

# New Europe College Yearbook 2005-2006



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# NEW EUROPE FOUNDATION

## NEW EUROPE COLLEGE

Institute for Advanced Study

*New Europe College (NEC)* is an independent Romanian institute for advanced study in the humanities and social sciences founded in 1994 by Professor Andrei Pleșu (philosopher, art historian, writer, Romanian Minister of Culture in 1990–1991, Romanian Minister of Foreign Affairs from 1997 to 1999) within the framework of the *New Europe Foundation*, established in 1994 as a private foundation subject to Romanian law.

Its impetus was the *New Europe Prize for Higher Education and Research*, which was awarded in 1993 to Professor Pleșu by a group of six institutes for advanced study (the Center for Advanced Study in the Behavioral Sciences, Stanford, the Institute for Advanced Study, Princeton, the National Humanities Center, Research Triangle Park, the Netherlands Institute for Advanced Study in Humanities and Social Sciences, Wassenaar, the Swedish Collegium for Advanced Study in the Social Sciences, Uppsala, and the Wissenschaftskolleg zu Berlin).

Since 1994, the NEC community of fellows and *alumni* has enlarged to over 500 members. In 1998 the New Europe College was awarded the prestigious *Hannah Arendt Prize* for its achievements in setting new standards in higher education and research. One year later, the Romanian Ministry of Education, Research and Youth officially recognized the New Europe College as an institutional structure for continuous education in the humanities and social sciences, at the level of advanced studies.

Focused primarily on research at an advanced level, NEC strives to create an institutional framework with strong international links that offers to the young scholars and academics in the fields of humanities and social sciences from Romania, and to the foreign scholars invited as fellows,

working conditions similar to those in the West, and provides a stimulating environment for transdisciplinary dialogue and critical debates. The academic programs NEC coordinates and the events it organizes aim at promoting contacts between Romanian scholars and their peers worldwide, at cultivating the receptivity of academics and researchers in Romania for fields and methods as yet not firmly established here, thus contributing to the development of a core of promising young academics and scholars, expected to play a significant role in the renewal of the Romanian academe and intellectual life.

While not an institution of higher education, NEC has been consistently contributing through some of its programs to the advancement of higher education in Romania.

### **Academic programs currently organized and coordinated by NEC:**

- ***NEC Fellowships (since 1994)***

Each year, up to ten NEC Fellowships for outstanding young Romanian scholars in the humanities and social sciences are publicly announced. The Fellows are chosen by the NEC international Academic Advisory Board for the duration of one academic year (October through July). They gather for weekly seminars to discuss the progress of their research projects and participate in all the scientific events organized by NEC. The Fellows receive a monthly stipend for the duration of nine months, and are given the opportunity of a one-month research trip abroad, at a university or research institute of their choice. At the end of the academic year, the Fellows submit papers representing the results of their research, which are published in the New Europe College Yearbooks.

- ***Ștefan Odobleja Fellowships (starting October 2008)***

Starting with the current academic year New Europe College offers eight fellowships supported by the National Council of Scientific Research in Higher Education. The definition of these fellowships is identical with those in the NEC Program, in which the Odobleja Fellows are integrated.

- ***The NEC–LINK Program (since 2003)***

Drawing on the experience of its NEC and RELINK Programs in connecting with the Romanian academic milieu, NEC initiated in 2003, with support from HESP, a program that aims to contribute more consistently to the advancement of higher education in major Romanian academic centers (Bucharest, Cluj–Napoca, Iași, Timișoara). Teams consisting of two academics from different universities in Romania, assisted by a PhD student, offer joint courses for the duration of one semester in a discipline within the fields of humanities and social sciences. The NEC-LINK courses are expected to be innovative, and meet the needs of the host universities. The grantees participating in the Program receive monthly stipends, a substantial support for ordering literature relevant to their courses, as well as funding for inviting guest lecturers from abroad and for organizing local scientific events.

- ***Europa Fellowships (since 2006)***

This fellowship program, financed by the VolkswagenStiftung, proposes to respond, at a different level, to some of the concerns that had inspired our *Regional Program*. Under the general title *Traditions of the New Europe. A Prehistory of European Integration in South-Eastern Europe*, fellows work on case studies that attempt to recapture the earlier history of the European integration, as it has been taking shape over the centuries in South–Eastern Europe, thus offering the communitarian Europe some valuable vestiges of its less known past. The program proposes to show what is incipiently European, virtually European, what anticipates Europeanness in the historical and topological configuration of South–Eastern Europe.

- ***Robert Bosch Fellowships (since 2007)***

This fellowship program, funded by the Robert Bosch Foundation, supports young scholars and academics from the Western Balkan countries, offering them the opportunity to spend a term at the New Europe College and devote to their research work. Fellows in this program receive a monthly stipend, and funds for a one-month study trip to a university center in Germany.

## **Programs organized since the founding of the New Europe College:**

- ***RELINK Fellowships (1996–2002)***

The RELINK Program targeted highly qualified young Romanian scholars returning from studies or research stays abroad to work in one of Romania's universities or research institutes. Ten RELINK Fellows were selected each year through an open competition; in order to facilitate their reintegration in the local scholarly milieu and to improve their working conditions, a support lasting three years was offered, consisting of: funds in order to acquire scholarly literature, an annual allowance enabling the recipients to make a one-month research trip to a foreign institute of their choice in order to sustain existing scholarly contacts and forge new ones, and the use of a laptop computer and printer. Besides their individual research projects, the RELINK fellows of the last series were also involved in organizing outreach activities within their universities, for which they received a monthly stipend. NEC published several volumes comprising individual or group research works of the RELINK Fellows.

- ***The GE–NEC Program (2000 - 2007)***

Starting with the 2000–2001 academic year, the New Europe College organized and coordinated a program financially supported by the Getty Foundation. Its aim was to strengthen research and education in fields related to visual culture, by inviting leading specialists from all over the world to give lectures and hold seminars for the benefit of Romanian undergraduate and graduate students, as well as young academics and researchers. This program also included 10-month fellowships for Romanian scholars, chosen through the same selection procedures as the NEC Fellows (see above). The GE–NEC Fellows were fully integrated in the life of the College, received a monthly stipend, and were given the opportunity of spending one month abroad for a research trip. At the end of the academic year the Fellows submitted papers representing the results of their research, to be published in the GE–NEC Yearbooks series.

- ***NEC Regional Fellowships (2001 - 2006)***

Starting with October 2001 New Europe College introduced a regional dimension to its programs (that were hitherto dedicated solely to Romanian scholars), by offering fellowships to academics and researchers from South–Eastern Europe (Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Bulgaria, Croatia, Greece, The Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, the Republic of Moldova, Montenegro, Serbia, Slovenia, and Turkey). This program aimed at integrating into the international academic network scholars from a region whose scientific resources are as yet insufficiently known, and to stimulate and strengthen the intellectual dialogue at a regional level. The Regional Fellows received a monthly stipend and were given the opportunity of a one–month research trip abroad. At the end of the grant period, the Fellows were expected to submit papers representing the results of their research, to be published in the NEC Regional Program Yearbooks series.

- ***The Britannia–NEC Fellowship (2004 - 2007)***

This fellowship (1 opening per academic year) was initiated by a private anonymous donor from the U.K. This fellowship was in all respects identical to a NEC Fellowship. The contributions of fellows in this program were included in the NEC Yearbooks.

- ***The Petre Țuțea Fellowships (2006 - 2008)***

During the academic years 2006-2007, and 2007-8, NEC administered a fellowships program financed by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Romania through its Department for Relations with the Romanians Living Abroad. The fellowships were granted to researchers of Romanian descent based abroad and working in fields of the humanities and social sciences, as well as to Romanian researchers whose projects addressed the cultural heritage of the Romanian *diaspora*. Fellows in this program were fully integrated in the College’s community. At the end of the year they submitted papers representing the results of their research, to be published in the bilingual series of the *Petre Țuțea* Program publications.

The New Europe College hosts within the framework of its programs ongoing series of lectures given by prominent foreign and Romanian scholars, for the benefit of academics, researchers and students, as well as a wider public. The College also organizes international and national events (seminars, workshops, colloquia, symposia, book launches, etc.).

An important component of the NEC is its library, consisting of reference works, books and periodicals in the humanities, social and economic sciences. The library holds, in addition, several thousands of books and documents resulting from private donation. It is first and foremost destined to service the fellows, but it is also open to students, academics and researchers from Bucharest and from outside it.

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Beside the above-described programs of the College, the New Europe Foundation and the College expanded their activities during the last years by administering, or by being involved in the following major projects:

- ***The Ludwig Boltzmann Institute for Religious Studies towards the EU Integration (2001–2005)***

Starting with 2001, the Austrian Ludwig Boltzmann Gesellschaft funded for a few years within the framework of the New Europe Foundation a small institute focusing on the extremely sensitive issue of religion related problems in the Balkans, approached from the viewpoint of the EU integration. Through its activities the institute fostered the dialogue between distinct religious cultures (Christianity, Islam, Judaism), as well as between confessions within the same religion, attempting to investigate the sources of antagonisms and to work towards a common ground of tolerance and cooperation. The institute hosted international scholarly events, supported research projects, issued a number of publications, and enlarged its library with publications meant to facilitate informed and up-to-date approaches in this field.

- ***The Septuagint Translation Project (since 2002)***

This project aims at achieving a scientifically reliable translation of the Septuagint into Romanian by a group of very gifted, mostly young, Romanian scholars, attached to the NEC. The financial support is granted by the Romanian foundation *Anonimul*. The translation is scheduled to end in 2008; five of the planned nine volumes have already been published by the Polirom Publishing House in Iași.

- ***The Excellency Network Germany – South–Eastern Europe Program (2005 - 2008)***

The aim of this program, financed by the Hertie Foundation, has been to establish and foster contacts between scholars and academics, as well as higher education entities from Germany and South–Eastern Europe, in view of developing a regional scholarly network; it focused preeminently on questions touching upon European integration, such as transnational governance, and citizenship. The main activities of the program consisted of hosting at the New Europe College prominent, as well as young promising scholars coming from Germany, invited to give lectures both at the College and at universities throughout Romania, and organizing international scientific events with German participation.

- ***The ethnoArc Project–Linked European Archives for Ethnomusicological Research***

*An European Research Project in the 6th Framework Programme: Information Society Technologies–Access to and Preservation of Cultural and Scientific Resources (2006-2008)*

The goal of the *ethnoArc* project (which started in 2005 under the title *From Wax Cylinder to Digital Storage* with funding from the Ernst von Siemens Music Foundation and the Federal Ministry for Education and Research of Germany) was to contribute to the preservation, accessibility, connectedness and exploitation of some of the most prestigious ethnomusicological archives in Europe (Bucharest, Budapest, Berlin, and Geneva), by providing a linked archive for field collections from different sources, thus enabling access to cultural

content for various application and research purposes. The system was designed to conduct multi–archive searches and to compare retrieved data. In a two–year effort, *ethnoArc* attempted to create an “archetype” of a linked archive, aiming to incite modern, comprehensive and comparative research in ethnomusicology, anthropology and other related disciplines, and to deepen and spread awareness and familiarity with the common European memory and identity. The project was run by an international network of seven partners: four sound archives, two multidisciplinary research institutions, and, most importantly, a technology developer: the “Constantin Brăiloiu” Institute for Ethnography and Folklore, Bucharest, Archives Internationales de Musique Populaire, Geneva, the Ethnomusicological Department of the Ethnologic Museum Berlin (Phonogramm Archiv), Berlin, the Institute for Musicology of the Hungarian Academy of Sciences, Budapest, Wissenschaftskolleg zu Berlin (Coordinator), Berlin, New Europe College, Bucharest, FOKUS Fraunhofer Institute for Open Communication Systems, Berlin.



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## **RALUCA ALEXANDRESCU**

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Articles parus dans revues scientifiques



# LES INCERTITUDES DE LA DÉMOCRATIE SUR LA MODERNISATION POLITIQUE ET LA PRODUCTION INTELLECTUELLE DE LA DÉMOCRATIE AU XIX<sup>E</sup> SIÈCLE ROUMAIN

Un an avant la révolution de 1848 dans les Principautés roumaines, les diplomates français accrédités à Iassy et à Bucarest manifestaient leur inquiétude quant à un danger qui guetterait les grandes familles roumaines et l'influence exercée par la France dans cette région. Il s'agit d'une politique de découragement des études en France des jeunes boyards moldaves ou valaques, comme le note anxieusement le consul Codrîka à l'attention du ministre François Guizot :

« Plusieurs journaux ont annoncé que le gouvernement moldave a proposé à l'Assemblée générale une loi qui déclare déchu de ses droits civils et politiques tout sujet moldave qui fera son éducation en France. Aucune proposition de ce genre n'a encore été portée à l'Assemblée, réunie en ce moment à Iassy, mais elle s'occupe d'organiser un système d'instruction publique dont quelques dispositions, notamment l'ouverture du cours d'un degré supérieur, pour lesquels on ferait venir des professeurs de l'étranger, jointes à l'offre faite par le gouvernement russe de plusieurs places gratuites dans les écoles des cadets, en faveur des jeunes moldaves, sont regardées comme le commencement de l'exécution d'un plan, ayant réellement pour but de détourner les familles aisées d'envoyer leurs enfants compléter leur éducation dans nos écoles »<sup>1</sup>.

Sans avoir une forte attache dans la réalité des faits, car les jeunes boyards ont bel et bien continué de faire leurs études à Paris ou ailleurs, ce petit extrait des rapports consulaires français témoigne d'un certain état d'esprit qui dominait déjà, d'une manière claire, les tendances intellectuelles des Moldaves et des Valaques dans cette période. Ces

tendances vont dans la direction d'une absorption programmatique des faits et des gestes culturels français, qui vont même – comme on l'apprend toujours des rapports consulaires rédigés dans cette période<sup>2</sup> – jusqu'à la volonté d'implanter le programme d'études français dans certaines écoles des deux Principautés. En ignorant quelques fois les prétentions du protectorat russe, qui, selon les observations des diplomates français<sup>3</sup>, était à l'origine de cette politique officielle menée par les Princes de la Moldavie et de la Valachie, ceux-ci vont eux-mêmes déployer des intenses diligences afin de faire admettre leur progénitures dans les grandes écoles française. Le cas du Prince Bibesco, qui arrive finalement à voir son fils se faire admettre, par intervention du roi de France<sup>4</sup>, à l'École militaire de Saint-Cyr, est suggestif dans ce sens.

Ces petits remarques découvertes dans les rapports consulaires rédigés à la veille de la révolution de 1848 constituent un bon exemple d'un phénomène qui s'accélère à l'époque ; il s'agit d'une hâte toujours croissante d'immersion de la culture politique et historique roumaine dans une actualité occidentale qui montre, par sa présence même, les décalages criants de développements. C'est une question dont les membres de cette génération devenaient de plus en plus conscients, car Alecu Russo notait, en faisant le point sur cette période, que la Moldavie avait vécu en 16 ans, de 1835 en 1851, « plus qu'en 500 ans, depuis sa fondation par Dragos et jusqu'à l'époque de nos parents »<sup>5</sup>. C'est le signe que, déjà, la génération de 1848 était devenue consciente du tournant constitué par la pratique des voyages et d'expérience de l'Occident, pratique qui avait été suggérée par un des boyards éclairés de la génération précédente, Dinicu Golescu<sup>6</sup>. Celui-ci avait été peut-être le premier à donner voix à ce « complexe de l'Occident »<sup>7</sup> qui hantera ensuite plus qu'une génération d'intellectuels roumains, en situant finalement les fondations du débat sur la modernisation dans la découverte d'une « attitude juste » envers les modèles formateurs pour la culture démocratiques roumaine.

En effet, la problématique de la formation des jeunes intellectuels à l'étranger<sup>8</sup> s'impose avec une acuité croissante. Comme Paris est d'habitude à l'époque leur destination principale, on ne saurait s'interroger sur l'avènement de la modernité politique roumaine sans questionner la portée de cette influence majoritairement française dans cette période et les résultats, dans la compréhension de la « démocratie » à travers les outils intellectuels fournis par la culture française<sup>9</sup>.

En même temps, saisir la modernité politique roumaine de la seconde moitié du XIX<sup>e</sup> siècle à travers le discours intellectuel de l'époque pose d'emblée un problème de choix méthodologique ; d'autre part, cette démarche exige une explication de la lecture possible de cette modernisation à travers les aventures conceptuelles de la démocratie. En vérité, pourquoi faire une interprétation de ces phénomènes par l'intermédiaire d'une analyse de la démocratie? Ou encore: quelle serait la pertinence, pour une enquête concernant la production intellectuelle de la démocratie et la modernisation politique, le grand débat de 1848, qui a mis ensemble des concepts tellement épars et diffus dans leur compréhension démocratique tels que la Nation (identifiée ou même quelques fois remplacée par le Peuple) et la Révolution, dans le discours politique et dans l'avènement d'une certaine démocratie à la roumaine<sup>10</sup>? La proposition de lecture que j'avance ici va dans une direction qui est celle, plutôt, de la démocratie manquée, d'un concept qui a été associé par la plupart des auteurs de 1848 à des valeurs et identités collectives, choix lourd en conséquences pour le développement de la démocratie et du parlementarisme roumain au XIX<sup>ème</sup> et, pourquoi pas, aussi du XX<sup>ème</sup><sup>11</sup>. Le révolutionnaire Nicolae Balcescu, participant aussi à l'épisode transylvain de 1848, beaucoup plus violent que celui que les Principautés en avaient été les témoins, écrivait rempli d'une admiration presque religieuse, en 1851 : « Horia saisit la hâche dans ses mains et, en la trempant dans du sang hongrois et allemand, écrivit avec elle les droits de la nation roumaine et le programme politique et social de ses révolutions futures »<sup>12</sup>

### **La « démocratie » roumaine entre deux régimes d'historicité<sup>13</sup>**

Je ne me propose naturellement pas de répondre d'une manière exhaustive à ces questions qui représentent, en fait, un malaise intellectuel chronique face aux incertitudes de la modernité roumaine<sup>14</sup>. Mon but est seulement de reprendre à nouveau frais ces questions et de proposer une lecture faite dans une perspective méthodologique différente – l'histoire conceptuelle. J'essaie d'appliquer cette lecture à quelques représentants de la génération matricielle de 1848 et tenant compte des liens qu'ils développent ou, au contraire, ils oublient, dans la génération précédente, celle de Ionica Tautul ou, encore, de Dinicu Golescu.

L'interrogation en miroir de ces deux générations n'a aucunement comme fondement un certain fond évolutionniste qui se proposerait de montrer comment, d'une génération à l'autre, la pensée politique roumaine s'est enrichie de nouveaux concepts et de nouvelles interprétations par rapports à ceux déjà existents. Ou bien comment la logique interne d'hérédité de cette pensée roumaine a pu faire s'accroître la cohérence intellectuelle du portrait culturel de la « démocratie » roumaine. Bien au contraire. Je suis partie d'un constat général concernant les sens de la modernité<sup>15</sup> comme puisant dans une nouvelle perception du temps, en général, et du temps historique, en particulier; il y a, d'une part, l'histoire jusqu'à la Révolution Française, agissant comme articulation du présent et du futur, et il y a, d'autre part, le changement produit à cette époque-là, dans le caractère manipulable de l'histoire<sup>16</sup>: on abandonne ce temps linéaire et continu, source d'inspiration pour les générations présentes, et on commence à vivre l'histoire dans ses articulations diagnosticables et prédictibles<sup>17</sup>. Ce travail, la génération de 1848, qui se situe aussi aux racines du parlementarisme roumain du XIX<sup>e</sup> siècle, ne l'a jamais vraiment fait, en remplaçant l'ouvrage du discours conceptuel en ouvrage uniquement de la réalité ou du passé historique<sup>18</sup>. Tandis que, pour la modernité occidentale d'après la révolution de 1848, ce travail exercé sur le futur transforme le discours avec l'histoire dans un discours pour l'histoire, dans ses côtés maniables prédictibles à l'aide, surtout au XIX<sup>e</sup> siècle, de ce que l'on appelle la nouvelle science. Comme le remarquait l'historien allemand, la genèse de l'Etat moderne pourrait alors se retrouver dans la lutte incessante contre les prophéties religieuses et politiques de tout ordre<sup>19</sup>. En utilisant les catégories métahistoriques de l'« expérience » et de l'« attente », on pourrait alors rechercher « comment dans chaque présent, les dimensions temporelles du passé et du futur avaient été mises en relation »<sup>20</sup>. Et se demander, en essayant d'appliquer une méthodologie similaire au cas roumain, quel était le « régime d'historicité » de chaque période du XIX<sup>e</sup> siècle roumain, ou autrement dit quelle est la manière dont une société « traite son passé et en traite »<sup>21</sup>. Plus clairement, quels sont les rapports que la génération de 1848 établit, d'une manière plus ou moins consciente, avec les éléments de discours politiques proposés par la génération précédente.



## **La démocratie « d'ailleurs » et la rupture des nos Anciens et nos Modernes**

En effet, 1848 propose un cas à part dans la pensée politique roumaine. Tandis que le discours mythologique fondateur est à l'ordre du jour, et que les éléments de l'auto-identification symbolique se retrouvent dans les exploits des antécédents, la pratique discursive est renvoyée au contraire vers les repères intellectuels formateurs de la génération de 1848 qui sont, comme on va le voir, généralement français. Loin d'être un lieu de rencontre, le moment 1848 se révèle alors comme le symptôme d'une distance qui se creuse entre le passé et le présent ; cette controverse surplombe une société qui essaye, tant bien que mal, de se configurer dans une nouvelle attitude envers son passé, d'une part et dans une attente impatiente de la liberté<sup>22</sup>, d'autre part, comme expression d'une exaltation révolutionnaire et non d'un projet démocratique cohérent, qui va, de plus en plus, gagner la partie majoritaire dans le discours révolutionnaire de 1848.

Le particulier de cette démarche est que, à la différence de la grande querelle des Anciens et des Modernes, qui pose le problème du rapport avec le passé comme nécessité d'introduire la « nouveauté », à la différence des Anciens, qui eux, cherchaient la légitimation dans le passé glorieux et la tradition<sup>23</sup>, les penseurs roumains ne peuvent pas rejeter d'emblée cette tradition, qui est la seule à légitimer, dans leurs esprits, la démarche nationale et de construction identitaire ; mais, de l'autre côté, il plongent dans une Modernité européenne qui est issue d'un rapport polémique aux temps historiques et à la liberté des Anciens.

La philosophie politique de la modernité, née, comme on a souvent dit<sup>24</sup>, d'un abandon programatique de la philosophie politique d'Aristote, fonde une idée différente par rapport à la place privilégiée accordée à l'individu dans l'espace politique. Mais, plus que cette image dilématique de l'homme déchiré entre le désir de l'épanouissement individuel solitaire et la volonté de participer à une action politique nécessairement délégué à l'époque moderne, la philosophie politique moderne questionne la place qui reste au politique lui-même dans l'intégralité de l'existence humaine. Cet espace du social, tel qu'il est défini par le XIXe siècle, va supposer que le politique n'est qu'un aspect, certes important, mais pas le seul, de l'ensemble culturel d'une époque<sup>25</sup> ; ensuite, que cet ensemble, en s'objectivant du politique, parce qu'il en sort, peut mieux le contenir et le maîtriser, grâce aussi au phénomène de l'autonomisation du politique.

Le XIX<sup>e</sup> siècle commence à percevoir le politique et sa science non plus comme une cause générale de toutes les autres, ou comme résultat « naturel » de l'enchaînement aristotélicien des sciences du mouvement qui aboutissent fatalement à une science unique, celle du politique, mais tout au contraire, comme une science qui doit puiser dans les autres sciences de la société, afin de se retrouver dans ses expressions les plus adéquates. La science politique du XIX<sup>e</sup> siècle devint alors l'image consciencieuse du grand passage du paradigme mécanique au paradigme biologiste<sup>26</sup>. C'est aussi le passage d'une vision physique – mécanique -- du corps politique à un modèle qui observe les phénomènes politiques en tant que manifestations physiologiques. Le corps politique devient le sujet biologique d'une nouvelle science intégrée dans le corpus général des sciences modernes. En Occident, la nouvelle science du politique inventée par le XIX<sup>e</sup> siècle devra dorénavant intégrer les événements et la société, l'histoire et la sociologie, comme sciences autonomes, voir indépendantes. Et elle fera cela tout en quittant la thèse de l'artificialisme politique proposée par la philosophie du contrat, mais en retenant de celle-ci l'élément définitoire de la modernité, qui est la souveraineté.

