

## ELITE AND MASS IDEOLOGIES ON ROMANIAN TRANSITION\*

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*The paper explores the main ideologies on postcommunist transition and reform in Romania, at elite and mass levels. Transition and post-communist reform are seen as two perspectives on the same process of structural change from a centralized economy and totalitarian organization to a market economy and democracy. The reform approach follows the changes from the perspective of the plan, of the target condition that is being aimed for – the society of well-being, based on freedom and competition. Transition is a “passing” from one state to another. But not just any passing, rather it is a passing that, in the vague evaluation of those that experience it, would best be as short as possible, be put behind them as quickly as possible.*

*Elite views on reform are categorized in terms of modernization, restructuring of different forms of capital, by analogy with medical treatment, chess play and Biblical exodus.*

*Mass views on post-communist transition are inferred by survey data analysis. Attitudes on change on the one hand and attitudes on community vs individual, on the other hand, are the basic dimensions structuring the mass ideologies on transition and reform in post-communist Romania. Exploring the way these attitudes structure and generate ideological groupings of the population is the purpose of the second part of the paper.*

*The overlapping of ideological groups and capital groups is extremely strong. Going from individualist liberalism through the communitarian liberalism, individualist pragmatism, communitarian pragmatism, communitarian conservatism series to communitarian conservatism is done by almost linearly reducing human, material and social type capital. Similarly, the level of regional development reduces as the same movement from individualist liberalism to the communitarian variety takes place. It is surprising to see how much people depend on their beliefs, including religious belief, on what they own and where they live.*

### *“Transition” in sociology*

#### *“Transition” as intermediary unwanted states*

Transition means change, that is to say a multitude of intermediary situations between two states of relative equilibrium that are identified by experience, knowledge or design. In the case of post-communist transition,

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\* The paper is based on chapters from my book *Spatiul Social al Tranzitiei*, published in 1999 at Iasi: Polirom Printing House. For e-mail contact use :dsandu@dnt.ro