Europe, *The Economist* indicates, after the Baltic countries, a result of the chasm between rural and urban environments, of the low tolerance that the population has towards bank debt („repaying consumer loans of €15 per month is a burden for many consumers”), and, due to the structure of consumption spending (40% of consumption is still made to cover basic needs, double the amount in Central European countries).

In our hypothesis, the political class sets its action coordinates in relation to an *implicit program* set by the intelligentsia. ‘Euro-Atlantic integration’, ‘the market economy’, ‘human rights’, ‘privatization’, ‘minority rights’ – these key formulations that have made possible Romania’s getting back in close proximity to the West were uttered almost compulsively by most of the Romanian intellectual elite. The political class conformed with these imperatives depending on the flexibility of party interests, and of the capacity to comprehend the imperative of Romania’s European re-integration. However, the effort seems to have been too much. Trying to solve two overwhelming tasks: national (re)construction and social progress, the intelligentsia did not manage very well the connection with the civilized world, and the political class often fell into *politicianism*, a phenomenon which, as we know from direct experience, is still contemporary:

„By ‘politicianism we understand a type of political activity... by which a few of the citizens of a state manage to turn public institutions and services from means of working for the public good, as they should be, into means of working for personal interests’ – wrote R. I. Dulcescu-Motru – future president of the Romanian Academy<sup>56</sup>, in 1904.

Anthony D. Smith resumes the role of elites in backwards countries, which he refers to as *ethnic intelligentsia*<sup>57</sup>, in relation to the ‘public good’ mentioned in the quote from Motru, along the following coordinates: the transformation of society from the stage of dependent community into an actor with political will by regaining national and civic liberties, ‘mental’ and economic recovery and unification of the territory<sup>58</sup>. It is obvious that, faced with these objectives, politicianism can mean a failure so much bigger as it compromises the ‘correct’ alignment of the backwards society with the orbit of development specific to the dominant time, to the era.

One of the most interesting indirect indicators of this type of deficit (political mismanagement, i.e. *politicianism*) is trust in the justice system. Public perception

<sup>55</sup> Perverse effects are ‘individual or collective effects resulting from the juxtaposition of behaviors that were not among the objectives sought by the actors’ – Raymond Boudon. (1977). *Effets pervers et ordre social*, Paris: PUF, 10.

<sup>56</sup> Constantin R. Dulcescu-Motru, outstanding representative of Romanian culture in the first half of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, president of the Romanian Academy between 1938 and 1941.

<sup>57</sup> Smith, *op. cit.*, 64.

<sup>58</sup> Smith, *op. cit.*, 64.

of the justice system sends to, among other things, the degree to which social space is perceived as being 'just' or 'unjust', meaning to the quality of the distribution of power within the state and society, therefore within politics. At the beginning of 2007, 26% of Romanians trusted the justice system, considering that 62% of the magistrates polled said that 'there is political pressure in investigations'.<sup>59</sup>

Therefore, it is not surprising to find out that trust in the political class is at a minimal level. In December 2007, 80% of Romanians believed that members of parliament represent them 'little or very little', being excessively concerned with their own businesses and interests.<sup>60</sup>

The social logic of contemporary economics is accompanied by phenomena of social blockage and dissolution which, together with other researchers, we called *diminished reality*. Especially interesting we found to be Ritzer's analyses regarding excessive rationality, which leads to the 'McDonaldization of society'. In the East, diminished reality often takes the form of *separation of society and administration*, and of an acute deficit of doctrinary imagination and political action. If in the West reality becomes problematic due to excessive organization, systematicity, and predictability, in the East social reality suffers from a de facto abandon by the ideologies and elites.

In the context of an ideological project that is deficient at the level of the intelligentsia, with a disoriented political class, and without a properly developed middle class to ensure the 'combustion' in the social engine of development, the evolutions in Romanian society, no matter how bright – integration into NATO in 2004, and into the EU in 2007, the extraordinary growth of the market since 2006–2007, still run the risk of a weak social structural growth.