Mais le nouveau régime d'historicité qui s'installe peu à peu dans la pensée politique roumaine suit un trajet légèrement différent. C'est une question, certes, de décalage culturel, et c'est aussi une impossibilité pour elle de renouer l'échange avec les générations précédentes. Or, le dialogue – ou la querelle, qui est toujours le résultat de deux éléments qui se rencontrent – entre les Anciens et les Modernes, fondateur dans la pensée politique de l'occident, n'arrive pas à se produire dans l'espace intellectuel roumain. Les auteurs de la génération 1848 citent les écrivains qui les ont précédés, mais n'arrivent pas à internaliser véritablement l'expérience de leur écriture. Le changement de ce rapport avec le temps s'annonçait, d'une certaine façon, chez Ionica Tautul<sup>27</sup>, écrivain moldave actif dans les années trente du XIX<sup>e</sup> siècle – et donc contemporain, dans le sens strictement chronologique du terme, de François Guizot et d'autres – dans un univers intellectuel qui, à l'époque où il écrit, encore dominé par le poids de la culture grecque<sup>28</sup>. La démarche de Tautul, qui essaie de forger une langue littéraire nationale et une terminologie qui lui soit propre, s'inscrit ainsi parfaitement dans cette vision d'ensemble d'une culture encore à la recherche de ses identités.

La question de la non-continuité se pose avec d'autant plus d'acuité que les nouvelles données du XIX<sup>e</sup> siècle dans les Principautés bouleversent d'une manière irréversible la nature des structures temporelles de

l'expérience. On passe d'une vision qui voit l'homme « sous les temps » à celle qui se propose, d'une manière programmatique, d'envisager les temps « produits » par l'homme, dans une vision historicisée du présent<sup>29</sup>. Cela implique l'apparition, assez tôt, d'un besoin de plus en plus accru pour les développements historiques romantiques et mythologiques, ou, dans une première période, pour le besoin de valoriser l'histoire *magistra vitae*, comme exemple pour la revalorisation du présent. C'est, dans l'interprétation de Pocock, un signe de la survivance du sens classique de l'histoire, qui « faisait encore autorité pendant les Lumières néo-classiques »<sup>30</sup>. Cela expliquerait, d'une certaine manière, la fréquentation, par les auteurs roumains, plus timide et restreinte de la théorie politique. L'imposition de plus en plus impérieuse du passé historique, valorisé et glorifié, transforme la vision des auteurs sur leur propre contemporanéité dans un effort de fonder les institutions démocratiques modernes sur deux catégories de références : les belles et tristes ruines du passé – l'allusion à Volney n'est pas fortuite, puisque, à côté du comte d'Herbigny, il fait partie des références en matière politique de Tautul et, peut-être, des autres membres de sa génération – et les exemples du présent, la constitution d'un champ d'expériences en regardant « ailleurs » -- l'expression favorite de Tautul pour indiquer la force de l'exemple étranger.

Regarder « ailleurs » pose d'emblée un problème de choix. Car ailleurs signifie, pour la génération de Tautul, Platon, Aristote, et la Charte constitutionnelle de 1814 dans un tout confondu. Ce phénomène de subsistance des Anciens et des Modernes, sous le toit commun de « l'avènement de la nation politique roumaine » n'est pas étranger aux confusions qui s'ensuivirent en ce qui concerne le sens du concept de démocratie. C'est seulement avec le travail de la génération de 1848 changera, au fur et à mesure de sa croissance, pour ainsi dire, biologique, les perspectives des approches historiographiques. Nicolae Balcescu et Mihail Kogalniceanu, d'une part, et Ion Ghica, de l'autre part, ou bien C. A. Rosetti représentent cette nouvelle vague qui essaye, cette fois-ci d'une manière consciente, de relever le défi soulevé par la génération des historiens français de la Restauration.

En avançant donc quelques années, au moment 1835, date de la première vague de migration estudiantine, le changement du rapport au passé va se produire alors par un transfert pratiqué d'une culture qui est celle française, sans que la pensée roumaine fasse vraiment un travail sur elle-même. L'oubli dans lequel les modestes mais intéressants efforts

de cet écrivain vont tomber symbolise aussi, d'une manière plus générale, l'oubli de la science politique en général, c'est à dire de cette réflexion conceptuelle sur les origines, les mécanismes des institutions et des acteurs politiques qui aurait pu configurer autrement la « démocratie roumaine ».

### **La « démocratie » et les historiens « symbolistes » de 1848**

Ce qui va s'ensuivre, c'est que, n'ayant pas exercé ce travail qui, en Occident, avait déjà provoqué un changement de régime d'historicité, la pensée politique roumaine se trouvera dans la situation de plonger toute entière, et sans beaucoup de réflexion, dans un processus de modernisation dont elle ne détient pas la clef des débuts philosophiques et intellectuels. Les auteurs de 1848 se contentent de s'auto-placer dans une généalogie glorieuse, surtout à l'aide de l'histoire, mais sans faire appel aux efforts d'éclaircissement conceptuel, même modestes, entrepris par leurs prédécesseurs immédiats. Le résultat est l'identification à un passé souvent outrageusement glorifié et identifié au seul personnage collectif digne d'entrer dans le paradigme de la renaissance des Principautés, le Peuple. Le ton est donné par Nicolae Balcescu, qui déplore l'absence d'une vraie histoire au service de la nation roumaine : « L'histoire est le livre de chevet d'une nation. À travers lui, elle voit son passé, son présent et son avenir. Une nation sans histoire est un peuple encore barbare, et malheur au peuple qui a perdu la religion des souvenirs ! »<sup>31</sup>.

Retracer ce parcours tordu et paradoxal de la création d'un certain sens de la « démocratie » roumaine impose aussi la mobilisation de quelques outils complémentaires, comme la théorie des transferts culturels.<sup>32</sup> Ainsi, une recherche sur l'avènement d'une nouvelle conscience du politique dans les Principautés roumaines doit inévitablement passer par une analyse des emprunts, voir des transferts culturels opérés surtout dans la génération de la révolution de 1848, qui est généralement reconnue comme auteur véritable du premier essai d'insertion dans la culture occidentale. Pour ce faire, la théorie des transferts culturels propose de dégager quatre pistes croisées de recherche : l'herméneutique, la conjoncture, les institutions, l'étude de la genèse des discours. Ces étapes vont décrire le parcours du concept de démocratie dans la pensée politique roumaine, dans l'espace créé entre la champ d'expérience de cette génération – encore réduit – et son horizon

d'attente. La génération de 1848 va se heurter à un besoin accru d'accélération des acquisitions culturelles, ceci étant la conséquence du retard dans les textes des trois premières décennies du XIXe siècle.

La question des acquisitions culturelles implique quelques volets distincts, dont il faut tenir compte. On conçoit d'habitude un transfert culturel comme vecteur, aussi, d'une tentative de réinterprétation<sup>33</sup> qui serait comprise dans la démarche même, qu'il faudrait par conséquent saisir comme un « problème d'hérméneutique, de tradition interprétative »<sup>34</sup>. Dans ce cas – y compris, par extension, celui de l'acculturation produite dans les Principautés roumaines -- la démarche hérméneutique se situerait à deux niveaux :

« dégager leur vérité d'ouvrages étrangers qu'on connaît d'avantage par ouï-dire que par expérience propre, d'autre part de retrouver grâce à eux la vérité d'une tradition nationale qui peut-être déjà continuée elle-même des efforts successifs pour interpréter l'autre »<sup>35</sup>.

La méthode s'avère plus difficilement applicable dans le cas de deux représentants de la génération antérieure au moment 1848, Dinicu Golescu et Ionica Tautul. Les causes en sont multiples et parmi elles on pourrait citer la discipline philologique assez laxo de ces auteurs. Leur formation hétéroclite et souvent autodidacte les conduit à ne pas citer correctement leurs sources, par exemple. En tout cas, s'il s'agit de voir ce que ces auteurs-là lisaient, ou mettaient dans leurs bibliothèque, le travail peut se faire plutôt à l'aide des déductions qu'en se servant d'un appui documentaire, qui est, pour la plupart des cas, faible pour cette période.

A l'époque de la formation de Tautul – qui fut aussi un haut fonctionnaire auprès du Prince roumain de la Moldavie dans les années vingt du XIXe siècle, Ionita Sandu Sturdza – les traités et les abrégés de philosophie ou d'éthique circulent en langue grecque et assez difficilement. Le plus célèbre à l'époque, c'est le manuel d'éthique de Néophyte Vamvas, qui fut adopté par plusieurs générations d'écoliers et d'intellectuels roumains, pour son caractère très instructif quant aux grandes théories philosophiques, à commencer par Aristote<sup>36</sup>. La génération de Tautul, formée, dans son écrasante majorité, dans les Académies princières où l'on enseignait encore en langue grecque<sup>37</sup>, utilise ces instruments, dans une époque où le grec commence à cohabiter avec le français<sup>38</sup>, où la philosophie de Locke<sup>39</sup>, Descartes, Leibniz ou

Montesquieu<sup>40</sup> se confronte, plutôt dans les références formelles que dans une démarche philosophiquement assumée, avec « l'esprit révolutionnaire » de 1789.

Les écrits de Tautul fournissent à leur tour un discours suffisamment hétéroclite<sup>41</sup>, avec, néanmoins, un changement de perspective remarquable. Pour Tautul, la démocratie sera définie en contradiction avec les autres types de régimes, mais aussi comme le stade final d'une succession irrésistible. Arrivée à ce point, il est utile de constater que l'image de l'individu se dessine en correspondance avec cette image d'un régime démocratique qui privilégie les rapports contractuels avec les citoyens, dans un mélange, on ne saurait pas le dire assez, hétéroclite et parfois confus, mais orienté vers un certain sens de la modernité politique<sup>42</sup>. On voit peut-être le mieux ce mélange surprenant dans un texte à quatre variantes, daté du 1<sup>er</sup> juin 1829, intitulé *Talmacirea « enigmei » venite din Anglia*<sup>43</sup>. Voici le texte de départ : « Je suis moi-même mon père, mon frère et mon fils, et aïeul et beau-père et mère et épouse »<sup>44</sup>. Il s'agit de la traduction d'un texte reçu d'un certain Monsieur Picard, le 31 mai 1829. L'interprétation donnée par Tautul indique un sens fort du mot « démocratie » (celui de volonté souveraine), situé clairement à la fin d'un parcours en évolution qui aura comme terme l'établissement d'un régime politique démocratique.

Même si Tautul n'est pas nécessairement rigoureux dans la citation de ses sources intellectuelles, ses textes parlent d'eux-mêmes. « *Cercarea » împotriva deistilor si materialistilor* [*Essai contre les déistes et les matérialistes*], texte qui se propose de systématiser une somme d'arguments dirigés contre les Déistes<sup>45</sup> mobilise des sources très respectables à l'époque, notamment les traités de philosophie et de logique qui circulaient dans les Académies Princières. C'est un argument supplémentaire en faveur d'une direction<sup>46</sup> qui privilégie l'image de l'individu en tant que partie « contractante » dans l'espace moderne de l'État et de ses institutions, mais qui ne va pas dans le sens de la démocratie libérale moderne, telle qu'elle est définie – et depuis bien longtemps déjà – par la pensée politique du début du XIX<sup>e</sup> siècle.

Le travail « archéologique » s'avère plus facile quand il s'agit de l'appliquer à la génération suivante, celle de 1848. Alors, un premier phénomène d'acculturation serait justement cette importation de discipline philologique dans un espace culturel qui n'avait développé presque aucune tradition propre dans ce sens. Ce qui fait encore défaut, et c'est un phénomène qui va traverser l'espace intellectuel du XIX<sup>e</sup> siècle,

même pour sa troisième génération, celle de Junimea, c'est un espace commun de dialogue, donc d'une possible « histoire culturelle croisée ». Le seul espace commun d'attente culturelle, qui aurait pu fonctionner même pour les intellectuels de la première génération, et qui était le généreux espace des antiques, n'a pas agi. Les références antiques n'ont pas manqué dans la génération de Tautu, bien au contraire, elles ont nourri son champ d'expérience sans être, pour autant, des véhicules culturels ou du moins, d'espaces communs de rencontre avec des cultures différentes. La deuxième génération aurait pu saisir l'occasion d'un dialogue sur la formule « philologique » ou politique, mais elle est en revanche partie, pour des raisons tant bien conjoncturels qu'institutionnels, mue par le désir de « brûler les étapes », de rattrapper le retard dont elle devenait brusquement et même dramatiquement consciente<sup>47</sup>. Le cycle « naturel » du dialogue polémique, mais aussi ontologique, du point de vue de la modernité, entre les Anciens et les Modernes n'a pas eu lieu dans l'espace culturel et politique roumain, car les intellectuels roumains de cette génération se sont vite précipités dans l'« Histoire » qui réécrit<sup>48</sup>, dans le sens défini par Reinhart Koselleck<sup>49</sup>, qui observait qu'à la suite d'un travail de superposition des structures temporelles et des expériences historiques sur leurs modes de narration, on peut distinguer finalement trois types fondamentaux :

« l'histoire qui enregistre, l'histoire qui développe et l'histoire qui réécrit. L'histoire qui enregistre est un acte tout à fait unique, l'histoire qui développe accumule les durées, or l'histoire qui réécrit les corrige toutes les deux afin d'en dégager rétrospectivement une nouvelle histoire »<sup>50</sup>.

La nouvelle question qui se pose est dans quelle historiographie les historiens roumains se sont-ils précipités ? Dans l'historiographie française – indirectement hégélienne, dans un certain sens – serait la première et la plus générale réponse. Mais cette réponse est loin d'apporter un vrai éclairci sur la question. Car l'historiographie française elle-même se trouve, à l'époque de la Restauration, à un tournant. Il y aurait d'une part les historiens « libéraux »<sup>51</sup>., dont le représentant le plus important est Augustin Thierry ; à ses côtés, il y a aussi François Guizot et Victor Cousin, le hégélien. L'historien libéral est pris par son projet de terminer la Révolution, conçue à la fois comme rupture et comme commencement.

« Comme homme politique (qu'il est souvent activement), l'historien libéral l'entend achever, en dotant enfin la France de la monarchie constitutionnelle, que contrairement à l'Angleterre, elle a jusqu'alors manquée »<sup>52</sup>.

La croyance de Thierry va dans la direction d'une histoire qui doit refuser une certaine tradition romantique qui combinait la littérature historique et l'histoire tout court, qui menaçait de détourner l'histoire de son vrai but. Il est le partisan d'une histoire des faits nus, donc d'une vraie science, dans le sens inventé par le XIX<sup>e</sup> siècle. Il croit dans l'avènement d'une histoire uniquement basée sur les récits des archives et des documents et il écrit, en 1820 même :

« Voilà, Monsieur, le malheur de la France ; dans les temps des grands efforts patriotiques, la littérature n'était pas née ; et quand vint le talent littéraire, le patriotisme sommeillait ; les historiens cherchèrent ailleurs des inspirations pour leurs récits. L'histoire de France, telle que nous l'ont faite les écrivains modernes, n'est point la vraie histoire du pays, l'histoire nationale, l'histoire populaire : cette histoire est encore ensevelie dans la poussière des chroniques contemporaines, d'où nos élégants académiciens n'ont e garde de la tirer. La meilleure partie de nos annales, la plus grave, la plus instructive, reste à écrire ; il nous manque l'histoire des citoyens, l'histoire des sujets, l'histoire du peuple »<sup>53</sup>.

Il y aurait, d'autre part, une deuxième grande catégorie d'historiens, les « symbolistes ». Son apparition est très étroitement liée à l'apparition de Jules Michelet et de ses cours au Collège de France. Thierry se déclare très inquiet et il confesse son malaise réveillé par cette nouvelle méthode importée d'Allemagne. Victor Cousin, devenu pendant la monarchie de Juillet le tenant de la philosophie historique officielle, est le facteur le plus actif de ce transfert de la philosophie hégélienne, qui, « vulgarisée, se voit transformée en justification de l'état des choses existant »<sup>54</sup>. L'historien de Cousin, et ensuite de Jules Michelet et Edgar Quinet, est un interprète de ces drames, il en est le lecteur avisé et attentif qui cherche les causes de ces drames et qui porte son empreinte sur la grande histoire de France.

Michelet et Quinet vont reprendre cette idée de l'histoire comme un rapport juste entre le vrai, le réel et l'étude des images et des symboles. C'est de cette manière que Jules Michelet va décrire la « méthode » de son Histoire de la Révolution française : « Pour nous, joyeuse ou



mélancolique, lumineuse ou obscure, la voie de l'histoire a été simple, directe ; nous suivions la voie *royale* (ce mot pour nous veut dire populaire), sans nous laisser détourner aux sentiers tentateurs où vont les esprits subtils ; nous allions vers une lumière qui ne vacille jamais, dont la flamme devait nous manquer d'autant moins qu'elle était toute identique à celle que nous portons en nous. Né peuple, nous allions au peuple »<sup>55</sup>. L'identification est dorénavant faite : l'histoire en général et l'histoire de la France en particulier va faire, en fait, l'histoire du peuple, ce personnage collectif qui va fournir les sujets aux historiens et vers qui tout le savoir de la nouvelle science historique va se concentrer.

C'est tout particulièrement cette approche « symboliste » de la philosophie de l'histoire qui va influencer, d'une manière radicale, les jeunes roumains Mihail Kogalniceanu , C. A. Rosetti ou Nicolae Balcescu, qui vont à Paris dans les années trente, après donc cette explosion de l'école historique « symboliste ». Ils audient émerveillés les cours de Michelet au Collège de France. Ils lient les ouvrages déjà publiés par lui et son ami Quinet. Une longue et perdurante fascination va marquer la destinée intellectuelle et politique, aussi, de ces intellectuels roumains. Car le problème de la découverte de l'âme nationale et de son identité politique démocratique paraît trouver sa solution dans la méthode proposée par Michelet et Quinet. Prendre le peuple roumain comme unique actuer d'un drame national qui est d'autant plus douloureux qu'il est en train de se dérouler, c'est la solution pour l'identification des causes, et c'est aussi la voie de légitimation de l'œuvre qu'ils sont en train d'édifier. Voilà une page très parlante publiée à Paris par C. A. Rosetti, deux ans après la défaite de la révolution de 1848, écrite dans le style déclamatoire et légèrement prophétique qui le distingue parmi ses autres collègues de génération :

« Aujourd'hui, je vois encore le combat de la vie et de la mort, l'affrontement de la lumière aux ténèbres et au milieu de la tyrannie et de l'asservissement le plus complet, je vois les jeunes éclairés par la grande lumière de la Roumanie, enchaînés dans les endroits les plus surveillés, au cœur des prisons et des persécutions ... je vois les prêtres et les moines leur donnant a bénédiction et leur insufflant le courage ... les commerçants leurs souriant et leurs donnant des armes pour leur combat ... Je vis le cœur de la Roumanie tréssaillir en apprenant que l'endroit où l'Olt se marie au Danube est le lieu de naissance de la liberté et que 10, 15, 20 milliers de Roumains ont arboré l'étendard vainqueur, et le Peuple tout entier, en se tenant par la main, en unité de cœur et de pensée, serrés les uns contre les

autres, envahissant les rues comme des vagues de flammes d'alcool poussées par le vent, brûlant et noircissant pour toujours *seigneur, boyard, servitude et injustice*, le vieux dragon, qui est le diable et le Satan »<sup>56</sup>.

C'est dans ce sens aussi que le transfert de la philosophie historique de Michelet et de Quinet va trouver son expression de légitimation et de subversion. Ce qui ne veut pas dire que, dès que ces jeunes intellectuels prennent le contact avec la science nouvelle, la pensée politique roumaine se trouve entièrement et consciemment connectée à la pensée politique du XIX<sup>e</sup> siècle européen. Ces trajets sont péniblement refaits, et le transfert opéré joue ici dans la logique des transferts culturels ; les démarches des jeunes intellectuels roumains trouveront toute leur force dans ce « couple légitimation-subversion » qui « livre en général la clef d'une interprétation des transferts sous l'angle d'une théorie des conjonctures »<sup>57</sup>. En appliquant cette théorie, il est, à un moment donné, nécessaire de ne plus se demander ce que Kogalniceanu a compris de Michelet, ce que Ghica a compris de Guizot, ce que C. A. Rosetti a compris, peut-être, de Saint-Simon ou de Fourier, mais « il importe de renverser cette question, de passer de la question de l'objet à la question du fonctionnement, de la question quoi à la question comment »<sup>58</sup>.

Or, justement, en suivant ce chemin méthodologique, on est amené à constater que, pour ces représentants de la génération de 1848, l'influence de cette direction symbolique de la pratique historique française eut comme conséquence une translation, dans l'imaginaire politique de Balcescu ou de Kogalniceanu, de la logique démocratique, dans cet unique acteur valide de la scène nationale, qui est le peuple. La révolution doit se produire dans ces paramètres, et c'est uniquement à travers cette révolution nationale que l'esprit démocratique trouverait son expression la plus parfaite.

En plus, la méthode « symbolique » mise au point par Jules Michelet et embrassée par Kogalniceanu ou Balcescu suit le fil d'un récit qui, « d'abord linéaire, devient tableau, puis il reprend son cours »<sup>59</sup>. « Mais pour pouvoir être construit, le tableau présuppose la descente : il est le déploiement des éléments que la chronique (l'œil et la plume au ras de la surface des choses) ne voient même pas »<sup>60</sup>.

Kogalniceanu croit en cette logique biologiste de l'histoire, qui lui vient de Michelet. Pour que l'histoire puisse enfin être faite – pourquoi faire de l'histoire ? Pour trouver les causes et le sens de la nouvelle révolution nationale et démocratique, ou dans les termes de Balcescu,

sociale et politique. La fascination de la reconstitution d'une histoire générale des Roumains, qui remonterait aux sources de l'Empire Romain va de pair avec la volonté de Michelet de refaire le trajet de l'histoire de France en partant des documents du V<sup>e</sup> siècle et en arrivant à la Révolution Française. C'est dans ce sens que Michelet va expliquer dans son journal qu'il faut remonter plus haut que ses contemporains historiens l'ont fait, qu'il faut dépasser « la France des Annales », qui n'est pas une histoire, mais une collection de documents incomplets, une collection de récits superficiels et partiels. Michelet traite avec le même manque de confiance les démarches « systématiques » de Thierry ou celles « analytiques » de Guizot, qui donnent de « faux profils » et « manquent d'unité organique » de l'ensemble<sup>61</sup>.

Dans sa préface a *Letopisetele Moldovei*, Mihail Kogalniceanu écrivait en 1852 :

« Si l'étude de l'histoire a été jamais d'utilité, c'est justement dans notre époque, dans ces temps chaotiques, quand personnes publiques et individus privés également, vieux et jeunes, nous avons vu nos individualités écartelées et nos plus agréables illusions effacées. Pendant de temps pareils, le bord du salut, l'autel du soutien pour nous, c'est l'étude de l'histoire, le seul oracle qui puisse encore nous indiquer l'avenir »<sup>62</sup>.

Pour lui, l'avenir promis par l'histoire, acquis par l'histoire, c'est justement le progrès de la patrie :

« Ce n'est pas à la suite des changements bruyants et rapides que notre pays va se développer. Ce sont les réformes douces et graduelles, les améliorations sérieuses, le développement de l'instruction publique, l'égalité des droits entre toutes les classes de la nation, la correction des mœurs dans les familles, le renforcement, l'établissement et le respect du pouvoir dirigeant, comme organe de la loi qui représentent les uniques éléments régénérateurs pour nous. Tout changement par la force, toute transformation violente ne peuvent être que fatales pour nous. Quand les révolutions commencent, la civilisations cesse... »<sup>63</sup>.

Dans son *Mot introductif au cours d'histoire nationale*, du 24 novembre 1843, Mihail Kogalniceanu expose sa croyance dans le rôle de l'histoire, lié au mouvement de libération nationale. Connaître l'histoire nationale, équivaut à une sublime preuve de patriotisme, et le patriotisme est l'élément qui garantira l'avènement de la vie réelle de la nation roumaine :

« La nécessité de l'histoire de la patrie nous semble impérative même pour ce qui est de la défense de nos droits contre les nations étrangères »<sup>64</sup>. Il s'agit de voir dans la pratique de l'histoire un début de légitimité nationale et démocratique. C'est d'ailleurs dans ce sens qu'une large partie de l'historiographie roumaine va dorénavant agir.

Le projet historique de Kogalniceanu, exposé dans le Cours introductif, rappelle, d'une manière troublante par ses similitudes, le *Discours sur l'unité de la science* de Michelet, car l'historien roumain critique ceux qui se sont occupés de l'histoire nationale et qui sont restés à l'histoire des princes, en oubliant le peuple, « sans lequel les gouverneurs ne seraient rien »<sup>65</sup> :

« Je m'en garderai bien de faire la même erreur capitale ; au contraire, à côté de l'histoire politique des pays, dans la mesure où je serai aidé par les vieux documents et traditions, je chercherai de vous donner une idée claire sur l'état social et moral, sur les coutumes, les préjugés, la culture, le commerce et la littérature des Roumains jadis »<sup>66</sup>.

Dix-huit ans plus tôt, le jeune encore, à ce temps-là, Jules Michelet, prononçait, devant les élèves du Collège Sainte-Barbe, où il était professeur, un discours qui deviendra, par la suite, un « exposé de programme et de philosophie »<sup>67</sup>, quelques années avant la parution de son *Introduction à l'histoire universelle*, en exposant ce que deviendra aussi, visiblement, une partie du programme historique de Kogalniceanu :

« Gardons-nous donc de diviser rigoureusement cette double étude de l'histoire, des langues et de la littérature. La pensée est une. Ne séparons pas les actions et les paroles qui en sont signes correspondants ; elles sont liées dans la nature, unissons-en l'étude dans l'éducation »<sup>68</sup>.

Le chemin pris par les historiens de 1848 détermine en fait une certaine compréhension des mécanismes politiques. L'identification de la Nation à la Démocratie, de la révolution démocratique à travers la révolution nationale, trouvent d'une certaine manière leurs racines dans ce choix qui marque la formation intellectuelle de toute une génération.

N'empêche que ce choix représenta aussi la voie d'entrée dans la modernité européenne. Quand Kogalniceanu déclare l'Histoire comme « l'unique oracle qui peut voir dans l'avenir », il entre visiblement dans l'unité de l'Histoire-*Geschichte*<sup>69</sup>, une histoire « au singulier », une histoire

en soi. « Dans ce nouveau cadre conceptuel, l'histoire se définira finalement comme connaissance d'elle-même : auto-compréhension dans et par le temps »<sup>70</sup>. C'est peut-être dans ces nouveaux cadres conceptuels de la modernité, qui prennent en considération le temps et ses espaces comme projections des expériences passées dans une attente de plus en plus accélérée de l'avenir qui buscule l'ordre de l'Ancien Régime que le nouveau régime d'historicité s'insinue dans la pensée politique roumaine. La révolution de 1848, même dans ses échecs reconnus et avoués, va jouer dans la dynamique de ce temps historique un rôle, toutes proportions gardées, similaire à celui joué par la Révolution française dans l'espace de la modernité européenne.

## Conclusions

Parler de l'avènement de la « démocratie » dans les œuvres des auteurs de 1848, c'est penser premièrement à la manière dont ces personnages construisent leur rapport au présent, autochtone ou occidental, dans un contexte qui s'ouvre dans deux directions principales.

La première direction serait représentée par les fractures intellectuelles. La première génération du XIX<sup>e</sup> siècle, celle de Tatul, baigne, sans vraiment le reconnaître ou le savoir, dans la philosophie des Anciens, avec quelques mélanges assez curieux dans ce contexte, et avec le sentiment encore diffus d'un décalage intellectuel et politique qui trouve une solution dans la promotion des valeurs nationales, sous la forme, pour l'Ancien Régime et pour la période qui va jusqu'aux Règlements Organiques, des écoles en langue roumaine. Cette génération va être suivie par celle de la révolution de 1848, qui part des mêmes constats, le décalage culturel et politique entre les pays roumains et l'occident, mais qui fait un choix différent ; elle plonge dans la modernité du XIX<sup>e</sup> siècle européen, sans entrer, pour autant, dans un dialogue, fut-il polémique, avec la génération précédente. L'idée de démocratie émerge donc comme le résultat non pas d'un travail sur soi-même, d'un travail sur la réflexion déjà mûre des historiens français. Le résultat, dans le schéma ontologique de la pensée politique roumaine, c'est que le fait de « brûler les étapes » coïncide avec le fait de perdre de vue justement le lien duquel est sortie la véritable idée de démocratie représentative moderne, qui est, justement, la polémique fertile entre les Anciens et les Modernes. La pensée politique roumaine s'est retrouvée, d'un coup, dans la situation

de concevoir un système dont elle n'en détenait aucunément la clef, est c'est en partie dû au fait qu'elle a négligé de tirer son parti de la réflexion, même mince et pauvre du point de vue quantitatif et qualitatif, qui avait été déjà produite dans le sillage philosophique de l'Ancien Régime. En revanche, elle s'était retrouvé, au coeur du bouillonnement intellectuel et politique français des années trente, devant un discours qui, en plus, servait très bien, et devait encore servir, l'agenda « révolutionnaire, national et démocratique » qu'ils s'étaient proposé. Les perceptions mêmes sur le politique et sur la notion de souveraineté en tant que vecteur principal de l'identité des citoyens dans l'Etat des Modernes sont allées dans une direction qui n'a pas facilité l'acquisition de la démocratie libérale moderne.

Une deuxième direction qui a mis sur un faux chemin la réflexion démocratique roumaine a été le choix de la méthode. Au fait de brûler les étapes, une autre incidence sur la manière caractéristique de la lecture démocratique s'est ajoutée ; il s'agit, tout simplement, d'un choix qui a marqué la perception sur les valeurs nationales et dont seulement la génération suivante a fait le « procès ». C'est seulement Alexandru Xenopol, historien ou George Panu, écrivain, qui, dans les années soixante-dix du XIX<sup>e</sup> siècle, ont fait la critique de cette manière de lire l'histoire comme une chaîne de causalités intégratrices, qui aurait comme point final l'avènement complet de la Nation démocratique. C'est ce que, pour le compte de l'historiographie française, Augustin Thierry ou François Guizot avaient déjà fait, dans une simultanéité par rapport aux théories qu'ils combattaient.

Et c'est seulement à partir de ce moment-là que les intellectuels roumains situés au coeur du débat concernant les voies de la modernisation pourront parler sur la base d'une certaine formalisation de l'espace des institutions, des droits et des libertés anticipées par les révolutionnaires de 1848, et sur la base d'une articulation de l'espace de protection de certains droits liés à la liberté d'expression (comme, par exemple, la disparition de la censure)<sup>71</sup>. La démocratie on le voit bien, dépasse, en tant qu'aire conceptuelle, la simple détermination pratique des voies de sa mise en oeuvre. Les équivoques de la modernité politique roumaine traversent ainsi les définitions successives de la démocratie que les intellectuels du XIX<sup>e</sup> siècle s'apprêtent à forger, conjointement à un processus de reformulation institutionnelle. L'aventure institutionnelle roumaine, menée tout au long du XIX<sup>e</sup> siècle, s'étend selon un schéma similaire, qui mène à la découverte de deux espaces radicalement

différents pour ce qui est de leur développement<sup>72</sup>. C'est ainsi que les « infrastructures »<sup>73</sup> conceptuelles engendrées par le discours politique roumain de cette période ont touché plusieurs découpages de la démocratie: le sens des procédures représentatives, l'émancipation, l'idée moderne qui oscille entre le désir d'émancipation individuelle (direction privilégiée par les libéraux de I.C. Bratianu et aussi, dans un sens encore plus marqué, par les radicaux-démocrates de G. Panu) et celui de participation à la puissance sociale (dans le sens «hérité» de François Guizot et repris par les penseurs conservateurs). Le sens de la démocratie passe ainsi, successivement, à travers celui de la liberté des Modernes, de la liberté révolutionnaire des Nations – le cas, partiel, de 1848 et de l'union de 1859 – et de la liberté politique des individus agissant dans un espace institutionnel en construction.

## NOTES

- 1 *Documents sur l'histoire des Roumains, recueillis par Eudoxiu de Hurmuzachi*, vol. XVIII, *Correspondance diplomatique et rapports consulaires français (1847-1851), publiés suivant les copies de l'Académie Roumaine par Nerva Hodos*, avec indice alphabétique des noms de N. Iorga, Bucarest, 1916, Codrika pour Guizot, le 1 mars 1847, Jassy p. 5.
- 2 *Ibidem*, p. 35. *D. de Nion pour Guizot, sur le lycée de Bucarest et sur les profeseurs français, Bucarest, le 9 Octobre 1847* : « En exécution de la loi relative à l'instruction publique, et que j'ai eu l'honneur de transmettre à Votre Excellence, le 10 Septembre dernier, le Hospodar de Valachie vient d'instituer à Bucarest un lycée dont l'organisation et le plan d'études sont calqués, aussi exactement que possible, sur le modèle de nos collèges Royaux ».
- 3 *Ibid.*, *D de Nion pour Guizot, sur la loi d'organisation de l'enseignement, Consulat de Bucarest, le 10 septembre 1847*, p. 29, « Votre excellence sait avec quel déplaisir la Cour protectrice voit l'usage où sont les principales familles des Valaques d'envoyer leurs enfants faire leurs études à Paris ».
- 4 Les dépêches diplomatiques durant l'année 1847 montrent en effet combien soutenus ont été les insistances du Prince Bibesco, finalement couronnées de succès après un premier refus de la part du ministre français de la guerre. Voir, par exemple, dans la même collection cf. *supra*, *D de Nion pour Guizot, sur l'admission du fils du Prince à Saint Cyr et sur la Société des Eutdians Roumains à Paris, le 16 septembre 1847*, p. 31.
- 5 Alecu Russo, *Studie moldovana*, in *Cintarea Romaniei*, Bucarest, 1971, pp. 9-10, cité par Alexandru ZUB, in *Cunoastere de sine si integrare istorica*, Ed. Universitatii Al. I. Cuza, Iasi, 2004, p. 14.
- 6 Le rôle joué par Dinicu Golescu dans le présage de la modernité roumaine est longuement discuté par Andrei PIPPIDI, qui parle de ce boyard éclairé comme du « premier roumain moderne » : « Après 1830, la modernisation et la démocratisation des structures sociales et politiques a été l'obsession de deux générations d'intellectuels » (« Identitate națională și culturală. Câteva probleme de metodă în legătură cu locul românilor în istoria universală », in *Despre statui și morminte. Pentru o teorie a istoriei simbolice*, Polirom, Iasi, 2000, p. 95).
- 7 C'est en fait une paraphrase de la formule utilisée par Sorin ANTOHI dans « La originile utopismului românesc – mentalități și evenimente », in Alexandru ZUB (coord.), *Cultură și societate. Studii privitoare la trecutul românesc*, Ed. Științifică, Bucarest 1991. Antohi parle, en citant lui même G. Calinescu, d'un « complexe Dinicu Golescu », c'est à dire d'une « admiration face à l'occident qui coexiste longuement avec les tentatives d'importation des solutions pour les problèmes orientaux » (*op. cit.*, p. 210).
- 8 Sur le poids de cette migration estudiantine dans la formation des intellectuels roumain qu XIX siècle, voir, par ex. Elena SIUPIUR, « *The Training of*



*Intellectuals in South-Eats Europe during the 19th Century. The Romanian Model* », in *Anuarul Institutului de Istorie și Arheologie A. D. Xenopol*, XXIII/2, 1986, pp. 469-490.

- 9 Cette position privilégiée de la culture française comme appui pour la culture démocratique roumaine naissante de l'époque est généralement admise par les historiens. Voir, par exemple, Andrei PIPPIDI, *Despre statui și morminte*, *op. cit.*, p. 97, qui parle de Paris devenu, à partir de 1830, la « capitale intellectuelle de la Roumanie », ou bien Alexandru ZUB et Dumitru IVANESCU (coord.), *Franța, model cultural și politic*, Académie Roumaine, Institut d'histoire A. D. Xenopol, Junimea, Iassy, 2003. L'influence française est, en outre, un sujet amplement traité non seulement par les historiens, mais aussi par les historiens et critiques littéraires qui s'occupent de cette période. La liste deviendrait, dans ce sens, trop longue pour la reproduire d'une manière exhaustive.
- 10 J'utilise comme appui méthodologique le rapport établi par Reinhart KOSELLECK entre le concept de révolution et la modernité politique européenne: « Il existe peu de termes qui soient aussi largement répandus et qui appartiennent de manière aussi évidente au vocabulaire politique moderne que celui de révolution » (*Le futur passé. Contribution à la sémantique des temps historiques*, Éditions de l'EHESS, Paris, 2000, p. 63).
- 11 Voir, sur ce sujet, Daniel BARBU, *Politica pentru barbari*, Nemira, Bucarest, 2005. Daniel Barbu parle d'une résistance à la démocratie qui serait « une constante du régime parlementaire roumain » au XIX<sup>e</sup> siècle, résistance issue d'une certaine conception sur l'avènement des droits collectifs : « La qualification individuelle pour l'exercice du droit de vote ne pouvait être que le résultat historique de la qualification supérieure et définitive de la nation sur la scène internationale » (*op. cit.*, p. 76, la traduction nous appartient).
- 12 Nicolae BĂLCESCU, « Mișcarea românilor din Ardeal la 1848 », publiée dans la revue *Junimea Română*, I, nr. 2, in *Opere*, II, *Ecrits historiques, politiques et économiques, 1848-1852*, édition critique de G. Zane et Elena Zane, Presse de l'Académie Roumaine, Bucarest, 1982, p. 114 (la traduction nous appartient).
- 13 J'utilise cette formule dans le sens proposé et expliqué par François HARTOG, comme un outil mis à la disposition de l'espace polémique et chargé d'attentes qui se crée entre le champs d'expérience et l'horizon d'attente : « Partant des diverses expériences historiques, le régime d'historicité se voudrait un outil heuristique, aidant à mieux appréhender, non le temps, tous les temps ou le tout du temps, mais principalement des moments de crise du temps, ici et là » (cf. *Régimes d'historicité. Présentisme et expérience du temps*, Le Seuil, Paris, 2003, p. 27).
- 14 Sur le problème de la modernisation politique au XIX<sup>e</sup> siècle roumain, v., par exemple, Daniel BARBU, « La modernisation politique: une affaire des

- intellectuels? », in *Studia Politica. Romanian Political Science Review*, vol. I, no. 1, 2001, p. 57-71.
- 15 Reinhart KOSELLECK, *Ibid.*
- 16 *Idem*, p. 51.
- 17 *Idem*, p. 20.
- 18 Sur le sujet de l'écart entre le parlementarisme roumain et la démocratie, voir Daniel BARBU, *Politica pentru barbari*, éd. cit., p. 78 : « L'élite libérale roumaine a traité la modernité non pas comme une reconnaissance philosophique et comme une pratique universelle des droits individuels d'ordre civil et politique, mais comme un pouvoir exercé sur les mots » (la traduction nous appartient).
- 19 Reinhart KOSELLECK, *Idem*, p. 25.
- 20 *Idem*, p. 307.
- 21 François HARTOG, *Régimes d'historicité*. éd. cit., p. 19.
- 22 Voir Andrei PIPPIDI, cf. *supra*, note 9, p. 99.
- 23 Pour un rappel complet du contenu de la Querelle, voir aussi Levent YILMAZ, *La querelle des Modernes. Temps, nouveauté et histoire à travers la Querelle des Anciens et des Modernes*, Thèse de doctorat présentée le 26 novembre 2002, sous la direction de François Hartog, à l'Ecole des Hautes Etudes en Sciences Sociales, à Paris.
- 24 Voir, par ex., Hannah ARENDT, *Qu'est-ce que la politique ?*, Seuil, Paris, 1995, p. 41 et suiv.
- 25 Marcel GAUCHET discute, en polémisant avec Hannah Arendt, sur cette condition du politique, renvoyé à tort, selon lui, dans le deuxième rang des préoccupations des « sociologies » du XIX<sup>ème</sup> siècle. A tort, car « sans le socle stable fourni par le politique, il n'y aurait pas de production de l'avenir possible ». En d'autres termes, le XIX<sup>ème</sup>, et le XX<sup>ème</sup> siècle aussi, ont beau négliger le politique, celui-ci reste toujours le fondement de toute démarche fondatrice du futur. (*La condition politique*, Gallimard, Paris, 2005, pp. 9-12 et suiv.).
- 26 Pour une vision extrêmement riche en suggestions et pistes d'analyse concernant le XIX<sup>e</sup> siècle, v. Pierre ROSANVALLON, *Le moment Guizot*, Gallimard, Paris, 1985, p. 11-15 et suiv.
- 27 Ionica TAUTUL, *Scieri social-politice [Ecrits socio-politiques]*, préface, étude introductive, notes par Emil Vârtosu, Editura Științifică, Bucarest, 1974.
- 28 Voir, dans ce sens, l'ouvrage concernant l'influence grecque sur l'enseignement dans les Principautés roumaines au XVIII<sup>e</sup> et début du XIX<sup>e</sup> siècle d'Ariadna CAMARIANO-CIORAN, *Academiile domnesti din București si Iasi, [Les Académies princières de Bucarest et de Jassy]* Editura Academiei RSR, Bucarest, 1971.
- 29 Reinhart, KOSELLECK, *L'expérience de l'histoire*, édité et préfacé par Michael Werner, traduit de l'allemand par Alexandre Escudier, Galimard-Le Seuil, Paris, 1997, p. 203.

- 30 J. G. A. POCOCK, *Barbarism and religion*, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge, 2000, volume two, *Narratives of civil government*, p. 8 : « The classical meaning of 'history', which retained authority in the still neo-classical Enlightenment, was that of a narrative ; one which related the exemplary deeds, to be imitated or avoided – there were bad examples as well as good – of ruling individuals, displayed in a context of war and government, politics, rhetoric and morality ».
- 31 Nicolae BALCESCU, *Préambule pour le Magazine historique*, in *Opere*, éd. cit., tome I, 1974, p. 45.
- 32 Voir, dans ce sens, l'étude de Michel ESPAGNE et Michael WERNER, « La construction d'une référence culturelle allemande en France. Genèse et histoire (1750-1914) », *Annales ESC*, juillet-août 1987, pp. 969-992.
- 33 *Idem*, p. 972.
- 34 *Idem*.
- 35 *Idem*.
- 36 Le manuel de VAMVAS – publié à Venise en 1818 – est important pour plusieurs raisons. En premier lieu, c'est l'un des premiers manuels qui circulent dans les Académies Princières, repris par l'enseignement en roumain, dans la traduction de 1827 de l'écrivain Dinicu GOLESCU, dans le volume, paru sous le titre *Elementuri de filosofie morală tălmăcite în limba românească de Constantin Radovici din Golești* [Éléments de philosophie morale, traduits en langue roumaine par Constantin Radovici de Golesti], Tipografia de la Cismea, Bucarest, 1827. D'autre part, comme le signale aussi Daniel BARBU, *op. cit.*, p. 973, dans le manuel de Vamvas en roumain on retrouve l'une des occurrences notables du mot « démocratie » à cette époque.
- 37 Ariadna CAMARIANO-CIORAN, *Academiile domnesti...*, éd. cit, p. 208, 226.
- 38 Andrei PIPPIDI, « L'accueil de la philosophie française du XVIII<sup>e</sup> siècle dans les Principautés Roumaines », in Alexandru ZUB (éditeur), *La Révolution française et les Roumains. Impact, images, interprétations*, Iasi, 1989, p. 213.
- 39 Pour la fréquentation des écrits de Locke dans cette période, v. Ariadna CAMARIANO-CIORAN, *ibidem*, p. 148, p. 200.
- 40 *Ibidem*, p. 22.
- 41 La liste des auteurs et des volumes qui traitent d'une manière détaillée de la question des transferts intellectuels et des mouvements d'idées dans cette période, en commençant par la fin du XVIII<sup>e</sup> siècle est extrêmement vaste. En voici quelques titres : A.-D. XENOPOL, *L'influence intellectuelle française chez les Roumains*, in *Annales des sciences politiques*, Félix Alcan, Paris, 1909 ; Pompiliu ELIADE, *Influenta franceza asupra spiritului public în România* ; Ariadna CAMARIANO-CIORAN, *Voltaire si Giovanni del Turco tradusi în limba româna pe la 1772* [Voltaire et Giovanni del Turco traduit

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- 42 V. Vlad GEORGESCU, *Istoria ideilor politice românești (1369-1878)*, Ion Dumitru-Verlag, München, 1987, pp. 127 – 131.
- 43 V. Jean-Fabien SPITZ, *John Locke et les fondements de la liberté moderne*, PUF, Paris, 2001, pp. 13-22; Quentin SKINNER, *Les fondements de la pensée politique moderne*, PUF, 1999, pp. 819-830; Jonathan ISRAEL, *Radical Enlightenment, Philosophy and the making of Modernity 1650-1750*, Oxford University Press, 2001 pp. 23-58 ; Jens BARTELSON, *A Genealogy of Sovereignty*, Cambridge University Press, 1996, pp. 186-198.
- 44 Ionica TAUTUL, *op. cit.*, p. 255 : « Traduction de l'énigme d'Angleterre ».
- 45 *Ibidem*. La traduction nous appartient.
- 46 *Ibidem*, p. 229 : « qui croient dans l'existence de Dieu, mais nient la nature divine du Christ et ce qui relève de Sa Loi Sainte, et contre les matérialistes qui nient le caractère non substantiel et immortel de l'âme et tout ce qui relève de ce haut dogme ».
- 47 Sur le climat intellectuel de l'époque, la circulation des idées et des livres, voir notamment : Nicolae IORGA, *Alte note despre cultura și viața socială românească sub vechiul regim*, [Autres notes sur la culture et la vie sociale sous l'Ancien Régime] in *Analele Academiei Române*, section historique, II<sup>e</sup> série, vol. XXIX (1916-1919), p. 16-22 ; *Idem*, *Istoria literaturii românești, [Histoire de la littérature roumaine]*, Bucarest, 1933 ; Alexandru DUTU, *Mișcarea iluministă moldoveana de la sfîrșitul secolului al XVIII-lea [Le mouvement des Lumières à la fin du XVIII<sup>e</sup> siècle]*, Bucarest, 1968 ; Cornelia PAPACOSTEA-DANIELOPOLU, *O bibliotecă din Moldova la începutul secolului al XIX-lea. Bibliotecă de la Stâncă [Une bibliothèque moldave au début du XIX<sup>e</sup> siècle. La Bibliothèque de Stâncă]*, in *Studii și Cercetări de Bibliologie*, V, 1963.
- 48 Sur le retard intellectuel par rapport à l'Occident européen et surtout sur les efforts déployés par les intellectuels roumains de brûler les étapes, v. Pompiliu ELIADE – *Influența franceză asupra spiritului public în România – Originile [De l'influence française sur l'esprit public en Roumanie, Les origines]*, Ernest Leroux, Libraire-éditeur, Paris, 1898], trad. par Aurelia Dumitrașcu, Humanitas, Bucarest, 2000 ; Keith HITCHINS, *România 1774-1866*, trad. par George A. Potra et Delia Razdolescu ; Paul CORNEA, *Originile romantismului românesc. Spiritul public, mișcarea ideilor și literatura între*