## REFERENCES

- B descu, Ilie.** (2002). *Noologia. Cunoa terea ordinii spirituale a lumi. Sistem de sociologie noologic*, Bucure ti: Editura Valahia.
- B descu, Ilie, Dungaciu, Dan, Baltasiu, Radu.** (1996). *Istoria sociologiei. Teorii contemporane*, Bucure ti: Ed. Eminescu.
- Boudon, Raymond.** (1997). *Effets pervers et ordre social*, Paris: PUF;
- Calhoun, Craig.** "The Infrastructure of Modernity: Indirect Social Relationships, Information Technology and Social Interaction in H.Haferkamp and N.Smelser", eds., *Social Change and Modernity*, (Berkeley: University of California Press), 218-219 apud Brian D. Loader, ed. (1997), *The Governance of Cyberspace. Politics, technology and global restructuring*, London and New York: Routledge.
- Calhoun, Craig.** "Computer Technology, Large-Scale Social Integration and the Local Community" in *Urban Affairs Quarterly* 22: 2 (1986): 337 in David Holmes, "The Fallacies and Fortunes of

<sup>59</sup> Eurobarometer published in "*Justi ia e chioar* (One-eyed justice)", *Gândul*, 11 ianuarie 2007.

<sup>60</sup> CURS (Centre for Urban and Regional Studies, Bucharest) poll from December 2007, published in "Conform unei cercet ri CURS Traian B sescu, un pre edinte de nota 6 (According to a CURS poll, Traian Basescu gets a D as president)", *Gândul*, 17 ianuarie 2008).