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- 49 Reinhart KOSELLECK, *L'expérience de l'histoire*, édité et préfacé par Michael Werner, traduit de l'allemand par Alexandre Escudier, Galimard-Le Seuil, Paris, 1997, p. 214.
- 50 Michael WERNER écrivait dans sa préface à la traduction française de *L'expérience de l'histoire* (éd. cit., p. 10) : « Tout en s'attachant aux textes, l'histoire pointe à la fois un au-delà et un en-deça de la sphère de l'expression et de la logique langagières », car les concepts « ne sont jamais pris comme un système textuel tendant en lui-même vers l'autonomie et autorisant un seul traitement en termes d'analyse des textes, mais sont toujours rapportés à une fonction d'explication historiographique. ce qui intéresse Koselleck avant tout, c'est leur pouvoir analytique, non leur opacité herméneutique ».
- 51 R. KOSELLECK, *Idem*, p. 214.
- 52 François HARTOG, *Evidence de l'histoire. Ce que voient les historiens*, Editions de L'Ecole des Hautes Etudes en Sciences Sociales, Paris, 2005, p. 137.
- 53 *Idem*.
- 54 Augustin THIERRY, *Considérations sur la France (1820-1827) ; Première lettre (1820)*, in Marcel GAUCHET, *Philosophie des sciences historiques, Le moment romantique*, Le Seuil, Paris, 2002, p. 70.
- 55 Pour cette importation de la philosophie de Hegel dans le contexte français, voir notamment l'article de Michel ESPAGNE et Michael WERNER, « La construction d'une référence culturelle allemande en France. Genèse et histoire (1750-1914) », *Annales ESC, juillet-août 1987*, pp. 969-992.
- 56 Jules MICHELET, *De la Méthode et de l'Esprit de mon Histoire de la Révolution Française*, Noël, Paris, 1988, p. 2.
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- 59 *Idem*, p. 984.
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- 61 *Idem*.
- 62 Cf. François HARTOG, *op. cit.*, p. 155.
- 63 Mihail KOGALNICEANU, *Texte social-politice alese*, Editura Politica, Bucarest, 1967, p. 158. La traduction nous appartient.
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- <sup>69</sup> Jules MICHELET, *Idem*, p. 294.
- <sup>70</sup> Reinhart KOSELLECK, *Le futur passé*. éd. cit., pp. 42-53.
- <sup>71</sup> François HARTOG, *Evidence de l'histoire...*, éd. cit., p. 169.
- <sup>72</sup> Cf. Ioan STANOMIR, *Nașterea constituției. Limbaj si drept în Principate pâna la 1866*, Nemira, Bucuresti, 2004, p. 346.
- <sup>73</sup> Cf. Elena SIUPIUR, *Intelectuali, elite, clase politice moderne în Sud-estul european. Secolul XIX*, Domino, Bucarest, 2004, p. 100.
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# REGIONALISIERUNG UND REGIONALISMUS IN RUMÄNIEN NACH 1989: GRUNDLAGEN, FORMEN UND INSTITUTIONEN

## 1. Einleitung

In der letzten Zeit ist international ein erneutes Interesse von Staat, Parteien und politischen Bewegungen an der Konzeption des Raumes und der Region, an der Regionalwirtschaft und der politischen Nutzung der Region festzustellen. Diese Entwicklungen sind auch in Rumänien nach 1989 eingetreten, als Folge der fortschreitenden internationalen Integration des Landes. Sie haben vor allem nach 1999 stark den öffentlichen- wie auch den wissenschaftlichen Diskurs beeinflusst. Es war der Zeitpunkt, wo die Beitrittsverhandlungen mit der EU begannen und die starke regionale Dimension der EU auch im Integrationsprozess Rumäniens mit einbezogen werden musste. In diesem allgemeinen Rahmen war die rumänische Gesellschaft intensiver als vorher mit der Frage der Regionalisierung konfrontiert. Die Regionalisierungen stellen Formen der Raumkonstruktion dar, welche von den Machtakteuren durch soziales oder politisches Handeln gebildet werden. Im politischen Sinne spiegeln sie das Verhalten des Staates gegenüber der sub-nationalen Ebene wider und zielen auf einen Dezentralisierungsprozess der politischen Macht und unterschiedlicher öffentlichen Aufgaben (z. B. Transfer von Problemen und Kosten) auf sub-nationale Ebene hin. Der Regionalismus ist ein weiterer Fragenkomplex, der in der postkommunistischen Transition in unterschiedlicher Art immer wieder in der Öffentlichkeit aufgetaucht ist. Praktisch sind die beiden Begriffe, Regionalisierung und Regionalismus, eng miteinander verbunden, sie bilden zwei Seiten der gleichen Medaille. Deswegen sollen auch Forschungen zu dieser Thematik beide Aspekte in interdisziplinärer Weise berücksichtigen. Hier sind zwei kritische Bemerkungen notwendig. Zum einen mangelt es den bisherigen

Forschungen in Rumänien an einen interdisziplinären Charakter: Die Reihe von Studien und Übersetzungen in *Altera* und die Analysen der politischen Wissenschaft (Molnár, 1998, Andreescu, 1998, Fati, 1999 etc.) beschäftigen sich fast ausschließlich mit der politischen Dimension der Regionalisierung und des Regionalismus. Die wirtschaftliche Dimension wurde nur sporadisch und unsystematisch aufgegriffen, aber nicht auf die Regionalisierung und den Regionalismus bezogen, sondern auf den technischen Aspekt der regionalen Disparitäten reduziert (Popescu, 1994, Vincze, 2000, Voineagu, 2002). Die Regionalwirtschaft als grundlegende Disziplin konnte sich im Kanon des rumänischen Hochschulsystems nicht durchsetzen. Soziologen wie Sandu (1996, 1999) oder Mungiu-Pippidi (1999) haben erhebliche Beiträge zur kulturellen Dimension der Regionalisierung und des Regionalismus geleistet, während Geographen eher mit Fragen der Regionalisierungen aus dem Gesichtspunkt der Regionsbildung befasst waren (Benedek, 2000, Cocean, 2002). Es fehlen somit fachübergreifende und vergleichende Analysen, welche die unterschiedlichen Dimensionen des Fragenkomplexes verknüpfen können. In zweiter Reihe wurden die Forschungen auch dadurch erheblich erschwert, dass dieser Fragenkomplex in Rumänien auch nach der Wende noch zu den Tabuthemen der Wissenschaft gehörte, vor allem in jenen Disziplinen, die als Säulen der Nationsbildung betrachtet wurden (Geschichte und Geographie). Auch heute noch, wiewohl mit abnehmender Tendenz, wird die Beschäftigung mit diesen Themen als eine Art wissenschaftliche Abschweifung betrachtet.

Das grundlegende Ziel dieses Aufsatzes ist es, die aktuellen Regionsbildungsprozesse in Rumänien darzustellen und zu analysieren, die unter den gegenwärtigen Bedingungen der nach 1989 begonnenen Transformation von einem sozialistischen, geplanten Wirtschaftssystem mit einem Einparteiensystem zu einem demokratisch und marktwirtschaftlich orientierten System zu beobachten sind. Dabei wird es notwendig sein, sich genauer mit dem Fragenkomplex der Regionalisierung und des Regionalismus zu beschäftigen. Beide Begriffe beziehen sich auf das Konzept der Region. „Region“ wird in diesem Aufsatz als soziale- und politische Konstruktion betrachtet. Die Entstehung von Regionen, die Regionalisierung der Gesellschaft, die Umgestaltung territorialer und sozialer Strukturen, sind ohne Zweifel sehr eng mit der historischen und sozialen Entwicklung der entsprechenden Gesellschaft verbunden. Theorien des sozialen Wandels bekommen in diesem Zusammenhang eine große Bedeutung. Es bereitet jedoch Probleme, die

neue Territorialität von Transformationsländern wie Rumänien aus theoretischer Sicht darzustellen. Dadurch ergeben sich erste Schwierigkeiten bei der Analyse sozial-räumlicher Phänomene, wie sie u.a. die Regionalisierung und der Regionalismus darstellen<sup>1</sup>. Nach Gruber (1999) sind die Regionalisierung und der Regionalismus Teile der neuen post-modernen Politik, eines neuen politischen Paradigma, das durch folgende Merkmale gekennzeichnet wird: Bildung neuer Identitätspolitiken und neuer Sozialbewegungen (die sozialen Klassen bilden nicht mehr die einzige Quelle der politischen und sozialen Interaktion); Schwachung der Trennlinie zwischen der politischen- und privaten Sphäre; Änderung der politischen Partizipation und der Modalität, wie die politischen Entscheidungen beeinflusst werden.

Im Wesentlichen sind zwei konkurrierende theoriebildende Positionen zu unterscheiden. Die marxistisch geprägte Richtung der Sozialtheorie wurde vorwiegend in Westeuropa und in den USA entwickelt, ohne Berücksichtigung des von den antidemokratischen Ostblock-Regierungen umgesetzten „realen“ Sozialismus und dessen vielschichtigen sozial-räumlichen Auswirkungen. Diese Theorie bietet eine einfache lineare historische Entwicklung der Gesellschaft, die in der sozialistischen Produktionsweise einen Höhepunkt findet. Wendepunkte in dieser Entwicklung, wie sie 1989 in Osteuropa eingetreten sind, finden darin keine Erklärung. **Die Modernisierungstheorie** vermag schon eher Erscheinungen der neuen Territorialität und Regionalisierung eine theoretische Untermauerung zu bieten. Es muss jedoch festgestellt werden, dass die Annahme der Hypothese, dass in traditionellen und partiell modernisierten Gesellschaften durch die Anwendung gleicher Modernisierungsmethoden, die in modernen Gesellschaften erfolgreich waren, eine gesellschaftliche Entwicklung ausgelöst werden könne, in der Realität oft nicht bestätigt werden kann. Ein gutes Beispiel bietet Rumänien, wo das in den letzten Jahren verfolgte politische Modell davon ausgeht, dass durch einen radikalen Wandel, die Abkehr vom kommunistischen System und dem Aufbau eines nach demokratischen Regeln funktionierenden Mehrparteien-Systems sowie marktwirtschaftlicher Strukturen automatisch bessere Lebensbedingungen und wirtschaftliche Wohlfahrt Einzug halten werden. Als Folge wurde die Einführung von Institutionen aus der EU nach 1989 als ein Modernisierungsvorgang betrachtet, wovon eine schnelle und Wohlstand schaffende Transformation der Gesellschaft erwartet wurde. Inzwischen ist jedoch klar geworden, dass allein die Übertragung der EU-Instrumente

kein symmetrisches Ergebnis zu den Verhältnissen in den heutigen EU-Ländern hervorbringen wird. Dementsprechend wird die Modernisierung durch die Errichtung von Institutionen allein wenig erfolgreich sein. Der Prozess ist vielmehr von der Verstärkung der z. Z. schwachen Kontrollmechanismen und von der Rücksichtnahme an bislang vernachlässigte weiche Entwicklungsfaktoren, wie Mentalitäten, kulturelle Werte und Normen, sowie von den sozialen Netzwerken, die im Laufe der sozialistischen Periode entstanden sind, abhängig. Aus diesen Erläuterungen heraus erhält die Feststellung, dass die Modernisationstheorie, wie auch die marxistische Theorie, die Transformation nur lückenhaft erklären kann, einen weiteren Beleg. Das beiden Theorien jeweils zugrunde liegende Prinzip des erzwungenen zeitlichen Ablaufs presst die Transformation in einen eher utopischen bzw. einen linearen Weg.

Hinzu kommt die Tatsache, dass die regionale Dimension des Übergangs zu wenig behandelt wird. Man kann dabei annehmen, dass viele und unterschiedlich im Raum verteilte Parameter zu regionalen Unterschieden in den Transitionsprozessen führen. In der Folge muss man mit regional unterschiedlichen Ausprägungen des Übergangsprozesses rechnen. Diese sind mit Ausnahme von D. Sandu (1996, 1999) noch wenig untersucht worden.

Ein weiteres grundlegendes Problem der Regional- und Sozialanalyse liegt in der **Marginalisierung vor 1989 der Regionalgeographie in Rumänien<sup>2</sup> und in ihrer Reduktion auf eine physische Regionalgeographie**, in der Naturregionen als von außen vorgegebene, absolut existierende und politisch neutrale Einheiten funktionieren. Auch viele der gegenwärtig erscheinenden empirischen Arbeiten der Humangeographie übernehmen unreflektiert die vorgegebenen Naturgrenzen. Die häufigsten und beliebtesten dieser „natürlichen Grenzen“ sind Flußtäler und strukturelle Kontaktlinien zwischen großen morphologischen Einheiten wie Gebirge, Hügel und Ebenen. Diese Situation ist nicht nur paradigmatisch determiniert, wie sie in der westlichen Regionalgeographie lange Zeit in der nomothetisch und quantitativ orientierten Forschung auftrat, sondern ist als Ergebnis des Einflusses einer national-kommunistischen Ideologie zu interpretieren. Dementsprechend sind bestimmte Forschungsthemen tabuisiert worden, z.B. die ethnische und soziale Differenzierung und Segregation der Bevölkerung oder viele Themenbereiche der Regional- und Kulturgeographie. In der kommunistischen Periode wurde die



Regionalgeographie vor allem als eine integrative Disziplin für physisch- wie auch humangeographische Raumkenntnisse betrachtet. Eine Folge dieses Geographie-Machens (Werlen, 1997) kann als Blütezeit der regionalen Monographien in Form von geographischen Kreis<sup>3</sup>-Darstellungen oder sogar von Gemeinde- und Stadtmonographien bezeichnet werden. Dazu kommt noch die große Anzahl touristischer Monographien und eine Serie von Gebirgsmonographien (*Munții noștri*, „unsere Gebirge“)<sup>4</sup>. Die gegenwärtige Regionalgeographie Rumäniens ist daher einerseits noch sehr monographisch geprägt; es mangelt an theoretischen und konzeptionell-methodologischen Diskussionen und Grundlagen<sup>5</sup>. Andererseits sind seit 1989 ein großes und wachsendes Interesse und eine aktive Mitwirkung der Regionalgeographie in bestimmten Formen der Regionalisierung Rumäniens und in der Regionalplanung festzustellen. Dies ist vor allem in der politisch-normativen und positivistisch-wissenschaftlichen Regionalisierung der Gesellschaft festzustellen. Diese sind als Teile der Instrumentalisierung wirtschaftlicher, politischer und sozialer Transformation zu verstehen, und haben wesentlich zur Konstruktion neuer Regionalisierungen in Rumänien nach 1989 beigetragen<sup>6</sup>.

## 2. Das Konzept der Region

Aufbauend auf den oben vorgestellten Überlegungen wird sich dieser Teil des Aufsatzes mit dem generellen Konzept der Region beschäftigen. Dabei werden die verschiedenen bereits bestehenden Regionskonzepte nicht unreflektiert übernommen, sondern nach unterschiedlichen Paradigmen untersucht, um ein Konzept der Region begrifflich zu machen. Zu diesen gehören Konstruktivismus, Realismus, sowie das regionalwissenschaftliche Paradigma. Aus den unterschiedlichen Auffassungen zum Begriff „Region“ sollen dann Konsequenzen zu Regionalisierung und Regionalismus abgeleitet werden.

Am Anfang des 20. Jahrhunderts ist das klassische regional-geographische Paradigma entstanden. Es wurde als eine idiographische Disziplin vorgestellt, wo das zentrale Thema die Intergration des Menschen und der Gesellschaft in die Natur bildete. Dabei waren die Auswirkungen der Natur auf die Entstehung von regionalen Differenzen ausschlaggebend, die Region wurde in allen ihren Aspekten dargestellt und monographisch beschrieben. Die Region als zentraler Begriff hatte einen ontologischen

Satus und eine objektive Existenz, die bloß von den Wissenschaftlern entdeckt werden sollte.

Nach dem zweiten Weltkrieg, wurde im allgemeinen Rahmen des Positivismus die Regionalwissenschaft gegründet, zuerst in den USA (*Regional Science*) aufgrund der Arbeiten von Walter Isard, später in Europa. Unzufrieden mit der „Unwissenschaftlichkeit“ der klassischen Regionalgeographie wollten die Begründer der Regionalwissenschaft alle raumbezogenen Disziplinen integrieren, wobei die Geographie und die Wirtschaftswissenschaften die Führungsrollen spielten. Sie versuchten, die Regionen aus der Perspektive der Lokalisationstheorien zu erklären und durch die Anwendung von stark formalisierten und deduktiven Modellen, die Gesetzmäßigkeiten der Regionalentwicklung zu entdecken.

In den achtziger Jahren des 20. Jahrhunderts geriet die Regionalwissenschaft unter der starken Kritik der radikalen und humanistischen Geographie. Während dieser Periode wurden die sozialen Theorien in die regionalgeographische Analyse einbezogen. Damit wurden im Gegensatz zur nomothetischen Perspektive der Regionalwissenschaft neue idiographische Akzente gesetzt. Als Folge hat die Region ihren ontologischen Status verloren, sie existiert nicht mehr als eine äußere Entität, sondern ist von unterschiedlichen sozialen Gruppen und Institutionen gebildet. Dieses neue Paradigma wird als Neue Regionale Geographie (*New Regional Geography*) bezeichnet. Ihre zentrale These ist, daß die Regionen aus sozialen, wirtschaftlichen und politischen Interaktionsnetzen aufgebaut werden, wobei die wichtigsten strukturierenden Faktoren folgende sind: die Interaktion von unterschiedlichen Akteuren, die Dichte formeller Beziehungen, die regionale Solidarität, die Kooperationsformen von kulturellen, Bildungs-, Forschungs-, Wirtschafts- und Verwaltungsinstitutionen. Innerhalb der Neuen Regionalen Geographie sind mehreren Forschungsrichtungen vertreten (Werlen, 1997), wovon zwei für unser Thema von Bedeutung sind:

- Die Regionalidentitätsforschung hat sich zuerst in Deutschland durch die Schreiben von H.H. Blotevogel, G. Heinritz, G. Popp (1987) und J. Pohl (1993) durchgesetzt. Nach ihrer Meinung wird die regionale Identität intersubjektiv gebildet und sie soll aus der Perspektive der rationalen Rekonstruktion untersucht werden. Als konkrete Erscheinungsform der Identität ist der Regionsname zu betrachten. Sie nennen fünf Kriterien für die Untersuchung der regionalen Identität: Maßstab (mittleres Niveau zur Unterscheidung

von lokalen und nationalen Identitäten); Grenzen und innere Struktur; Zeit (historische Perspektive); Intensität; soziale Differenzierung (die regionale Identität hängt von Faktoren wie Sozialisation, kulturelle Tradition, sozialer Satus usw. ab).

- Die kritische Orientierung ist vor allem in der angelsächsischen Literatur vertreten: A. Pred (1994), N. Thrift (1996), J. Allen, Doreen Massey, A. Cochrane (1998), D. Gregory (1998) sind die wichtigsten Autoren. Ihre zentrale Innovation besteht in der Analyse von unterschiedlichen Machtkonstellationen aus regionaler Perspektive. Dadurch werden die unterschiedlichen Positionen von Regionen abgeleitet (Zentren, Peripherien). Dazu kommt noch der Geschichte eine wichtige Rolle in der Erklärung regionaler Unterschiede zu: *„The identities of regions are constructed through their relationships to ‘other’ regions and naturally they come with a history in which they have already been ‘placed’, so to speak. By ‘placed’, here, we mean that regions draw their meaning at any one point in time through their differences from other regions.”* (J. Allen et co., S. 10) Dadurch erhält die Region eine Doppelbedeutung: sie ist gleichzeitig Ergebnis und Medium der sozialen Beziehungen. Diese Orientierung beinhaltet auch die Idee, daß durch normative Handlung die Situation bestimmter Regionen verbessert werden kann, die Wissenschaft sollte sogar dazu beitragen, daß lokale und regionale Gemeinschaften die Prozesse, die in ihrer Region oder ausserhalb davon ablaufen, besser verstehen: *„[...] to aid attempts by people living and working within an area to understand what is going on around them and maybe to change it for the better.”* (id., S. 1)

Unabhängig davon, ob die Region als Konstruktion oder als Entität mit realer Existenz betrachtet wird, stellt sich die Frage der Grenze, und zwar wie wird eine Region abgegrenzt. Die Situation ist einfacher, wenn die Grenzen normativ vorhanden sind: politische Grenzen (Staaten) und Verwaltungsgrenzen (sub-nationale Ebene). Oft sind die Grenzen die Ergebnisse wissenschaftlicher Untersuchungen (Einzugsgebiet von Städten), wobei die Grundmethode sich auf die Auswahl von einer oder mehreren statistischen Variablen bezieht, deren Werte in Klassen gruppiert werden. Danach werden die Grenzen der Klassen auf der Karte gezogen. Erhebliche Schwierigkeiten ergeben sich bei der Abgrenzung von Regionen, die als soziale Konstruktionen verstanden werden, deren zentrale Kategorie die Identität ist. Unabhängig von der angewandten

Methoden sind die Regionen bis zu einem bestimmten Masse methodologische Konstruktionen. Das bedeutet, daß ihr genauer Grenzablauf von den ausgewählten Abgrenzungsmethode bestimmt wird und dadurch die Region in starkem Maße eine methodologische Konstruktion ist.

Die Theorie von Anssi Paasi (1995) überwindet das oben vorgestellte methodologische Dilemma und versteht die Regionen als Human- und Sozialkategorien, die sich in vier Phasen herausgebildet haben:

- die Annahme der territorialen Gestalt,
- die Bildung einer konzeptuellen (symbolischen) Gestalt,
- die Bildung der institutionellen Gestalt und
- die Entwicklung von Regionen als Entitäten und als soziales Bewusstsein der Bevölkerung.

In der ersten Phase wird die soziale Praxis entwickelt, die zur Festlegung der Regionsgrenzen führt. Die Abgrenzung von Regionen wird von Paasi als ein entscheidender Moment in der Regionskonstruktion betrachtet, weil sie zugleich die Basis für die folgenden Phasen und die Voraussetzung der Entwicklung eines Regionalbewusstseins ist. Die zweite Phase entspricht der Entwicklung von territorialen Symbolen, wie der Name der Region, der die Verbindung zwischen dem Image der Region, dem Regionalbewusstsein und der Regionsvorstellungen von Aussenstehenden widerspiegelt. Die Funktion der Symbole ist die Legitimation eines partikulären Stellenwertes einer Region mit ihren besonderen Werten, Normen, Identitäten und Rollen. Sie können sich lokal wie auch überlokal herausbilden, abhängig von den Besonderheiten der politischen Machtbeziehungen. Die dritte Phase verläuft simultan mit der zweiten und bezieht sich auf die Entwicklung von regionalen Institutionen. Paasi schreibt diesen Institutionen eine Schlüsselrolle in der Reproduktion des regionalen Bewusstseins und der Region selbst zu. Dieser Prozess ist sehr stark mit der politischen und wirtschaftlichen Transformation einer Gesellschaft verbunden. In der letzten Phase wird der Region eine eindeutige Rolle in der Gesellschaft zugeordnet, sie wird als eine Entität festgestellt und als solche von der Gesellschaft anerkannt. Diese vier Phasen müssen nicht zeitlich aufeinander folgen, sie können vollkommen gleichzeitig oder in unterschiedlichen Abfolgen ablaufen. Im Weiteren wird die Analyse aus der Perspektive von Paasi weitergeleitet, wobei der Akzent auf die Entstehung und Rolle regionaler Institutionen gesetzt wird.

### 3. Die Formen und Inhalte der Regionalisierung in Rumänien

In diesem Kapitel werden die neu entstandenen Regionalinstitutionen identifiziert und nach unterschiedlichen Gesichtspunkten untersucht, nämlich ihre regionale Rolle sowie ihr Funktionsmechanismus. Die neue politisch-normative Regionalisierung Rumäniens ist eine politische Konstruktion, die auf einer breiten geographischen Basis entwickelt wurde, und welche in der Regionalplanung und Regionalentwicklung Anwendung findet. Die Geschichte dieser politischen Konstruktion von Regionen in Rumänien ist noch kurz und ist das Ergebnis externer Faktoren. Im Rahmen des EU-Integrationsprozesses wurde von dem Kandidatenland verlangt, ein auf dem regionalen Prinzip beruhendes Entwicklungssystem aufzubauen. In Reaktion auf diese Vorgabe im Jahr 1998 hat das Gesetz Nr. 151 für Regionalentwicklung in Rumänien (vor kurzem ersetzt durch das Gesetz Nr. 315 vom 18. Juni 2004) die Ziele, institutionelle Rahmen, Kompetenzen und Instrumente der Regionalentwicklung in Rumänien definiert. Es wurden vier Hauptobjektive festgelegt:

- die Reduzierung interregionaler Disparitäten durch die Unterstützung einer ausgeglichenen Entwicklung, durch die Nachholung der verspäteten Entwicklung benachteiligter Regionen und durch die Vermeidung neuer Disparitäten;
- die Vorbereitung des institutionellen Rahmens gemäß den EU-Beitrittskriterien und den Zugangskriterien zu den Strukturellen Fonds der EU;
- die Korrelierung der sektorialen Politik der Regierung auf regionaler Ebene, durch die Unterstützung der Initiativen und Verwertung lokaler und regionaler Ressourcen mit dem Zweck der nachhaltigen und wirtschaftlich-sozialen Entwicklung der Regionen;
- die Anregung der internen und grenzübergreifenden Zusammenarbeit, die Teilnahme der Entwicklungsregionen an Tätigkeiten europäischer Organisationen zur Promovierung wirtschaftlicher und institutioneller Regionalentwicklung.

Territorial hat das Gesetz eine regionale Ebene ohne juristische Personalität etabliert; das heisst, dass sie keine verwaltungs-territoriale Einheit ist. Sie könnte auch keine sein, weil Artikel 3, Paragraph 3 der Verfassung Rumäniens feststellt, daß das Staatsgebiet in Städte, Kommunen und Kreise aufgeteilt ist. Die Ratifizierung der Europäischen Charta für die lokale Autonomie (Gesetz Nr. 199/1997) stellt ebenfalls fest, daß

Rumänien unter regionale Autorität die Kreisautorität der lokalen öffentlichen Verwaltung versteht.

Die neuen Entwicklungsregionen wurden durch die Festlegung eines neuen Institutionennetzes für die Verwaltung dieser Raumeinheiten realisiert:

- Auf staatlicher Ebene wird der Nationalrat für Regionalentwicklung gemäß dem Gesetz Nr. 315/2004 eine auf Partnerschaft basierte Institution für die Entwicklung und Implementierung der Ziele der regionalen Entwicklungspolitik. Der Staat hat eine starke Position in dieser Institution, da der Vorsitzende der Minister für Europäische Integration ist; das Sekretariat ist ebenfalls diesem Ministerium unterstellt und weitere Vertreter der Regierung sind Mitglieder des Rates in gleicher Anzahl mit den Vertretern der acht Regionalentwicklungsräte (die Präsidenten und die Vize-Präsidenten). Zu seinen wichtigsten Aufgaben gehören: Bestimmung der nationalen Strategie für Regionalentwicklung und des Nationalen Entwicklungsplans, Bestimmung der Kriterien und Prioritäten der Nutzung des Nationalen Fonds für Regionalentwicklung, Vorschläge zur Nutzung von Beitrittsfonds für Regionalentwicklung, die für Rumänien von der EU bestimmt werden, Zustimmung von Projekten, die von den Regionalentwicklungsbüros vorgeschlagen werden.
- Die territorialen Strukturen für Regionalentwicklung sind von acht Regionalentwicklungsräten vertreten, die schon im Jahre 1999 gegründet wurden. Sie sind deliberative Körperschaften auf der Ebene jeder Entwicklungsregion, ohne juristische Personalität. Sie haben folgende Hauptfunktionen: Analyse und Entscheidung über die Regionalentwicklungsstrategien und -programme; Zustimmung von Regionalentwicklungsprojekten, die auf regionaler Ebene ausgewählt wurden, in Anlehnung an die Prioritäten und Methodologie der nationalen Institution, die mit der Regionalentwicklung beauftragt ist (das Ministerium für Europäische Integration); Bestimmung von Kriterien, Prioritäten, Allokation und Zielbestimmung von Ressourcen aus dem Fonds für Regionalentwicklung usw.
- Die Regionalentwicklungsbüros sind territoriale Strukturen für Regionalentwicklung, die im Rahmen jeder Entwicklungsregion funktionieren. Sie sind gemeinnützige Nichtregierungsorganisationen ohne Erwerbzzweck mit juristischer Personalität. Sie haben folgende Aufgaben: Erarbeitung und Vorschlag an den

Regionalentwicklungsrat der Regionalentwicklungsstrategie und der Regionalentwicklungsprogramme und -pläne, sowie des Fondsmanagementplans; Implementierung von Regionalentwicklungsplänen und dem Fondsmanagementplan; Management des Regionalentwicklungsfonds usw.

Ursprünglich, im Jahre 1999, wurde auch ein Nationalbüro für Regionalentwicklung als Nationalstruktur gegründet, aber im neuen Gesetz für Regionalentwicklung aus dem Jahre 2002 wurde dieses abgeschafft: eine gute Lösung aber gleichzeitig ein neues Zeichen der institutionellen Instabilität in Rumänien.

Die acht neuentstandenen Entwicklungsregionen (*regiuni de dezvoltare*) fassen die bestehenden Kreise aufgrund einer multikriterialen Gruppierung zusammen. Sie erfüllen eine Rahmen-Funktion für die Ausarbeitung, Umsetzung und Auswertung der Regionalentwicklungspolitik. Sie haben ebenfalls eine technische Funktion als grundlegende Territorialeinheiten für die Sammlung von spezifischen statistischen Daten im Zusammenhang mit den EUROSTAT Regelungen und entsprechen damit der NUTS-2 Ebene in der EU. Bezüglich des NUTS-Systems wurde ein technischer Aspekt noch nicht geregelt, und zwar wie die NUTS-1 Ebene gebildet wird. Rumänien ist ein mittelgroßes Land im europäischen Vergleich, deswegen wird es auf der höchsten NUTS-Ebene von mehreren Einheiten rãpresentiert, aber die Anzahl und die Kriterien der Gruppierung von Entwicklungsregionen stehen noch nicht fest.

Die Grenzen der neuen Regionen folgen den administrativen Grenzverläufen der schon seit 1968 bestehenden Kreisgrenzen. Die Symbolik dieser Entwicklungsregionen ist teilweise im historischen und sozialen Bewußtsein der Bevölkerung verankert. Es waren jedoch wenige Bemühungen seitens des Staates bei der Entwicklung neuer territorialer Symbole festzustellen. Es kann sogar behauptet werden, dass eine gewisse Zurückhaltung bei der Nutzung schon bestehender Symbole beobachtet werden kann. Dies zeigt sich zum Beispiel in den Namen der Regionen, die die jeweilige geographische Position der Entwicklungsregionen im Rahmen Rumãniens bezeichnen (Nord-Ost, Süd-Ost, West, Zentrum, Nord-West). Nur drei von ihnen reflektieren auch den historisch-kulturellen Hintergrund: Süd-West Oltenien, Süd-Muntenien und Bukarest-Ilfov, eine Tatsache, die sich dadurch erklären lässt, daß die anderen Regionen auch Teile anderer historischen Regionen beinhalten. Im Folgenden werden die acht Entwicklungsregionen kurz dargestellt (Tab. 1):

- Die Entwicklungsregion 1 Nord-Osten hat die größte Ausdehnung und die größte Bevölkerung (cca. 3,6 Millionen). Die Mehrheit ihrer Entwicklungsindikatoren haben geringe Werte;
- Die Entwicklungsregion 2 Süd-Osten ist kulturell die heterogenste Region, mit jeweils zwei Kreisen aus der Moldau, Muntenien und Dobrudscha. Die Region weist auch eine geringe Kohäsion bezüglich die Transportwege auf und hat Indikatoren, die um die Landesdurchschnittswerte liegen;
- Die Entwicklungsregion 3 Süd-Muntenien liegt um die Hauptstadt Bukarest. Sie hat Entwicklungsindikatoren, die sie auf der vorletzten Stufe positionieren, wegen ihrer dualen Raumstruktur: im Norden liegen wirtschaftlich entwickelte Kreise (Prahova, Argeş, Dâmboviţa), während im Süden vier schlecht entwickelte Kreise das Gesamtniveau der Region nach unten ziehen;
- Die Entwicklungsregion 4 Süd-West Oltenien enthält die Kreise der historischen Provinz Oltenien und befindet sich auf der gleichen Entwicklungsstufe mit der Region Süd-Osten;
- Die Entwicklungsregion 5 West umfasst das historische Banat und den Kreis Hunedoara. Nach Bukarest ist es die am besten entwickelte Region Rumäniens;
- Die Entwicklungsregion 6 Nord-West hat eine bessere Position in der Entwicklungshierarchie des Landes als die Entwicklungsregionen Süd-West und Süd-Ost, aber befindet sich hinter den Regionen West und Zentrum, weil hier zwei kleine und mit den niedrigsten Entwicklungsindikatoren ausgestattete Kreise der West-Provinzen liegen: Sălaj und Hunedoara;
- Die Entwicklungsregion 7 Zentrum umfasst ausschließlich siebenbürgische Kreise und folgt unmittelbar nach Bukarest und West, was das Entwicklungsniveau betrifft;
- Die Entwicklungsregion 8 Bukarest-Ilfov umfaßt die Hauptstadt Bukarest mit dem Kreis Ilfov und bildet das wirtschaftlichen Wachstumzentrum Rumäniens, eine Situation, die strukturell bedingt ist, da diese Entwicklungsregion eine sehr kleine Fläche hat.

Mit der neuen politischen Regionalisierung sind drei grundlegende Probleme verbunden:

- Erstens sind die Kriterien der Regionalisierung in der Politik wie auch in der Wissenschaft sehr umstritten und nicht konsequent



durchgesetzt worden. Vier Hauptkriterien lagen der Regionsbildung zugrunde: die Bevölkerungszahl, die Fläche, sowie die kulturellen und ökonomischen Verflechtungen. Im Vergleich zum EU Durchschnitt sind die rumänischen Entwicklungsregionen jedoch in Bezug auf Bevölkerungszahl und Fläche zu groß. Eine der Regionen ist kulturell sehr heterogen<sup>7</sup> und in mehreren Fällen fordern die Vertreter der Kreise eine andere Zuordnung aufgrund von wirtschaftlichen Verflechtungen mit Kreisen in anderen Regionen. Diese Verflechtungen haben sich teilweise erst in den letzten 20-30 Jahren entwickelt, die neue Regionalisierung trägt dem jedoch kaum Rechnung. Forderungen dieser Art kommen z. B. aus dem Kreis Braşov in der Entwicklungsregion Zentrum, der starke wirtschaftliche Beziehungen und Interessen an einer Entwicklungsachse durch das Prahova Tal nach Bukarest hat, oder den Kreisen Prahova und Dâmboviţa, die der Süd-Region angehören, aber insgesamt nur ein sehr geringes Niveau an Kohäsion aufzeigen. Es wurden unterschiedliche Vorschläge zur Neueinteilung der Kreise in Entwicklungsregionen formuliert (Benedek, 2004, Săgeată, 2004). Mit dem Gesetz nr. 315/2004 wurde die Diskussion über die Anzahl der Regionen und die Zugehörigkeit einzelner Kreise jedoch für eine längere Zeit geschlossen. Rumänien wird der EU mit den existierenden acht Entwicklungsregionen beitreten und eine spätere Änderung ist schwer vorstellbar, weil sie die räumliche Grundlage für die EUROSTAT bilden.

- Zweitens, im Unterschied zu einigen Regionalisierungsmodellen in Europa (Spanien, Italien, Deutschland, Österreich, Belgien oder die Schweiz), aber im Zusammenhang mit anderen (Frankreich, Portugal, Griechenland usw.), verfügen die Regionen in Rumänien nur über eine geringe Entscheidungskompetenz und sind finanziell schwach. Sie sind praktisch der Regierung untergeordnet, die die Finanzmittel an die Regionen verteilt; eine Situation, die an die der französischen Regionen in den 1970er und 1980er Jahre erinnert. Die neue politisch-normative Regionalisierung ist von oben nach unten orientiert und ist das Ergebnis einer sehr begrenzten Runde von Konsultationen. Die Vorschläge einer Experten-Gruppe, die das Dokument „Grüne Charta der Regionaleentwicklung in Rumänien“ 1997 ausgearbeitet hat, wurden praktisch im Gesetz übernommen.

- Drittens verwendet die in den Entwicklungsregionen verfolgte Regionalpolitik keynesianische Instrumente, wie die Redistribution des Einkommens, die direkte Unterstützung von Unternehmen, die sich in von den Regionalentwicklungsbüros identifizierten und von der Regierung zugelassenen benachteiligten Regionen (*zone defavorizate*) niedergelassen haben, durch finanzielle Vergünstigungen, und die indirekte Unterstützung von Unternehmen durch öffentliche Investitionen in der territorialen Infrastruktur der benachteiligten Regionen. Einerseits wurden die keynesianische Instrumente in der EU größtenteils durch Entwicklungsinstrumente des neuen Regionalismus ersetzt, andererseits sind die Ergebnisse der Anwendung dieser Instrumente in Rumänien nicht spektakulär: die Arbeitsproduktivität in der benachteiligten Regionen ist gering geblieben und sie sind weiter von anderen, innovativen Regionen abhängig geblieben. Dazu kommt die Tatsache, daß nach dem EU Beitritt die direkte Instrumente aufgehoben werden, da sie nicht mit der EU Wettbewerbspolitik kompatibel sind. Übrigens wird im neuen Gesetz über die Regionalentwicklung den Regionalentwicklungsbüros keine weitere Ausweisung von benachteiligten Regionen zugeteilt.

#### **4. Der Regionalismus in Rumänien**

Auf dieser Analysenebene treffen sich die unterschiedlichen Dimensionen der Regionalisierung und des Regionalismus. Letzterer wird als eine ideologische Bewegung verstanden, die das Primat regionaler Werte unterstützt. Im allgemeinen bezieht sich der Regionalismus auf das Verhalten von unterschiedlichen territorialen Einheiten (Regionen, Siedlungen) gegenüber der Außenwelt oder einer äußeren Autorität. Dadurch definieren sich praktisch die sub-nationalen Ebenen durch ihre Beziehung zur Zentralmacht des Staates.

Im Falle Rumäniens gehen wir davon aus, dass die Regionalisierung nicht von einem aktiven Regionalismus ausgelöst wurde. Dabei werden diejenigen Gruppen untersucht, die den Regionalismus als Ideologie formuliert haben, bzw. die den Regionalismus als Mittel zur Mobilisierung der Bevölkerung verwendet haben. Damit ist die Grundfrage nach den Formen des Regionalismus verbunden. Welche dominieren und wie sind sie räumlich verteilt, bzw. voneinander unterscheidbar? Ziele, Diskurs

sowie Rolle und Einfluss unterschiedlicher regionalistischen Gruppen werden dabei untersucht.

Hier soll auch die Frage der Regionalidentität aufgegriffen werden, die sich in diesem Beitrag nur auf die Auswertung und Problematisierung schon bestehender Untersuchungen beschränken wird. Weiterhin soll ermittelt werden, ob der Regionalismus in den starken interregionalen wirtschaftlichen Disparitäten verankert ist, oder ob der Regionalismus nur kulturell bedingte Unterschiede widerspiegelt.

Diese Analyse wurde durch die Veröffentlichung einer Chronologie vom Regionalismus in Rumänien, zusammengestellt von Bakk Miklós (Bakk, 2003), erleichtert. Sie wurde durch die Auswertung von Zeitungsartikeln und Kommentare zu diesem Thema und durch die Auswertung der Wahlergebnisse ergänzt.

#### **4.1. Der politische Regionalismus**

Aufgrund dieser Untersuchung wurden folgende Institutionen (politische Parteien und Bewegungen) des Regionalismus identifiziert:

- die Partei der Moldauer<sup>8</sup> aus Rumänien (*Partidul Moldovenilor din România*);
- die Bemühungen von Sabin Gherman, eine breite Stimmbasis für seine Regionalpartei zu erreichen;
- der Demokratische Verein der Ungarn in Rumänien (DVUR);
- das Ungarische Nationalrat in Siebenbürgen (*Erdélyi Magyar Nemzeti Tanács, EMNT*), der Szekler Nationalrat (*Székely Nemzeti Tanács, SZNT*), der Ungarische Bürgerverein (*Magyar Polgári Szövetség, MPSZ*)

Die Partei der Moldauer aus Rumänien, gegründet im Jahre 1997, war eine politische Initiative in der Moldau (die ärmste Region des Landes), die bei den lokalen Wahlen im Jahr 2000 75'266 Stimmen sammelte (1,05% der Gesamtanzahl der Stimmen in Rumänien) und den Bürgermeister des regionalen Zentrums, die Stadt Iași, stellte. Sie bestand nur für eine kurze Zeit: im Jahre 2001 fusionierte sie mit der regierenden Sozialdemokratischen Partei (*Partidul Democrației Sociale*).

Sabin Gherman hat versucht, seine Idee der Regionalisierung (Gherman, 2003) auch politisch zu verwerten, ohne Erfolg. Die Christlich-demokratische Partei (*Partidul Creștin Democrat*) hat bei den

letzten lokalen Wahlen ein sehr niedriges Ergebnis erzielt: sie verfügt insgesamt im ganzen Land über 17 Lokalräte (*consilieri locali*).

Der Demokratische Verein der Ungarn in Rumänien hat im Jahre 1993 die Frage der territorialen Autonomie in seinem Programm als deklariertes Ziel formuliert. Nachdem der Verein im Jahre 1996 Regierungspartei wurde, dann in der Periode 2000-2004 als Verbündeter der damaligen Regierungspartei (PSD) funktionierte, wurde dieses Ziel von der Tagesordnung des politischen Handelns gestrichen. Segmente der ungarischen Bevölkerung, die unzufrieden mit der vermeintlichen Abweichung der Spitzenführung des Demokratischen Vereins der Ungarn in Rumänien haben im Jahr 2003 eine neue Organisation unter der Führung des Pastors László Tökés gegründet: der Ungarische Nationalrat in Siebenbürgen (*Erdélyi Magyar Nemzeti Tanács, EMNT*). Im gleichen Jahr wurde der Szekler Nationalrat (*Székely Nemzeti Tanács, SZNT*) gegründet, während der Ungarische Bürgerverein (*Magyar Polgári Szövetség, MPSZ*) die Absicht erklärte, sich als politische Partei registrieren zu lassen und sich als Alternative zum DVUR für die ungarische Wähler anzubieten.

Ein ausgehobenes Ziel des EMNT, SZNT und MPSZ ist die territoriale Autonomie des Szeklerlandes, deswegen bilden sie die aktivste Gruppe des politischen Regionalismus, aber nicht die erfolgreichste: sie haben kein politisches Gewicht. Im Jahre 2004 haben sie ein Projekt zur Autonomie des Szeklerlandes beim Parlament eingereicht. Ursprünglich wurde ein Autonomieprojekt von der Gruppe um Bakk Miklos ausgearbeitet. Dessen Entwurf besteht aus drei Themen: a) ein Rahmengesetz über die Regionen, mit Schwerpunkt auf die Funktionierungsmechanismen, Kompetenzen und Institutionen, ohne territoriale Bezüge, die später durch ein spezielles Gesetz geregelt werden sollten, als Ergebnis eines politischen Kompromisses; b) ein Gesetzentwurf über die Entstehung der Region Szeklerland; c) ein Gesetzentwurf über den Status der Szeklerregion. Die SZNT hat die letzten zwei Punkte in sein eigenes Autonomieprojekt übernommen, umformuliert, in den früheren Entwurf (1995) von Csapo Jozsef integriert und vor das Parlament geschickt. Das Projekt wurde von der Mehrheit – darunter auch die Abgeordneten des DVUR, mit Ausnahme einer Gruppe von fünf Abgeordneten – abgelehnt.

#### 4.2. Der kulturelle Regionalismus

Die kulturelle Unterschiede zwischen den unterschiedlichen historischen Provinzen zeigen sich an den Grenzen entlang der großen kulturell-historischen Scheidelinie innerhalb Rumäniens (Siebenbürgen versus Alt-Rumänien), die trotz der fortschreitenden Verwestlichung von Siebenbürgen nicht als Zivilisationsgraben im Sinne von Huntington funktioniert (Capelle-Pogăcean, 1998). Die kulturellen Partikularitäten wurden jedoch nach der Wende, das heißt nach dem Ende der sozialistischen Modernisierung empirisch wenig belegt. Es wird immer wieder historisiert, in Formeln wie *amprenta trecutului*, also die Geschichte, die unterschiedliche Vergangenheit, die die Mentalität und die Architektur unterschiedlich geprägt hat (Capelle-Pogăcean, 1998). Ausserdem werden die kulturellen Unterschiede durch die Integrationsprozesse relativisiert.

Die kulturellen Unterschiede des Landes kann man im Wahlverhalten der Bevölkerung sehr gut verfolgen. Vor allem in 1996 spielten Siebenbürgen und andere Westprovinzen eine entscheidende Rolle im politischen Kurswechsel. In diesen Provinzen haben die damaligen Oppositionsparteien um die Demokratische Konvention klar die Wahlen gewonnen, während sie sich in Alt-Rumänien nur in den großen Städten durchsetzen konnten. Die Resultate waren ebenfalls bei den Präsidentschaftswahlen sehr klar regional differenziert: die Westprovinzen haben mehrheitlich für den Kandidat der Opposition gestimmt (Emil Constantinescu), der somit Präsident wurde, während Ion Iliescu in Alt-Rumänien die Oberhand hatte. Ab 1996 haben sich die Rumänen eindeutig für die euro-atlantische Integration ausgesprochen. Auch bei den Wahlen von 2000 sind die Ergebnisse regional sehr unterschiedlich ausgefallen. Die Westprovinzen sind weiter politisch viel fragmentierter und bilden weiter die Hochburg der Oppositionsparteien, sowie von den ethnischen Parteien des Demokratischen Forums der Deutschen in Rumänien (DFDR) und der Demokratische Vereins der Ungarn in Rumänien (DVUR). Bei den Präsidentschaftswahlen, haben die Siebenbürger, im Unterschied zu den Bewohnern Alt-Rumäniens stark für den national-extremistischen Kandidat C.V. Tudor gestimmt. Die im Zuge der Regionalisierung entstandenen Entwicklungsregionen haben die oben erwähnten politischen- und kulturellen Unterschiede reproduziert. Die einzige Ausnahme ist die Süd-Ost Region, deren innere kulturelle Kohäsion jedoch viel größer ist als diejenige zwischen Siebenbürgen (Zentrum

Region) und der Moldau (Nord-Ost Region). In dieser Korrelation zwischen den aktuellen Entwicklungsregionen und den kultur-historischen Regionen kann bereits eine Basis für die sozialen Klassifikationen der Zukunft liegen.

Ebenfalls zur kulturellen Dimension des Regionalismus sind noch die isolierte Bestrebungen einer Intellektuellengruppe um die Zeitschriften *Altera* (herausgegeben in Târgu Mureş) und *Provincia* (herausgegeben in Cluj) zuzurechnen. Der gemeinsame Zug dieser Bestrebungen ist, daß sie sehr schwierig als Regionalismus einzustufen ist. Im Gegensatz zur Regionalisierung, die als Kompromiß der Eliten funktioniert, braucht der Regionalismus eine breite Basis, es ist in der Regel eine Massenbewegung. Wir sehen in Rumänien noch bei einem Teil der kulturellen Elite weder in unterschiedlichen politischen Regionalismen kaum den Massencharakter. Die erste Nummer der ***Altera*** ist 1995 erschienen und laut Herausgebern (Liga PRO EUROPA, eine Nichtregierungsorganisation) strebte die Zeitschrift an, ein Diskussionsforum, bzw. ein Vermittler zu sein, der zugleich informiert und bildet zu einem Zeitpunkt, wo kein politischer Wille zur Harmonisierung der Beziehungen zwischen Mehrheit und Minderheiten zu spüren war (*Altera*, nr. 1/1995, „Editorial“). Meiner Meinung nach hat sie angefangen, einen alternativen öffentlichen Diskurs zu den damals vom Zentralismus und Ethnizität dominierten Diskursen aufzubauen. In ihren Seiten wurden zahlreiche Essays, Analysen und Dokumente veröffentlicht (viele als Übersetzungen) zu Themen wie Autonomie, Menschenrechte, kollektive Rechte, ethnische Beziehungen, Föderalismus und Dezentralisierung, Multi- und Interkulturalismus usw.

Die zweite regionalistische Publikation, ***Provincia***, hatte eine sehr kurze Existenz (2000-2002), war zweisprachig und startete als monatliche Beilage der rumänischen Zeitung *Ziua de Ardeal* und der ungarischen Zeitung *Kronika*. Sie versammelte eine Gruppe von rumänischen und ungarischen Intellektuellen (in erster Reihe Schriftsteller, Journalisten, Essayisten, Philosophen und Historiker), die die nationale Dimension vom Regionalismus überwinden wollte. Die Zeitschrift hat die Werte der transilvanischen Regionalidentität identifiziert, hervorgehoben und betont: die Toleranz, der Multikulturalismus usw., aber nicht als eine Form des regionalen Mystizismus sondern als ein post-nationaler Diskurs und als eine Form der regionalen Kommunikation. Die *Provincia* hat sich, wie auch *Altera*, als ein Diskussionsforum definiert, wo aber die in der Gegenwart verankerte und zukunftsorientierte Transylvanität hervorgehoben wurde.