- 'Interactivity' in Communication Theory", Online: <http://www.cem.itesm.mx/dacs/publicaciones/logos/anteriores/n58/dholmes.pdf>;
- Chauvel, Louis.** (2006). *Les classes moyennes à la dérive*, Paris: Le Seuil.
- Ford, Ramona L.** (1988). *Work, Organization and Power. Introduction to Industrial Sociology*, Boston: Allyn and Bacon.
- Frank, Andre Gunder.** (1978). *Dependent Accumulation and Underdevelopment*, London: Macmillan Press.
- Friedman, Thomas.** (2006). "The Taxi Driver", in *The New York Times*, 1 Nov. 2006. Thomas Friedman, "The Era of Interruptions", in *Business magazin* 107 (44/2006): 74.
- Ghe u, Vasile.** (2007). *Declinul demografic i viitorul popula iei României. O perspectiv din anul 2007 asupra popula iei României în secolul 21, Raport* (Alpha MDN, 2007), Academia Român , Institutul Na ional de Cercet ri Economice, Centrul de cercet ri demografice "Vladimir Trebici".
- Hirschman, Albert.** (1984). *Essays in Trespassing. Economics to Politics and Beyond*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Hodson, Randy, Sullivan, Teresa A.** (1994). *The Social Organization of Work*, Belmont: Wadsworth.
- John, Elster, Offe, Claus and Preuss, Ulrick K.** (1998). *Institutional design in postcommunist societies: rebuilding the ship at sea*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press in Liliana Pop. (2006), *Democratizing capitalism? The political economy of postcommunist transformations in Romania, 1989-2001*, Manchester and New York: Manchester University Press.
- Loader, Brian D.** (ed.). (1997). *The Governance of Cyberspace. Politics, technology and global restructuring*, London and New York: Routledge, 1997.
- Lovinescu, Eugen.** (1997). *Istoria civiliza iei române moderne*, Bucure ti: Minerva.
- M rginean, Ioan, Larionescu, Maria, Neagu, Gabriela.** (2006). *Constituirea clasei mijlocii în România*, Bucure ti: Editura Economic .
- Mullins, Laurie J.** (1999). *Management and Organisational Behaviour*, fifth edition, Financial Times/Prentice Hall, 1999.
- Pop, Liliana.** (2006). *Democratizing capitalism? The political economy of postcommunist transformations in Romania, 1989-2001*, Manchester and New York: Manchester University Press.
- Putnam, Robert.** (2000). *Bowling Alone. The Collapse and Revival of American Community*, New York: Simon & Schuster.
- Ritzer, George.** (2001). *Explorations in Social Theory. From Metatheorizing to Rationalization*, London: Sage.
- Smith, Anthony.** (1991). *National identity*, University of Nevada Press, Reno.
- Stoker, Gerry.** "Regime Theory and Urban Politics", in David Judge, Gerry Stoker, and Harold Wolman, eds., *Theories of Urban Politics* (London: Sage Publications Ltd., 1995), in Richard T. LeGates, Frederic Stout, eds. (1997). *The City Reader*, New York: Routledge.
- Stone, Clarence.** (1993). „Urban Regimes and the Capacity to Govern: A Political Economy Approach”, *Journal of Urban Affairs* 15: 1 (1993): 1-28, in Gerry Stoker, "Regime Theory and Urban Politics", in David Judge, Gerry Stoker, and Harold Wolman, eds. (1995). *Theories of Urban Politics*, London: Sage Publications Ltd. in Richard T. LeGates, Frederic Stout, eds. (1997). *The City Reader*, New York: Routledge.
- Toynbee, Arnold J.** (1997). *Studiu asupra Istoriei. Sintez a volumelor I-VI de D.C. Somervell*, trans., Dan. A. L z rescu, Bucure ti: Humanitas.
- Toynbee, Arnold J.** (2002). *Studiu asupra istoriei. Sintez a volumelor I-VI de D. C. Somervell*, Bucure ti: Humanitas.
- Thorniley, Daniel.** (February 2008). "Romania – The business outlook", *The Economist Intelligence Unit. Corporate network*, electronically distributed material;
- Veblen, Thorstein.** (1970). *The Theory of Leisure Class*, London: Unwin Books.
- Veblen, Thorstein.** *The Theory of the Leisure Clas*, New York, Berlin: Globusz Publishing, n.d..Online: <http://www.globusz.com/ebooks/LeisureClass/00000012.htm>.
- Zeletin, tefan (1991).** *Burghesia român . Originea i rolul ei istoric*, Bucure ti: Humanitas.

**Wallerstein, Immanuel.** (1979). *The Capitalist World-Economy*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

“Tinere e f r educa ie i via f r de viitor”, *Cotidianul*, 12 septembrie 2005;

“Upgrade de via ”, *Business Magazin*, 13-19 December 2006;

“Est-europenii încep s pun banii «la saltea»”, *Capital*, 19 iunie, 2007;

“Learning to live with Big Brother.”, *The Economist*, 27 September 2007;

“Patru din cinci tineri vor s plece în str in tate. Urm toarea destina ie a muncitorilor români va fi Irlanda”, *BloomBiz.ro*, available at:

<http://www.bloombiz.ro/article--Business-Economie->

[Patru din cinci tineri vor sa plece in strainatate. Urmatoarea destinatie a muncitorilor romani va fi Irlanda--1250492.html](http://www.bloombiz.ro/article--Business-Economie-Patru_din_cinci_tineri_vor_sa_plece_in_strainatate_Urmatoarea_destinatie_a_muncitorilor_romani_va_fi_Irlanda--1250492.html) (14 Decembrie 2007);

“Pozi ia Asocia iei Oamenilor de Afaceri din România (AOAR) cu privire la Starea economiei române ti – martie 1999 – Document adoptat cu ocazia reuniunii Senatului AOAR din 29 martie 1999” published at [www.aoar.ro/pozitii/3/r2.htm](http://www.aoar.ro/pozitii/3/r2.htm);

“Paying Taxes 2008. The Global Picture”, The World Bank, PricewaterhouseCoopers, published at: (<http://www.doingbusiness.org/taxes>);