### **4.3. Der wirtschaftliche Regionalismus**

Die kultur-historischen Regionen haben nicht nur eine starke kulturelle Dimension – die auch im politischen Wahlverhalten reflektiert wird – sondern sie entsprechen auch inter-regionalen wirtschaftlichen Disparitäten, die in 1920 noch groß waren, aber während der Planwirtschaft reduziert worden sind. Nach 1989, als Folge der Öffnung und Integration der rumänischen Wirtschaft in die globalen Produktions- und Konsumnetzwerke, sind die inter-regionalen wirtschaftlichen Ungleichheiten wieder gewachsen (Benedek, 2004). Die rumänischen Regionen haben auf den neuen politischen und wirtschaftlichen Rahmen differenziert reagiert, im Zusammenhang mit ihren ökonomischen Kapazitäten, Wettbewerbsfähigkeit und institutionellen Netzwerken.

Die Gewinner der Transition sind die städtischen Agglomerationen mit einem entwickelten Dienstleistungssektor, die Küstenregion und die Grenzregionen entlang der westlichen Staatsgrenze Rumäniens, während zu den Verlierern die isolierten Bergregionen, die ländlichen Regionen und die Schwerindustrieregionen zählen (id.). Die regionale Verteilung der Entwicklungsindikatoren (Tab. 1) zeigt, daß der kulturelle Hintergrund noch ein wichtiger Faktor der Regionalentwicklung in Rumänien ist. Der Pol der Unterentwicklung ist noch immer die Moldau (die Entwicklungsregion Nord-Ost); Dobrudscha, Muntenien und Oltenien (die Entwicklungsregionen Süd-Ost, Süd und Süd-West) befinden sich auf einem mittleren Niveau, während Siebenbürgen, das Banat, das Kreischgebiet (die Entwicklungsregionen Zentrum, West und Nord-West) zusammen mit Bukarest den Entwicklungspol des Landes (id.) bilden. Trotzdem möchte ich hier betonen, daß die Unterschiede nicht mehr so groß sind wie vor einhundert Jahren; je nach gemessenen Dimensionen liegt sie zwischen 1,5 (GDP/Einwohner) und 2,5 (Haushaltsaustattung). In der Gegenwart sind die schärfsten Entwicklungsunterschiede in Rumänien nicht inter-regional sondern zwischen Siedlungskategorien (Stadt und Land). Dazu kommt die Tatsache, daß Bukarest ohne Zweifel die stärkste Wirtschaftregion des Landes ist.

**Tabelle 1.** Grunddaten der Entwicklungsregionen

Region	Fläche (qkm)	Bevölkerung 2002	Urb. niveau (%) 2002	Index der Globalentw. 1994	Autos/1000 Pers. 1994	Armut % 2001	Säug- Sterbl. ‰ 1999
Nord-Ost	36 850	3 685 393	40,6	40	44	42,8	20,9
Süd-Ost	35 762	2 852 480	54,6	49	47	35,3	20,1
Süd	34 453	3 380 516	39,7	45	75	35,7	19,6
Süd-West	29 212	2 332 194	43,8	49	73	31,4	17,2
West	32 034	1 959 985	60,9	62	100	30	16
Nord-West	34 159	2 744 008	51,1	56	88	30,1	19,7
Zentrum	34 100	2 521 745	58,3	64	110	34,2	16,9
Bukarest	1 821	2 221 860	87,9	-	137	23,1	12,9
Rumänien	238391	21 698 181	52,7	51	85	34	18,6

Quelle: Recensământul populației și locuințelor din 2002. Date preliminare; Carta Verde. Politică de Dezvoltare Regională în România (1997).

Deswegen ist es eine Partikularität der rumänischen Gesellschaft, daß die Anhänger des politischen Regionalismus nicht die Gewinner-Regionen der Transition sind. Dazu trägt die Tatsache bei, daß die Raumstruktur Rumäniens durch ein politisch starkes aber gleichzeitig wirtschaftlich dynamisches Zentrum, Bukarest, dominiert ist. Die wirtschaftliche Distanz zu Bukarest wird dann als Mobilisierungsfaktor gegen das Zentrum für die Erklärung der eigenen Schwächen benutzt. Der aktivste Regionalismus konzentriert sich in den zentralen Regionen (Harghita und Covasna Kreise), dominiert von der ungarischen Bevölkerung, mit einem niedrigeren Entwicklungsniveau, wo die politische Autonomie als den besten Weg für den wirtschaftlichen Aufschwung gesehen wird. Andere regionalistische Gruppen haben einen niedrigeren Einfluß.

## 5. Schlußfolgerungen

### 5.1. Der Regionalismus

Die bisher erwähnten Betrachtungen zeigen, daß eigentlich der Regionalismus in Rumänien nach der Wende von 1989 nicht in einer aktiven Form erschienen ist. Es gibt mehrere Gründe dafür:



- Die allmähliche Auflösung der multikulturellen Gesellschaft und die Entwicklung eines von Rumänen und Ungarn polarisierten ethnischen Modells in Siebenbürgen;
- Die Isolierung der Ideen und der passive Regionalismus eines Teiles der rumänischen und ungarischen kulturellen Elite, die zwar auf den Seiten von *Provincia* die Idee einer transethnischen Regionalpartei skizziert hat aber nicht durchsetzen konnte und die Notwendigkeit, daß der Regionalismus im Rahmen der Zivilgesellschaft bleibt, verteidigt. Siebenbürgen wird eine Schlüsselrolle in der Modernisierung und Europäischen Integration des Landes zugeschrieben. Daraus resultiert für viele Autoren (z.B. Smaranda Enache) die Notwendigkeit einer effektiven Regionalisierung, die zur Stärkung regionaler Zentren führen könnte; dadurch sollten die eventuellen Abweichungen von der euroatlantischen Integration balanciert werden. Die West-Provinzen Rumäniens sollten die Integrationstreibkräfte bleiben.
- Der öffentliche Diskurs katalogisiert jeden Versuch über die regionale Dimension des Staates zu sprechen als Separatismus oder als ein gefährliches Thema, welches negative Einflüsse auf die künftige politische Entwicklung des ganzen Landes ausüben könnte. Es wird ein ideologischer und patriotischer Exklusivismus praktiziert (Fati, 1999). Die regionale Diversität wird als Gefahr betrachtet, weil sie die Fragmentierung symbolisiert (Chelcea, 1999). Deswegen sind die Regionalismen, die mehreren regionalen Gruppen zuzuschreiben sind, größtenteils passiv geblieben. Die Nation bildet weiterhin ein grundlegendes Element der Gesellschaftsorganisation.

Eine wichtige Frage für die Zukunft ist, ob der rumänische Staat die regionale Ebene stärken will oder dies eher nicht anstrebt. Diese Frage stellt in gewisser Weise ein Dilemma dar, wenn wir die Tatsache berücksichtigen, daß der rumänische Staat zum einen keine Erfahrungen mit einem dezentralisierten politischen System hat und zum anderen das politische Handeln noch von Stereotypen bezüglich des sogenannten „transylvanischen Problems“ geprägt ist. Auf dieser Ebene treffen sich die Regionalisierung und der Regionalismus. Im Falle Rumäniens ist unsere Grundannahme, daß die Regionalisierung nicht von einem aktiven Regionalismus ausgelöst worden ist. Deswegen zeigt sie die Charakteristika, die im Kapitel 3 vorgestellt wurden. Hätte der Regionalismus in Rumänien aktive Formen aufgenommen und wäre er artikulierter im öffentlichen Diskurs formuliert worden, würde auch die

Regionalisierung andere Formen annehmen. Dabei wird in Rumänien mit der anwachsenden regionalen Macht ein fortschreitender Separatismus und ein aktiverer politischer Regionalismus<sup>9</sup> befürchtet, der von den Erwartungen und Forderungen der ungarischen Minderheit genährt würde. Obwohl der Regionalismus in Rumänien alle drei Dimensionen aufweist (ethnokulturelle, politische und wirtschaftliche), und über gute geographischen und historisch-kulturelle Voraussetzungen verfügt, spielt er in der Regel im öffentlichen Diskurs eine untergeordnete Rolle. Die wenigen Versuche, dieses Thema in die politische Kultur einzuführen, sind gescheitert, weil sie auf die ethnisch-kulturelle Dimension und auf die Problematik von Siebenbürgen reduziert wurden.

Die spannende Grundfrage lautet daher, wie die rumänische Gesellschaft ihre regionale Gestalt weiterentwickeln wird, welche Regionalisierungen dabei in welcher Weise instrumentalisiert werden und welche interne und externe Zwänge letztlich für die eingeschlagene Richtung ausschlaggebend sein werden. Damit hängen viele weitere Fragen zusammen und zwar die der Demokratie (formell oder substantiell) und die der Struktur und Rolle des Staates (zentralisiert oder unterschiedliche Formen des dezentralisierten modernen Staates). Wenn die Dezentralisierung als Teil des Demokratisierungsprozesses eingebettet wird, dann haben wir eine sehr kurze Erfahrung von der Demokratisierung (1920-1938, ab 1989), insgesamt 33 Jahre in den letzten 85 Jahren. Eine Gruppe von Intellektuellen hat die These aufgegriffen, daß für die Reform und Modernisierung des Staates die regionale Dimension privilegiert werden sollte (Capelle-Pogăcean, 1998). Es kann jedoch als sicher gelten, daß die politische Regionalisierung des Staatsterritoriums die schon bestehenden regionalen Unterschiede in erheblichem Maße instrumentalisiert hat und dadurch paradoxaler Weise in der Zukunft den Regionalismus fördern könnte.

## ***5. 2. Die Regionalisierung***

Die Auswertung der Regionalisierungen in Rumänien wird dabei der Theorie der Regionsbildung von Ansti Paasi (1995) folgen. Aufgrund des Vergleichs mit dem Schema von Paasi, kann festgestellt werden, dass die politisch-normativen Regionalisierungen der rumänischen Gesellschaft partiell nach den gleichen Ordnungsphasen verlaufen, wie im Modell von Paasi. Auf den ersten Blick ist die Gestalt der politisch-normativen Regionalisierung (Phase 1 bei PAASI), wie es in Rumänien umgesetzt wird,

neu. In der Tat existierte es in dieser Form noch nie vorher. Aber bei einer näheren Betrachtung fällt auf, dass die Grenzen der Entwicklungsregionen die große, von den Karpathen repräsentierte Demarkationslinie zwischen den „westlichen Provinzen“ von Rumänien (Siebenbürgen, Banat, Kreischgebiet und Maramureş) und den „Herzland Provinzen“ des modernen rumänischen Staates (Moldau, Muntenien, Oltenien und Dobrudscha) reproduzieren. Diese kulturelle Trennlinie entstand dadurch, dass sich die „westlichen Provinzen“ bis 1918 in einem anderen politisch-kulturellen Rahmen (Königreich Ungarn, Fürstentum Siebenbürgen, Habsburg Monarchie, Österreich-Ungarische Monarchie) entwickelten als die „Herzlandprovinzen“ (Vasallen des Osmanischen Reiches bis 1859). Es wurde aber bereits erwähnt, dass diese kulturelle Demarkationslinie, die sich sehr klar am Anfang des 20. Jahrhunderts zeigte, während des letzten Jahrhunderts weniger evident war, was auf die Modernisierungspolitik des rumänischen Staates zurückzuführen ist.

Die Herausbildung einer institutionellen Gestalt (Phase III bei P<sub>AASI</sub>) war mit erheblichen Unterschieden verbunden: für die Entwicklungsregionen wurden durch das Gesetz zur Regionalentwicklung neue Institutionen geschaffen. In Anbetracht der im zweiten Teil des Aufsatzes diskutierten Probleme ist davon auszugehen, dass es in Zukunft Änderungen sowohl im institutionellen wie auch im territorialen System der Entwicklungsregionen geben wird. In Bezug auf die Regionalisierung ist festzustellen, dass die Regionalgeographie, mit Unterbrechungen, seit gut einem Jahrhundert als soziale und kulturelle Institution im Produzieren von Regionseinheiten „funktioniert“. Daraus folgt, dass der Einfluß der Geographie auf staatliche Regionalisierungsmodalitäten, auf die Öffentlichkeit, und sogar auf das Regionalbewusstsein der Bevölkerung über eine längere Periode festzustellen ist. Übermittelt wurde diese Regionsbildung u.a. durch soziale Institutionen wie das Bildungssystem, die Massenmedien oder über Monographien der unterschiedlichsten Art (siehe Einführung) oder auch durch die Kartographie.

Die Entstehung einer konzeptuellen (symbolischen) Gestalt, entsprechend der Phase II bei P<sub>AASI</sub>, bildet in diesem Schema die dritte Phase. Weder die „Regionalgeographie“ noch der Staat können neue und klare symbolische Marken für die von ihr konstruierten Regionen benennen. Die Regionalgeographie verwendet zwar symbolische Elemente wie Ethnizität in ihrer Definition, aber es bleibt festzustellen, dass über den Symbolgehalt der Regionen erst nach der Auswertung entsprechender empirischer Untersuchungen konkrete Aussagen formuliert

werden können. Im Zusammenhang mit einer regionsbezogenen Symbolik ist die Bedeutung von Kulturregionen noch eine offene Frage, die noch durch empirische Untersuchungen herauszuarbeiten ist. Dahinter steht auch die Frage, inwieweit ein damit verbundenes Regionalbewußtsein in der sozialistischen Vergangenheit und der anschließenden Transformationsphase verändert wurde<sup>10</sup>. An dieser Stelle kann aus der Sicht der bisherigen Erkenntnisse nur die Hypothese formuliert werden, dass die seit dem Ende des 2. Weltkrieges innerhalb Rumäniens erfolgten sozial-räumlichen Prozesse auch zu einem Wandel der regionalen Identitäten geführt haben. Diese Frage ist umso wichtiger, als die regionale Identität als eine endogene Ressource zur Unterstützung regionaler Interessen, Agendas und politischer Aktionen benutzt wird. Dadurch sollte die Position der Region politisch wie auch wirtschaftlich verstärkt werden.

Man unterscheidet zwischen der instrumentellen Mobilisierung der regionalen Identität in Form von Regionalentwicklungsstrategien zur Stärkung der regionalen Wettbewerbsfähigkeit und der politischen Mobilisierung der regionalen Identität, wo letztere die Zielsetzungen regionaler Entwicklung alleine definiert (Lagendijk, 2001). In Rumänien versucht die Regionalisierung eine instrumentelle Mobilisierung herzuführen (nicht deklarativ sondern per Definition). Die kulturelle Heterogenität der Entwicklungsregionen bildet jedoch ein wichtiges Hinderniss. Dazu kommt noch die Tatsache, daß die massive Industrialisierung und Urbanisierung, kombiniert mit starken inner-regionalen und rural-urbanen Migrationen, in größeren Städten wie Braşov oder Sibiu unterschiedliche Kulturen zusammengeführt hat. Der Verlust bestimmter ethnischer Gruppen wie der Juden und Rumäniendeutschen hat zu einer massiven Umgestaltung der regionalen Identitäten geführt. Dieser ausgeprägte demographische Wandel hat neue Formen des Zusammengehörigkeitsgefühls hervorgerufen, die an einigen Orten sicherlich im Gegensatz zu den traditionellen regionalen Identitäten stehen. Sicher ist, daß die regionale Identität in Siebenbürgen von der ethnischen konkurriert wird (Pippidi, 1999). Das ist in der Ethnizisierung des politischen Wahlverhaltens zu merken, obwohl bei den lokalen Wahlen aus 2004 in vielen Ortschaften Siebenbürgens transethnisch abgestimmt wurde (siehe Hermannstadt schon im Jahre 2000, dazu kommen dann aber 2004 Heltau, Mediasch, Hatzfeld, Sathmar, Sächsisch-Reen). Diese Entwicklung betont wieder den enormen Einfluss

externer Faktoren wie die EU Integration auf die Demokratisierung des inneren politischen Lebens.

Die Herausbildung von Regionen als Entitäten und als soziales Bewußtsein der Gesellschaft (Phase IV bei P<sub>AASI</sub>) läuft in der rumänischen Gesellschaft simultan mit der dritten Phase des Generalisierungsschemas ab. In diesem Sinne überschneiden sich zwei Phasen aus dem Modell von P<sub>AASI</sub>. Diese Situation ergibt sich aus der unklaren Funktion und Rolle der entstehenden regionalen Einheiten Rumäniens. Für die Entwicklungsregionen sind diese Funktionen schon relativ klar definiert. Im Vergleich zur Bedeutung von Regionen in der Praxis bestimmter EU Staaten sind sie jedoch sehr begrenzt. Die rumänischen Regionen verfügen z.B. über geringe Finanzmittel, haben keine juristischen Kompetenzen und sind dem Nationalen Regionalentwicklungsrat untergestellt, der vom jeweiligen Ministerpräsidenten geleitet wird. Das konzeptionelle System der Regionalisierung ändert sich gegenwärtig sowohl in der Politik wie auch in der Wissenschaft sehr schnell. Im politischen Bereich streben Vertreter mehrerer Kreise eine Neuordnung der Entwicklungsregionen an, während in der Geographie erste umfangreiche empirische Untersuchungen erst begonnen haben. Das Konzept beeinflusst gleichzeitig die Bedeutung und Funktion der Regionen. Der sich ändernde Inhalt des regionalen Systems, unabhängig von den Regionalisierungsmodalitäten, wird dabei von den wirtschaftlichen, sozialen, politischen und kulturellen Impulsen des Transformationsprozesses begleitet. Die Einflüsse dieses Prozesses werden ganz wesentlich zu den Differenzen bei der Herausbildung regionaler Facetten in der rumänischen Gesellschaft beitragen.

Was die politische Regionalisierung betrifft, ist die Ausweisung von Entwicklungsregionen in allen Phasen des Modells von P<sub>AASI</sub> durch den Prozess der europäischen Integration bestimmt. Die rumänischen Entwicklungsregionen sind somit der räumliche Ausdruck des fortschreitenden Transformations- und Integrationsprozesses. Die unmittelbar bevorstehende Integration wird zur Abgebung eines Teiles der Souveränität an die EU führen und beinhaltet die Annahme, die die Rumänen akzeptieren müssen, daß der Staat nicht ausschließlich ihr Besitz ist (Capelle-Pogăcean, 1998). Gleichzeitig wird diese Integration dadurch gekennzeichnet, daß die EU kein einheitliches Modell der Regionalisierung ausarbeiten konnte, was sich durch die unterschiedlichen Verfassungen und Staatenstrukturen erklären lässt. Mit anderen Worten hat das Prinzip der Co-Souveränität seine Grenzen gezeigt.

Die Regionalisierung wird stärker, wenn die Legitimität des Staates weicht und, in Anlehnung auf die Demokratie-Theorie, wird sie vom Staat als Mittel der Rückgewinnung der demokratischen Legitimität benutzt (Gruber, 1999). Eine gravierende Legitimitätsfrage sehe ich trotzdem für den rumänischen Staat nicht, obwohl die vertikale und horizontale Integration (soziale- bzw. regionale Einheiten) nicht vollkommen gelungen ist (Capelle-Pogăcean, 1998). Das war ein wichtiger Grund dafür, daß Rumänien vor 1996 alle regionale Initiativen abgelehnt hat (Fati, 1999) und die Regionalisierung als Demokratisierungsmittel angewandt wurde. Ein weiterer Grund ist die Stärkung des nationalistischen Diskurses nach der Wende bis 1996 (Adam Michnik: „Nationalismus ist die Fortsetzung des Kommunismus“ im Rahmen des Kampfes um politische Legitimation), als ein Kompromiß für die rumänisch-ungarische Versöhnung gefunden wurde: Der Demokratische Verein der Ungarn aus Rumänien (DVUR) wurde Regierungspartei; nach 1996 wurden mehrere internationale Dokumente von Rumänien unterschrieben und ratifiziert, die neue Gesetze über die Lokalverwaltung (Nutzung der Sprache in der Verwaltung und Justiz ermöglicht) und den Unterrichte haben auch dazu beigetragen, daß der DVUR seine politische Identität neu definieren mußte und auf das Prinzip der territorialen Autonomie verzichtet hat. Außerdem kann nicht prognostiziert werden unter welchen Umständen der Regionalismus zum Separatismus führt oder anders formuliert wie stark soll ein Staat regionalisiert werden, daß es nicht zum Separatismus kommt. Wie das Wahlverhalten bezeugt, ist Siebenbürgen keine Problem-Region. Sie spielt eine Schlüsselrolle in der Reintegration Rumäniens in die europäischen Strukturen und in der Demokratisierung der rumänischen Gesellschaft.

Als Folge der Regionalisierung und des Regionalismus wird die Region ein strategischer Ort und die Szene der Formulierung regionaler politischen Projekten (Lagendijk, 2001). Die lokalen und regionalen Identitäten werden von Entwicklungscoalitionen mobilisiert (Swyngedouw, 2000), die entweder neue Guvernerungsstrukturen darstellen in Form der rumänischen Regionalisierung, die als Partnerschaft zwischen lokalen, regionalen und nationalen Institutionen des Staates entworfen wurde, mit der vollkommenen Ausschließung der Zivilgesellschaft und des wirtschaftlichen Milieus, oder in Form von regionalen Allianzen auftreten, die zwischen politischen, wirtschaftlichen und kulturellen Akteuren geschlossen werden, wie im Falle von EMNT, SZNT und MPSZ in Rumänien.

Die dargestellten Probleme und Fragestellungen der Konstruktion von Regionen im rumänischen Transformationsprozess bieten einen ausgezeichneten Ansatzpunkt für künftige Forschungsthemen:

- Fortsetzung der Arbeiten an einer „Theorie der Transformation“ unter Einbeziehung von Regionalisierungspraktiken,
- Beiträge zur Konzeptionalisierung von Regionen unter Beachtung sozialer Inklusion statt ethnischer Exklusion,
- Adaptation konstruktivistischer Konzepte im Regionalisierungskonzept Rumäniens, insbesondere bei der Anwendung empirisch-analytischer Methoden,
- Verdrängung geodeterministischer Ansätze aus dem nationalen geographischen Diskurs und Verlagerung der Aufmerksamkeit auf die Analyse sozialer, ökonomischer, politischer und kultureller Komponenten bei der Konstruktion von Regionen,
- Einbindung der Problematik von Kulturregionsbildung in Rumänien in einem breiteren ideologischen und gesellschaftlichen Kontext. Dabei spielt insbesondere die Untersuchung der Strategien der Nationkonstruktion von Rumänen und Ungarn, der Politik der kommunistischen Sozialhomogenisierung, der kommunistischen Modernisierungspolitik und der unterschiedlichen Strategien der Integration und der damit verbundene Hoffnung der Bewahrung nationaler Identität bei der ungarischen Minderheit eine Schlüsselrolle.

**Anmerkung:** Der Grundideen des Aufsatzes wurden während eines Alexander von Humboldt Aufenthaltes am Leibniz-Institut für Laenderkunde Leipzig, im Jahre 2004 formuliert. Der Autor bedankt sich insbesondere bei Dr. Christoph Waack für seine inhaltlichen und sprachlichen Anregungen.

## ANMERKUNGEN

- 1 Folgende Autoren haben bislang versucht, die Transformation in Rumänien bzw. in Osteuropa aus theoretischer Sicht zu betrachten: J. HÄKLI (1994), D. SANDU (1996, 1999), V. PASTI et. al. (1997), W. HELLER (1998), J. PICKELS und A. SMITH (1998), EYAL, SZELENYI und TOWNSLEY (2001) und D. CHIRIBUCA (2004). Das hier angesprochene Thema blieb bislang dennoch wenig untersucht.
- 2 Die erste und zugleich letzte humangeographische Regionalisierung in der kommunistischen Periode wurde in der „Monografia geografică a RPR“ (1960) vorgenommen, ein deutlich sowjetisch geprägtes Werk.
- 3 Die Kreise (județe) sind administrativ-territoriale Einheiten in Rumänien, die zwischen der Staatesebene und der Siedlungsebene (lokale Verwaltungen) stehen. Rumänien ist in 42 Kreise (einschliesslich das Munizipium Bukarest) aufgeteilt.
- 4 Dieser monographische Charakter der Regionalanalyse ist sehr ausgeprägt, nicht nur in der rumänischen Regionalgeographie, sondern auch in anderen Disziplinen wie der Raumplanung.
- 5 Eine ähnliche Beschreibung finden wir auch bei Gerald WOOD (2000) für die Situation der regionalen Geographie in Deutschland. In Rumänien sind die Sozialtheorien bislang vollkommen von der Regionalgeographie ignoriert worden. Infolgedessen besitzt die Disziplin eher einen propädeutischen Charakter.
- 6 Es sind Parallelen zu den Regionalisierungstypen von B. WERLEN festzustellen (1997). Im Unterschied dazu deuten die in dieser Studie verwendeten Regionalisierungen (politisch-normativ, positivistisch-wissenschaftlich und symbolisch-informell) jedoch auf unterschiedliche Regionalisierungsmodalitäten der Gesellschaft hin, die durch den Staat, die Wissenschaft (insbesondere, aber nicht ausschließlich die Geographie) und regionale Bevölkerungsgruppen unternommen werden. In diesem Zusammenhang erlangt die WERLENSche produktiv-konsumtive Regionalisierung kaum eine Bedeutung, die symbolisch-informelle (informativ-signifikativ bei WERLEN) wird dagegen auf der Ebene regionaler Gruppen präzisiert. Für weitere Einzelheiten über diese Regionalisierungsmodalitäten siehe BENEDEK (2000).
- 7 Die Süd-Ost-Region, mit Kreisen aus drei unterschiedlichen Kulturregionen: Moldau, Muntenien und Dobrudscha. Für Einzelheiten siehe Benedek (2000).
- 8 Es wird die kulturell-historische Region der Moldau gemeint, Bestandteil des gegenwärtigen rumänischen Staates und lokalisiert im östlichen Teil des Landes (Iasi ist das bedeutendste Stadtzentrum) und nicht die politische Formation Republik Moldawien, die in 1990 nach der Desintegration der Sowjetunion entstanden ist (Hauptstadt ist Chișinău).
- 9 Siehe auch Peter JORDAN (1998): „Regionalisation and decentralisation in Romania-opportunities and obstacles“.
- 10 Mungiu PIPPIDI (1999) schreibt, dass das Regionalbewusstsein in Siebenbürgen und in den westlichen Teilen Rumäniens stark ausgeprägt sei (Banat, Crișana



and Maramureş), während die andere Regionen sehr stark homogenisiert worden sind. Sie bemerkt jedoch auch, dass man kaum die Existenz eines siebenbürgischen Bewusstseins und einer siebenbürgischen Identität beweisen könne. Vielmehr sei die ethnische Identität transzendiert und zeige sich in zwei parallelen Identitäten: eine siebenbürgisch-rumänische und eine siebenbürgisch-ungarische Identität. Der Transilvanismus, als eine transethnische siebenbürgische Identität untertonende intellektuelle Bewegung der Zwischenkriegszeit, hat zum ersten mal eine alternative angeboten zum dominierenden etnozentristischen traditionellen Nationalparadigma (Gábor, 1999). Seine Basis war, daß die Identitäten und Ideologien der siebenbürgischen Ungarn, Rumänen und Deutschen kompatibel miteinander sind. Es ist als ein kultureller Regionalismus zu verstehen, der schnell sich neu definieren mußte wegen ihrer Ablehnung durch die Mehrheit der rumänischen Elite, die weiter auf die Nation als zentrales Element des Staates ausharrte (id.). Aber seine Ideen zur Neudefinition der Identität der Ungarn in Siebenbürgen hat bis heute *Auswirkungen*.

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# NATIONALIZATION AS A DISTINCT URBAN PROCESS: STATE REMAKING, CLASS CHANGES AND THEIR SPATIAL EXPRESSION

## 1. INTRODUCTION: NATIONALIZATION AND URBAN SOCIOLOGY THEORY

In the late 1940s and early 1950s, the Romanian state confiscated a large number of privately owned houses and apartments. Nationalization meant the confiscation of about a quarter of all dwellings in Bucharest. This vast project aimed at eliminating housing inequalities among the urban population and produced long-lasting effects on the way urban life was subsequently lived.

This paper aims to describe how this rather unique historical process might inform theories of urban sociology. I situate nationalization and globalization in the same theoretical debate concerning the relation between the regime of accumulation and social organization of cities<sup>1</sup> (Harvey 1982; Sasken 1991; 2000). I import this same type of analysis for the political economy of state-socialism. What effects did the nationalization of capital goods (factories, trade, production facilities) in the Romanian economy have on the city, its classes and its buildings? Nationalization, I suggest, represents a specific urban process, distinct from suburbanization and gentrification. It concentrated the population by raising the rate of occupancy, bringing together people that formerly populated different geographic areas of the city. It also shrank residential space by increasing the share of office space for state bureaucracies. It also helped create a new class of privileged urban residents.

The effects of the global circulation of capital on the geography of housing and social classes have been well documented in the case of some cities. The best-known example is that of New York City (Sassen 2001, Sites 2003). The decentralization of production and the

concentration of the managerial classes and functions in selected, “global” cities such as New York (but also London or Tokyo) led to gentrification and class segregation of formerly integrated neighborhoods, or whatever remained integrated after suburbanization. Along with the growth of transnational corporate classes in such cities, the number of temporary, badly paid, casual jobs increased. Such cities responded less than before to the national states where they were located and more to larger, transnational entities. With increased flows of capital and people, they also witnessed the globalization of property markets. Seeking profit opportunities, international real estate firms built high class, “Grade A” office buildings, luxury condominium housing or rental housing or they purchased vacant suburban tracts of land, both for planning and for speculation (Olds 2001:23-24).

Some of the language and the assumptions used in this analysis are inspired by urban sociology, and particularly theories of urban political economy. According to this body of theory, the key processes that shape urban space reside in the division of labor of the international economy, the accumulation and concentration of capital and power, the relations between social classes, and the role of the state in the administration of a stable social order (Flanagan 1993:74). Such theories generally regard the built environment as an expression of the search for profit in capitalist economies. The owners of capital seek new opportunities to invest; sometimes these are found in the real estate industry. They also regard cities as physical extensions of market factors supplemented by state policy. As John Walton put it, “What we see and reify as the city is a physical network of factories, offices, schools, and roads, all hitched to the primary function of accumulating capital and all vulnerable to decay understood as devaluation (Walton 1993:308).” In other words, if one wants to understand the evolution of cities, one needs to pay attention to national and international markets, state formation and the circulation of capital.

Such an approach is useful for avoiding a “building by building” history of Bucharest. Existing histories are usually chronological, rather than structural, and focus not on districts nor the urban population, but on the construction of landmark buildings such as churches, inns, palaces, outstandingly beautiful houses, and landmark buildings hosting state institutions (*Clădirea CEC, Clădirea Poștei, Calea Victoriei, Casa Poporului*, etc.). As they rarely discuss the housing conditions of the majority of the population, they may be regarded as socially distorted.



This paper has the following structure. First, I will describe briefly the logic of nationalization, in order to have some basic context elements that would allow a judgment of the sociological significance of this process. Then I will describe two sets of social relations deeply transformed by nationalization. The first refers to relations between social classes and the state, a new set of engagements that transformed the class geography of the city. The second is focused on the relations between state expansion, capital centralization and the parasitism of the state institutions on the residential space. In the remainder of the paper, I will describe how the intervention of the state in the domestic domain produced new forms of governmentality and an increased power to dominate on the part of the socialist state.

## **2. HOUSING NATIONALIZATION 1945-1955: A SHORT OVERVIEW**

Let me offer some brief elements about the way that nationalization happened during those years, before I turn to the question that I posed in the introduction. Basically, nationalization had two components. The first was the elimination of the rent market, by the creation of strict tenancy policies and the creation of administrative bodies aimed to allocate tenants to specific houses. The second was outright confiscation, which was carried out in a rather simplified and arbitrary manner.<sup>2</sup> The first component was related to the measures aimed regulate the use rights over housing.

Controlling access to residential space answered two different problems: (1) the particular historical moment of the post-war situation and (2) inequitable conditions in the realm of housing. The first problem was historically contingent and had to do with housing shortage, to be expected immediately after a war, especially in a period of rapid industrialization. Some buildings were destroyed or damaged during World War II. The situation was made worse by the post-war migration of about 200,000 persons into Bucharest within four to five years. Many individuals and families from the countryside moved to Bucharest in order to find jobs and to take advantage of new employment opportunities in industry, state institutions and political organizations. The second problem had to do with the creation of socialism in housing, i.e. elimination of the rent

market, a more balanced distribution of residential space among different classes from the city, and so on.

Between 1945 and 1948 there were two important tenancy policies. First there was the requisition of buildings from private owners.<sup>3</sup> Requisition was legislated in 1945 and it aimed to create room for both persons and institutions. In regard to persons, priority was given to people whose houses had been demolished during the war, people who had been deported for “antifascist activities” (i.e. the Jewish population), people who had been evicted because of requisition, and public officials transferred because of their job. If somebody’s home was requisitioned for bringing in tenants, she or he was allowed to keep two rooms, and an additional room/person for each member of the family. If, however, the home was requisitioned for an institution, then the family had to be evicted altogether.

These were the legal specifications, but they were probably not fully respected. The number of houses requisitioned for institutions outnumbered the houses requisitioned for housing individuals and families. Moreover, as I will show below, the number of persons entitled to occupy such buildings according to the official criteria was small compared with those of powerful individuals (e.g., Ministry of Interior officers).

The second important policy was the automatic extension of leasing contracts, a measure implemented during the war.<sup>4</sup> This policy was not a novelty, since it resembled policies implemented after the unification at the end of the First World War in 1918. What was new, however, was the modification of the power relations between tenants and landowners. The legislation of 1946 granted decision-making power over the budget of maintenance costs to all residents, regardless of whether they were tenants or landlords.<sup>5</sup> After 1948, however, the state actions were no longer limited to renewing the existing tenancy contracts. The state began to pressure landlords and home-owners to accept tenants nominated by various institutions. From regulatory and arbitrating policies that established the relations between tenants and landowners, the state moved on to a redistribution function. This initiative was made possible by a census carried out in December 1948, which offered data about the number of homes and apartments. Possessing this knowledge, the state could establish norms about housing and assign persons to specific locations.

This action unfolded through an institution called the “Rental Authority.”<sup>6</sup> It existed between 1948 and 1951 and its responsibility was to identify and distribute access to buildings that were “under-occupied”

by their owners. After these two decrees, as one internal report of MGCIL put it, "the landowner no longer uses the available space according to his own will; the Rental Authority is the one who oversees its use for satisfying the needs of the workers".<sup>7</sup> In other words, the families who had too much private space had to share it with persons selected by this Authority.

In 1949, the Rental Authority had 24 offices in Bucharest and 107 in the rest of the country. These were subordinated to both the Ministry of Interior and the civil authority of MGCIL. A few months after this authority was created, the government passed another decree that established the maximal residential space to which each citizen was entitled<sup>8</sup> at 8 m<sup>2</sup>/person. This followed the Soviet housing policy of 1941 word for word.<sup>9</sup> The direct implication of this policy was that those individuals and families who had more space, usually from the former privileged classes and landlords, had to make it available for tenants. Combining the findings of the 1948 census with the new residential norm, MGCIL found that of 350,000 families living in Bucharest at that moment, 37% (i.e. 130,000 families) lived in "difficult conditions, with 4 to 10 persons in a room; 51% occupied the legal space, while 12% used more space than was legally admitted" (MGCIL, 81/1951).<sup>10</sup>

The actions of the Rental Authority were only temporary palliatives to the housing shortage. Its job was made worse by the expansion of state institutions into residential space (a process discussed later on in this paper) and by the demolition of some insalubrious houses (about 2% of the existing residential space). According to these archives, within only one year (1949) the average surface/inhabitant in Bucharest decreased from 7.78 square meters to 6.33 square meters.<sup>11</sup> The housing situation was further regulated in 1950, when the state pushed further its intervention and regulation of the domestic space.

The second dimension of the nationalization policies consisted of outright confiscation. In 1950, the state pursued systematic nationalization (decree 92/1950), targeting not undesirable groups, but housing inequalities in general. In a meeting of the Ministry of Interior, nationalization was described as the last important class battle. An official from that meeting declared that "housing is the site where the enemy has been hiding and it is here that the fight must be organized in a serious manner." After the nationalization of industry,<sup>12</sup> large agricultural estates,<sup>13</sup> trade,<sup>14</sup> medical institutions,<sup>15</sup> drug stores,<sup>16</sup> movie theatres,<sup>17</sup>

private and communal forests, gold and any foreign currency,<sup>18</sup> the housing decree represented the last important act of expropriation by the socialist state of the properties owned by private producers. Compared with the 1945-1950 isolated confiscation of property from political convicts, Decree 92/1950 was a systematic coming to terms of the socialist state with the private ownership of housing. It was more important numerically than all the other punitive and nationalization measures altogether. After this confiscation, no less than 22% of the existing apartments and houses in urban Romania were nationalized. This affected 138,000 apartments, half in Bucharest, half in the rest of the country.

The explanatory statement that accompanied the decree stated that nationalization was necessary in order to “withhold from the hands of the exploiters an important means of exploitation.”<sup>19</sup> The philosophy of this decree was based on class categorization as the source of rights over existing private properties, but as anyone could say, establishing to what class one belongs is not an easy task. Social scientists have been debating this for decades, taking into account ownership, prestige, power, education, occupation, etc. For the socialist state, however, classification was simpler than that: it created a large number of “housing exploiters” by simplifying the life of those people. While in theory it might be easy to determine who exploits houses, in practice, especially when one needs to take practical action, things are far from black and white. Landlords, tenants and even state officials (Pătrășcanu 1947) knew that many house owners were not particularly rich. In order to get to draft lists with nationalizable house, the officials had to simplify dynamic social practices associated with housing construction and ownership into two sharply define categories: “exploiters” and “non-exploiters.” An article from that period noted “When it came to housing, in the past, the demarcation line between exploiters and exploited was clear, sharply defined, as daylight. [...]”<sup>20</sup>

To many people from that period, this is far from representing reality. State simplifications, as James C. Scott observed,

are basic givens of modern statecraft, [but they are] rather like abridged maps. They did not successfully represent the actual activity of the society they depicted, nor were they intended to; they represented only that slice of it that interested the official observer. They were, moreover, not just maps. Rather, they were maps that, when allied with state power, would enable much of the reality they depicted to be remade (Scott 1998:3).

Through its censuses and measurements, as well as its political will and power to transform inequalities, the state could be said to have created classes out of more complex social situations. As Pierre Bourdieu claims, the very attempt to define classifications and to describe classes is an exercise of power and a fundamental form of class struggle itself: "The power of imposing a vision of divisions, that is, the power of making visible and explicit social divisions that are implicit, is the political power par excellence: it is the power to make groups, to manipulate the objective structure of society" (1990:138). As much of the state activities consist in the management of taxonomies (Douglas 1986), the efforts to classify landlords and house owners into discrete categories made the state itself a site of class struggle (Poulanzas 1978; Verdery 2003). The definitions with which it operated, the factors it left out and the temporality it assumed, made the state the vehicle and the agent of creation of new forms of social divisions and residential arrangements.

How did the state simplify the social reality of housing? More than anything else, state socialist officials saw it in terms of *numbers* of apartments and of rooms. This brought about three simplifications: (1) seeing production and profit instead of reproduction and the pursuit of family continuity; (2) reducing class to size of buildings; (3) mistaking owners' identities – seeing individuals, instead of kin networks. The first one had to do with the radical divorce between what many people thought of themselves and what the state told them they were doing.

For most landlords and owners, houses meant primarily family reproduction across generations. The state stripped houses of this temporal regime, seeing only accumulation and pursuit of profit. According to my calculations, a little over 50% of the nationalized houses belonged to "serendipitous entrepreneurs," i.e. persons or families who happened to have some extra space at some point in their life, while the rest could have been considered active entrepreneurs. Before communism, such families pursued the accumulation of family space for their children, rather than the pursuit of profit. The evidence that I found indicated that owners and small landlords saw their houses in terms of consumption and family continuity rather than as means to derive rent, as the state did. Secondly, one could say that nationalization reduced landlordship to ownership (and thus the inferring of the exploitative character of the latter), through the number of rooms/apartments possessed. The larger the number of rooms, the more exploitation state officials saw.

Finally, a third simplification used in establishing housing classes and exploiters was that the state judged ownership to be exclusively *individual*, although there were networks of relatives rather than nuclear families who lived together in such homes. Moreover, defining real estate possession as individual ownership of houses (i.e. taking into account only the legal documents, rather than the much more complex reality of living and sharing resources in order to construct a house) had the effect of freezing the developmental phase of the domestic cycle into a “class” status.

The state suspended domestic time. For example, if somebody had just married and bought a house, therefore becoming able to rent out the surplus space, s/he was classified as an “exploiter.” If another couple living in a similar house had three married children and therefore no or few tenants, they may have been exempt from nationalization. To put it simply, it was a blessing for the owners to be at the demographic peak of the domestic group at the moment of nationalization, just as it was devastating to have fewer members than the house was designed to accommodate. To give an example, one former owner said that, at least when the Rental Authority was initially created, they managed to avoid tenants, because a relatively friendly bureaucrat from the Rental Authority office suggested to his father that “You should be more!” The bureaucrat meant that as a family, and the remark prompted his father to bring a cousin’s family to live in their house.<sup>21</sup>

Above I described the structural logic of nationalization, i.e., the accumulation of houses by the state. Nationalization took a particular form in Bucharest. As it was the main economic and administrative center of Romania, right after World War II Bucharest was confronted with more overcrowding and population mobility than the rest of the country. Suddenly, the existing buildings had to house more persons than they had housed before nationalization. How did that happen, and with what effects on the class geography of the city?

### **3. SOCIAL CLASSES AND THE STATE**

The urban processes that developed in Western capitalist cities since the late 1940s transformed them from highly concentrated and centralized agglomerations into scattered, decentralized metropolitan areas. During that same period, just the opposite was happening in the cities of the

newly created socialist states. Nationalization led to a higher concentration of residents in existing housing units. The families who lost their homes usually had more residential space for their personal use than other residents of Bucharest.<sup>22</sup> New families or individuals were sent by the state to occupy such apartments.

The regulatory process was quite important: in Bucharest alone, within only two years (1949 and 1950), 88,830 tenants (individuals or families) who distributed into 116,219 rooms (out of a total of 686,970 rooms in Bucharest). This meant that 17% of all the housing space available in Bucharest had been reconfigured through state intervention.<sup>23</sup> This happened before nationalization; after that, I think the number easily surpassed 25% of the entire housing space. In terms of the distribution of social classes, nationalization desegregated, helped create a new urban gentry and relocated former privileged groups to less favorable conditions. I will discuss these trends in this order.

Systematic data on the agglomeration of new tenants into the space of families that lost their houses is not available. Based on a document of MGCIL from October 1950,<sup>24</sup> and on my interviews, I have the impression that the Rental Authority was granting a room per tenant. The tenants might have been an individual, or an entire family. Nationalization transformed apartments and houses with a diversified functional division of space into rooming houses.<sup>25</sup> In that document, the Ministry of Defense required the eviction of residents from 6 large buildings that contained 51 apartments. As they were situated in very close proximity to that institution, the request was justified on grounds of security. The Ministry of Defense wanted to replace the existing tenants with officers and their families. The request was granted and the Rental Authority provided the list with the residents who lived there at that moment. Let me discuss next the particulars of their situation.

What is striking about the distribution of rooms from the list is the sharing of apartments by persons from different social classes, as judged by the profession of the occupants. Almost all the apartments whose composition is listed contained families or individuals having high professional status (engineers, professors, doctors, army officers, etc) living together with workers, drivers, tailors and even persons with low social status (janitors, unemployed, students). Take, for instance, the case of an apartment with three rooms and a service room, which was occupied by a university professor and his wife, by a pensioner and her/his mother, by a mechanic and his wife (a hotel cleaner) and by a worker and his

unemployed wife. These groups of persons were not related in any obvious way. It is safe to assume that one of them owned the apartment, the family of either the university professor or the pensioner, and that the rest were brought in by the Rental Authority.

Except for the eight efficiency apartments, all others contain persons of unequal social status. In those tables, janitors share space with former army generals or office workers, students live with doctors, former traders live with workers, policemen live with chefs and so on. Social integration was achieved also through the increase of density of living in the existing, nationalized apartments. It rose not only because in multiple room apartments each family received one room, but also because hallways were also redesigned and used for living. I found some evidence that some owners resisted this, but the enforcement of such regulations did not leave much room for action. With minor adaptations such as constructing thin walls, hallways were transformed into temporary rooms. Other times, several single persons – especially the elderly – were brought to live in rooms that had a very large surface area. They would divide the room using blankets or bed-sheets.

While the mixing of population through geographical concentration was achieved through the redistribution of housing space by the Rental Authority, another process happened during those years. Along with class de-segregation in respect to housing, a new class of privileged residents also formed. There were two venues leading to the formation of this new urban gentry: one was spontaneous and carried out from below by powerful individuals; the other came from above and was organized by state institutions. First, I have found significant evidence showing that many state employees, especially those working for the Ministry of Interior (police and political police), seized this opportunity in order to acquire very good housing. Many times this happened spontaneously, without any administrative decision on the part of the authorities that regulated access to housing. Such spontaneous actions often produced conflicts between different state institutions. A report from 1951 said that there were persons who took the liberty to enter rooms made available by evictions, against the explicit directions of the Rental Authority.<sup>26</sup> The report goes on to say,

Most unauthorized occupancies are provoked by the employees of the Ministry of Interior [and of] the Ministry of the Armed Forces. [...] Illegal access to housing has become an ordinary strategy for some citizens [.]



Part of them are entitled to receive such apartments; but most of them moved from good to better housing conditions.

In the same report, the Rental Authority also expressed its powerlessness against such employees of the Ministry of Interior who had devised a particular bureaucratic trick in order to avoid leaving those apartments. In order to obtain eviction orders, one needed clear orders from the Attorney General's Office. But such orders could only be issued once the illegal tenants had received residency change approvals from the Ministry of Interior. They simply postponed getting such orders indefinitely.

Second, the formation of the group of well-located residents was also favored through the allocation of confiscated residential space by the state. Some data about the distribution of apartments in 1954 is particularly revealing in this sense. This may have been a turning point in the way these houses were appropriated and used, because the state, through MGCIL, began to evict some of its own institutions from illegally occupied buildings. After a first round of evictions took place, the space thus made available was allocated to families that requested it.

The data depict the situation at the level of each district of Bucharest, using the justification of allocation as a principle of classification. I grouped the reasons given there into three categories (see Table 1). The first group, which may be said to be the consequence of state expansion, included the requests of those transferred to their new employment in Bucharest and the requests of state institutions. The second group of requests was related to social welfare concerns: marriage formation, substandard housing, demolitions, tuberculosis, etc. The third group, which contained the ambiguous but fitting motivation of "various reasons," was due to intervention "from above," i.e., from ministries and Party organizations who requested houses for their personnel.

**Table 1. Housing requests granted in 1954, by the type of justification**

Requests by the logic of distribution	Justification of the request	Number of requests granted	% of Total requests (N =2609)	% of Total requests (N =2609)
<b>State Apparatus Expansion</b> 696	Job related transfers	654	26%	
	Institutions asking for housing	42	2%	<b>28%</b>
<b>Social welfare</b> 882	Divorced	31	1%	
	Married	62	2%	
	Demolished	61	2%	
	Overcrowding	299	12%	<b>32%</b>
	Insalubrious	269	10%	
	Tuberculosis	57	2%	
<b>New Class Formation</b> 1029	Evicted	103	3%	
	"Various reasons" [sic]	1029	40%	<b>40%</b>

**Source:** MGCIL, File 23/1954, p. 21.

Grouping them by their frequency, one may notice that the heaviest weight was the logic of new class formation, followed by social welfare and also the logic of state apparatus expansion.

Other evidence suggests that new class formation was given priority over social welfare considerations. In fact, there seemed to be a constant pressure in this regard. For instance, the minutes of Ministry meetings register the statement of a speaker who, categorizing the housing requests received, observed that many persons "request housing exchange: the houses of some comrades are very small for the responsibilities that they have."<sup>27</sup> Similarly, another participant noted, "We received very many requests made by the institutions on behalf of their employees. Too much interference was created." Part of the new class were selected artists who managed to stay afloat after the banning of an important number of

intellectuals. One of them, for instance, although occupying two efficiency apartments, asked for an apartment where the sun would shine from sunrise to sunset. The committee granted that, only to learn that it was not good enough, because the stairway was too tight and his furniture would have gotten scratched.

The logics outlined in the table above were opposing each other. To begin with, the way allocation was carried out diverged from the principles of nationalization, i.e., the elimination of housing exploitation. The state could not claim that it confiscated houses in order to give them to a new Communist privileged class, because its moral authority would have been even more seriously damaged.

The new criteria of housing allocation were, in theory, organized around the cult of labor, which should have replaced wealth as the main factor for distributing persons in the city. The criteria for allocating space privileged "labor" and "need." Priority was to be given to those transferred to the city because of employment (*transferați în interes de serviciu*) and to Stakhanovites, who had distinguished themselves in production activities (*spărgătorii de normă*). "Job-related transfers" was not a neutral category either, since as far as some people who lived in that period told me, it represented the military (Army or Political Police) and officialdom.

The next two criteria in terms of importance were inadequate housing (either insalubrious or overcrowded homes) and the situation of newlyweds without a separate house. The practice of allocating houses, however, differed from the theory. As one may notice from the table presented above, social welfare issues were not addressed as much as initially stated. Aside from that, there were tensions between the social welfare pressure and each of the two other logics. In the same file (23/1954), the report mentions that the allocation committee had, at one point, 300 apartments ready to be distributed. After reviewing 7,000 requests, it selected 1,000 for fieldwork investigations and decided on the 300 winners. Once selected, however, the committee had to readjust them so as to accommodate 170 requests (out of 257) pushed forth by the Municipal Council and other central state institutions. Similarly, as I will describe later on in the next section, there were strong conflicts between the welfare pressure and the pressure of state institutions that emerged after 1945. The Ministry wanted to evict these institutions in order to return the buildings to their initial function as residences.

After 1949, the Rental Authority had to relocate to the periphery of cities the former privileged classes, those who did not work, and the “enemies of the people.” I did not find comprehensive data on the scale of such relocations, but I do have some anecdotal evidence from interviews. In 1949, an explicit task of the Rental Authority was to create lists of the former exploiters and the people who were not working (MGCIL, file 60/1949). The directive was that, based on these lists, their housing space had to be reduced by bringing in tenants or they even had to be relocated to the periphery or to smaller cities where there was less demand for space (cf. MGCIL, file 27/1950).<sup>28</sup> Later on, in those directives reaffirmed that the “spirit of the class struggle should prevail from now on, in the sense that the former privileged classes, those who do not work and the enemies of the regime should be removed to the peripheries.”

My impression is that relocations to the periphery were not carried out on a large scale in Bucharest. Rather, the former privileged families circulated inside their former space, especially those who lived in villas. Many modernist villas had a sharp division of space by the type of activity and by the different periods of the day. Thus, the basement contained the support facilities (e.g. heating), the ground floor was designed for the daytime activities, while the upper floor was intended for the dormitory rooms. When the state nationalized those houses and apartment buildings, the former owners received the least attractive spaces (i.e. the basements and the attics), while the new tenants received the rest of the apartment or one room per family. Therefore, the spatial scope of relocation was vertical, rather than horizontal: many times the groups who became vulnerable after the Communist take-over remained in the same buildings, but in marginal dwelling spaces. I will move next to the description of changes on the ground, describing the effects of these legislation changes on the class geography of the city and on the transformations of the state.

#### **4. STATE EXPANSION AND ITS PARASITISM ON RESIDENTIAL SPACE**

In a process that Max Weber (1946:209-211) described as the “quantitative” expansion of the state apparatus, the state became physically bigger after the communist takeover both in size and in institutional complexity. Within only five years, between 1945 and 1950, the new socialist state added many new functions. These included the

administration of the capital acquired through the confiscation of private wealth (land, factories, manufactures, trade), the control of the population through increased surveillance and the overproduction of political institutions. Whereas before nationalization each factory had its own independent headquarters, the mechanism of central planning required new upper managerial levels to coordinate such formerly distinct production entities. These new administrative and managerial segments of the state had to be housed within the existing space. Ideally, they should have been concentrated in larger office buildings than existed at that moment, but their number was not significant.

Construction activity during these years was slow. These new segments of the state appropriated in a parasitical way the buildings accumulated before 1950, rather than constructing their own. The state requisitioned residential buildings in order to house the newly established managerial segments, Communist organizations and “popular” political associations, as well as for the Soviet Army that occupied Bucharest in 1944. According to the official figures (see Table 2) and reports, the new segments of the state were housed exclusively through evictions and subsequent transformation of the former residential space into office buildings.<sup>29</sup>

**Table 2. Residential space, office space and residential density in Bucharest, 1948-1951 (IN SQUARE METERS)**

Year	Surface area		Population	Density (sqm/person)	Necessary space according to the 8sqm/person norm
	Residential	Office			
1948	8,121,359	2,199,242	1,041,807	7.78	213,097
1949	7,950,651	2,389,950	1,091,807	7.26	803,805
1950	6,972,251	3,342,400	1,101,987	6.33	1,836,205
1951	6,688,451	3,632,200	1,130,807	5.91	2,359,005

**Source:** MGCIL, File 527/1950,  *Direcția Industriei Locale*, p. 55.

These figures show the reduction of residential space and the expansion of state institutions. As one may see from this table, nationalization significantly increased the density of the population. An internal report from 1950 mentioned that this conversion was accompanied by the

unlicensed modification and demolition of built space (MGCIL 81/1951). To give an example, in one residential building turned into office space, walls that separating apartments were broken down and the kitchen and WC were turned into offices (MGCIL 23/1954). According to that source, such transformations not only shrank more and more residential space, but they also threatened the very stability of buildings. The report estimated that when such a conversion took place, no less than 30% of the built space became unusable. The condition of buildings worsened quite quickly under such conditions, so state institutions had to move immediately to other buildings. In another report (dated 1953), state institutions that claimed office space were told to try to refurbish the buildings that were not being used because of their state of disrepair and then to move there (MGCIL 71/1953).<sup>30</sup>

How did these evictions take place? In a memoir of those years, the author of the above report described how Soviet soldiers and officers dressed in civilian clothes requisitioned apartments, buildings and even entire neighborhoods. Officers brought over their families from Russia and were looking for comfortable residencies. People had to leave their homes within 24 hours and were only allowed to take a single piece of luggage with strictly necessary belongings (Georgescu 1999[1951]:181). The rest of their possessions remained in the apartments and houses, sometimes to the present day. For instance, in a case presented in the media, the last foreign affairs minister of the Communist government lived in a requisitioned apartment that was reclaimed after 1989. The former owner declared that whatever his uncle had left there – carpets, paintings, the piano and about other 40 items – had been used by the tenants that occupied the apartment.

Unlike spontaneous evictions, nationalization or punitive policies, requisitions seemed to have been very meticulous. The commissions produced lists with the objects found in the house; they had to be signed by the owners and by the commission members. These procedures seem to have been taken seriously. For instance, in a requisition case, the commission stayed from late at night through the morning to catalog about 2,000 books that had existed in that apartment (Georgescu 1999[1951]:226). I managed to acquire several house inventories produced during the requisitions. What is striking about them is the fact that they are extremely detailed, listing objects found inside the houses that have little value (e.g. electric bulbs, lingerie) side by side with more valuable items (e.g. furniture).

In the case of requisitioned apartments and buildings, ownership was not formally canceled. The problem was that the owners could not return to these houses to the present day, because the state constantly introduced new tenants (institutions or families). Years after the requisition, the state would sometimes pass decrees declaring that a certain requisitioned building or group of buildings had become state property. The owners could not learn about this, because such decrees were not published. It was just an improvisation aimed at bringing some juridical coherence to something that was already in full effect from the moment of requisition. As a matter of fact, it emerged after 1990 that a decree had been passed in mid-1950s (511/1955) stating that any goods requisitioned up to that date were to be considered state property (cf. Stănescu 1997:188).

Along with the newly created political organizations, the older administrative institutions of the state evicted people from entire buildings that had been designed and used as residential space in order to turn them into office space. After such evictions, the institutions often asked for eviction of nearby buildings in order create kindergartens, cafeterias and more offices, or to insure security. In an executive meeting of the Housing Division of the newly created MGCIL, one official mentioned that 400 buildings containing 5,000 apartments had been appropriated by different state institutions and political organizations. All these apartments were initially used as housing for families.

Since this space was not designed for office use, the interior design of apartment space was an obstacle to proper functioning. Among other things, this space constraint produced pronounced variation in the density of office workers. Some institutions occupied as little as three m<sup>2</sup>/person, while others had 26 m<sup>2</sup>/person. Along with the situations when the state institutions really needed that space for its daily work, there were also cases when the space was not used at all. For instance, in the same meeting one official singled out the case of an allegedly peasant political organization (*Frontul Plugarilor*, Ploughmen's Front) that occupied 16 buildings. The official emphasized the absurdity of the fact that an agriculture-related association occupied so much built space in the city. Another example included the eviction of an entire apartment building to create a club for employees of the Ministry of Interior.

Upon such conversions, the new occupants usually altered the organization of buildings substantially. Kitchens, for instance were turned into office space and smaller rooms (e.g. dorms) were merged by tearing down the separating walls. To describe the occupation of the housing

space by the state institutions as an invasion is more than just a metaphor. It was done in a chaotic manner. It was not an all-out strategy from above, but rather the sum of independent actions by different expansion centers acting from below. Throughout the documents of 1948, 1949, 1950, the “center” expressed its irritation that certain institutions and individuals used evictions without the approval of the Ministry of Interior and of the MGCIL.

After 1952, MGCIL attempted to gain more leverage over the allocations of confiscated houses. In 1952 they stated that any allocation of state owned office or residential space was legitimate only with the approval of the Ministry.<sup>31</sup> In late 1953, they tried to reconvert these buildings to their initial function, arguing that state institutions should build their own office space because it was much cheaper to build office buildings than apartments. The Government passed a nominal list of the institutions that should leave specific buildings, although this too created problems of insubordination. Several institutions were supposed to leave approximately 88,000 square meters of office space occupied abusively in former residential space. This represented a mere 2.2% of the total office space occupied by the state, but even under these circumstances state institutions resisted eviction.

After several visits aimed to see if the orders had been observed, the officials of the Ministry noted that while some buildings had not been modified by their tenants, others had undergone substantial transformations of interior space. One such institution that had resisted eviction arguing that it had installed gas heating equipment using its own funds occupied two large apartment buildings, which, according to the MGCIL officials, could have housed a large number of sizeable families. One of them had 19 rooms, two hallways, three closets, a kitchen, a bath-room and two storage areas. According to the MGCIL officials it could have housed ten sizeable families after the state institution left. Another, composed of 30 room, five hallways, and four closets, could have been occupied by 12 families.

The report found that most institutions did not comply with the eviction order and that MGCIL informed the Prosecutor Office of Bucharest in order to let them know that the legislation was not being respected. Another report (File 22/1955) declared that faced with increased pressure to return the office space to its initial function, some institutions restricted their office space, but instead of “handing” it over to the Ministry, decided to allocate it to its own top employees. The Ministry protested that such



space allocation was illegal: freed space was to be allocated both to people in difficult social situations and to members of the new elite (employees of the different state institution and artists).

The report mentions that the ministry received 5,000 housing requests, which represented the entire volume registered at the district level throughout Bucharest in 1952. Out of these 5,000, 1,900 were to be verified on the ground by employees of the ministry. At the date when the report was written, 534 requests had been verified through fieldwork. They approved 357 and rejected 117. There was some justification given for why these requests were rejected. Some of the claimants lived in acceptable conditions, by the standards of the day, while others under-declared the space they occupied. There was also the case of an "artist" who, trying to help some friends, exchanged her apartment for a smaller and less comfortable one because she heard that people like her were about to receive good apartments.

## 5. GOVERNMENTALITY AND HOUSES

Another effect of nationalization had to do with governmentality (Foucault 1991), particularly in reference to the new administration of domestic space. The scope of nationalization was not limited to the relocation of individuals and families in the existing residential space. Nationalization as an urban process increased the presence of the state not only in the geography of the city, but also in its domestic spaces. That by itself was political and purposive. David Harvey (2003) described that when Napoleon III and Baron Hausmann built the large boulevards in Paris, one of their goals was to avoid the illegibility of the old city, whose small and random streets had been used in the past by revolutionary groups. Similarly, the Romanian Ministry of Interior saw in the new reorganization of houses and of Bucharest a chance to increase its control over the population. I analyze the domestic space within an urban framework, precisely to make the point that the infrastructural power of the state, i.e., "the power of the state to penetrate and centrally co-ordinate the activities of civil society through its own infrastructure" (Mann 1994[1985], 334) increased in that period and that the more institutionally oriented analysis should pay greater attention to everyday life. That might be a useful way to reconceptualize the institutions themselves. Michel Foucault (1991) distinguished between two forms of power and politics

in the modern states. He differentiated between sovereignty, concerned with territory, legitimacy and obedience to law; and disciplines, prisons, schools, armies, hospitals, administration, which constitute governmentality, i.e. a less conspicuous form of surveillance and control of society formalized as statistics and carried out in a more subtle way.

The scope of the housing reforms of the late 1940's was a novelty for the Romanian state. Never before had the state inspected, gathered data, kept records and administered such a large number of apartments and persons.<sup>32</sup> The new socialist state's capacity to rule was substantially increased by the housing reforms. During those years, the state increased its presence in residential space, through inspections, censuses, imposition of tenants, and bookkeeping. The authorities of MGCIL were pressured by the Ministry of Interior, with whom they had close interaction, to keep detailed evidence of the population's movements. One may argue that housing reform provided a key support in helping the repressive state apparatus to carry out its mission.

In a meeting with the Ministry of Interior officials, the number two top official of that institution,<sup>33</sup> lamenting the fact that the housing census data was not adequate and that the follow-up bookkeeping had been neglected, expressed his interest in the activity of the Rental Authority. The Ministry of Interior (i.e. the Police), he said, could have benefited from this in a way similar to that of Soviet authorities: "One needed to keep adequate records for each building, in order to know everyone who lives there." He presented as an ideal situation what he saw in Moscow during one official visit, explaining to the other members of the meeting,

Our Soviet counterpart explained that you go to the Militia and tell them "I am looking for a comrade who came here in 1934 or, let's say, 1920." You know that he is in Moscow and you know his name, but you do not know more. After 2-3 hours, if you go back [to them], they give you the exact address and even the name of the neighbors. They've got to be so good using scientific methods in order to know where the citizen lives. The file tells you where each citizen comes from and what is going on with him.

The activity of the Rental Authority (and from 1950 the administration of nationalized houses) also enabled the state to enter, survey and control the housing of persons.

One testimony from that period (Georgescu 1999[1951]) describes a long period of hiding from state officials who were searching for her. A

very intelligent person judging by her memoirs, she had been the secretary of the last non-Communist Prime Minister (1945-1946). She became a fugitive after the Communist Party fully seized power at the end of 1946. For about 3 years, her friends had been taken turns hiding her in their homes. Here is how she described the troubles that the creation of the Rental Authority produced for her attempt to continue her underground life:

For two months I have been switching houses. [Our] group had to break up. Almost all the addresses have been exhausted. I cannot sleep for more than one night in the same place. Marc does not know any longer where to send us. In the city there is a rumor that a study has been carried out in order to create the Rental Authority. The fact is that this projected office has already begun its existence; there are commissions that come to measure the residential space of each house. [They allocate] a room for a two-member family, two-rooms for more sizeable families, and they appoint co-residents who come to share the apartment with you starting that very evening. Another decree, already made official, orders landowners and owners to forward to the office the full list of the persons whom they host, together with their biographies [.] The decree contains sanctions that may be applied for those who will not comply. *Under such circumstances it becomes almost impossible to hide anymore* (Georgescu 1999[1951]: 231, my emphasis).

This testimony shows that the domination of the socialist state was created also through the charting and administration of the domestic domain. Prior to the housing reforms of the late 1940s, the domestic domain was less exposed to state routines. Related to this obsession with residential tracking, the Ministry of Internal Affairs decided in 1949 “to put an end to the anarchy of identity proofs.” From a statist point of view, the creation of identical citizens through papers that documented identity was, indeed, lagging behind. Take, for instance, the legal ways to establish the identity of an individual about 40 years before nationalization. In order to sign a housing leasing contract, the parts could certify their identity in no less than seven ways (cf. Demetriu 1909): (1) identification by a judge; (2) identification by a lawyer; (3) identification by two witnesses trusted by a judge; (4) an identity ticket (*bilet de identitate*) issued by the police or Local Council where the individuals had their legal residence; (5) a voter card accompanied with the receipts for the current year;<sup>34</sup> (6) a passport, in the case of foreign citizens; or (7) a letter issued by the local authority

or by the Police. A decree from 1949<sup>35</sup> asked the citizens to bring (1) their birth certificate; (2) evidence that that person had registered with the Population Bureau; (3) an Army Service book and, for women, (4) marriage registry evidence. The household head had to announce to police stations any person who sought join his/her residential space. The law also specified prison terms for those who failed to obtain new IDs. If the household head did not declare that he received a person without the new ID forms within three hours, she or he could go to jail and pay a substantial fine. According to same witness just mentioned above, identity papers were checked in the main public transportation sites, such as bus or train stations. That way, the government could more easily catch missing persons (Georgescu 1999[1951]: 195).

Along with new identity papers, another surveillance method was the creation of the office of street deputy, a kind of lay public administration recruited from among the population of residential communities. In a way they were similar to the neighborhood watch groups in the situations when they collaborate with the Police, with the important difference that street deputies were created from above (although the sources from that period present them as grass-roots). S/he was a contact person between the Party, Police and Municipal administration on the one hand, and individuals who inhabited a particular street on the other. Such local vigilantes existed not only in Romania, but also in China and Tanzania (cf. Abrahams 1996:45), Indonesia (after 1945), and possibly other places where the state attempted to intervene more strongly into everyday life. According to Roy Abrahams, in Tanzania, the Communist party created a "ten-house cell system, of sets of households with an elected leader and a set of local responsibilities for maintaining cooperation and good social order within party guidelines." Basically, street deputies were supposed to report how the public services to that part of the town might be improved, to make sure that public morality was respected, and to inform also on potentially outrageous events or comments. Officially, the street deputies were part of a larger hierarchical structure that was supposed to supplement the local municipal administration and to make the latter more efficient. Street deputies were elected from among "vanguard households and householders of each street[.] They will identify all the needs and will seek to solve them with local means, by mobilizing the citizens of their respective street" (PMB 2/1948). These were honorific, "voluntary" (unpaid) duties.

A socialist-realist reportage written in the early 1950s about Bucharest presents the street deputy as a strongly feminized, working-class, desexualized, motherly and ideal household keeper figure:

[Walking through the city,] I ran across a street deputy. A simple and withered woman. Her eyes still have a certain freshness. Their gaze shows that kindness and gentleness so characteristic of women who get old and who are pleased that they have raised many strong and good children. [...] She walks slowly and notices everything. [...] She is pulling out a notebook and begins to take notes in a visible hurry, but with hand movements that betray her unfamiliarity with writing. She gives the impression of a householder who inspects her house, the closets and the yard (Vălmaru 1954:103).

After the writer allegedly approached her, she told him, "I also walk around [when I have free time]. I walk and when I don't like something, I pull out the notebook and write down that over here one might build a daycare center, over there we should enlarge the street, a little down the road the pavement should be repaired." Street deputies were part of several higher-level committees. The "Householding Committees" contained street deputies, youth and women representatives and municipal "elected"<sup>36</sup> officials. In turn, these Householding committees were organized at the level of neighborhoods, boroughs and the city level.

While these might have been noble intentions, in addition to community welfare proposals, street deputies were also responsible for delivering names and addresses of "housing exploiters" compiled by the municipal authorities in order to implement nationalization. In cases of vigilantism, Roy Abrahams (1996:45) tells us, "slippage may, however, take place across the boundary between autonomy and state control." In this case too, in order to facilitate such neighborhood knowledge, the state granted highly arbitrary power to those who were embedded in the local relations of street cooperation and conflict. This personalization of power explains at least some of the cases in which some modest houses (by local standards) were confiscated, while other identical houses managed to evade confiscation.

That these were not neutral community leaders is demonstrated by the same testimony I quoted at some length above. In it Adrian Georgescu (the lawyer mentioned above as hiding) described that the new

administrators of state owned residential space and the neighborhood-municipal intermediaries (such as street deputies) were feared as potential spies. The same testimony mentioned above reads as follows: "The entire city is divided into spy areas. Building administrators have been created. Soon there will be apartment administrators. As nobody knows who are in fact [the administrators], everybody avoids everybody" (Georgescu 1999[1951], 198). Again, this proves an increased intervention of the state in the residential spaces. Along with the permanent fear that anybody could become a spy, the state became more present in the residential space through Police inspection and requisitions. The testimony just mentioned above said that late at night when somebody knocked on their door, she felt that "it could be only the Police, or, let's hope, the requisition commission" (Georgescu 1999[1951]:223).

Another strategy that helped the Party and the socialist state achieve domination with the help of nationalized houses was through blackmail and complicity. Five years after nationalization, a modification made to the initial nationalization decree was a curious intervention of the highest administrative level into the process of nationalization going on at the municipal level. The Council of Ministers could "add or modify" the lists of nationalized housing produced by the municipal levels of administration. Moreover, the same body could "decide to cancel the nationalization of any building or apartment."<sup>37</sup> No justification or formal criteria were offered for this top-down intervention.

Between 1955 and 1957 the government drafted lists with the persons who were to receive their property rights back. The list was stamped "top secret" and was issued by the cabinet of the Prime Minister Chivu Stoica to MGCIL. The list contains 785 entries, most of which refer to persons living in Bucharest. Several of them were famous scientists, actors and musicians. For instance, a top mathematician (Serban Tițeica) received an entire building, most likely the family house. A famous folk singer (Grigoraș Dinicu) received together with his wife two apartments. A member of the Romanian Academy (Ștefan Nicolau), received "the entire building" (probably an apartment house). Similarly, a scientist who later on became the president of the Romanian Academy (Miron Nicolescu) received "the entire building" back, whatever that meant. Others who received an apartment include famous pre-communist writers (Victor Eftimiu), artists (Luca and Maria Simion) or theatre actors (Jean Steriadi, Ion Făgărășanu, Constantin Notara, Aristide Demetriade). The vast majority of restituted properties were a single apartment or a family house.

Sometimes the documents state also “one apartment of their choice” from the building that was nationalized.<sup>38</sup> There are two cases in which the state returned three or four apartments. Ironically, this decree also specified very clear and much more advantageous conditions for the restitution than the legislation of the 1990s.<sup>39</sup> I mention this episode in relation to the new capacity of the state to dominate, because the logic of restitution was linked to the Party’s strategies to co-opt various intellectuals. Prestigious persons from the former regime who suffered because of the emergence of the communist party were won over to a certain extent through housing restitution.

## **6. CONCLUSIONS: NATIONALIZATION IN COMPARATIVE PERSPECTIVE**

Asking a question similar to that of urban scholars who research how the global circulation of capital changes cities, I attempted to describe how amassing most wealth in the possession of the state changed Bucharest. Nationalization of production and of housing represented the opposite of what we call today globalization. If globalization implies de-territorialization and the absence of fixed actors, nationalization attached capital to the immutable space of the nation-state and to a permanent owner, “the whole people.”

While deterritorialization is a distinctively geographical accumulation strategy encouraging “place wars” and the emergence of “competitive states” eager to attract capital (Brenner 1999:64), nationalization was a particular form of primitive accumulation of the state, trying to withdraw the socialist state from the competition to attract capital to its territory. In spatial terms, deterritorialization encourages centrifugal forces that invite people and production away from city centers. Nationalization, on the other hand, was centripetal, fixing people and production. In some cases, globalization erodes the power of municipalities and some segments of the nation-state. It makes cities, or at least central business districts and luxury residential areas, less accountable to local political power than to the demands of the transnational business class. Nationalization worked similarly, with the essential difference that was the state, rather the transnational business class, who influenced the urban geography. The power of the state to impose its interests in urban matters increased through nationalization. I am not suggesting that there was a

link between nationalization and globalization, but I seek to situate the former in terms of the latter.

I argued that the new political economy of socialism created a new type of urban process, different from almost anything that came before. The closest analogy would be the situation of post-World War I Germany (and, perhaps, war-time extraordinary policies in other countries):

During the war, and especially after 1916 when a total war economy was launched and military offices established a controlled 'state socialism', intervention in the private housing market increased. Rent control, assignment of tenants, inspection of notices to quit, a prohibition of the demolition of houses all heralded the beginning of a state-planned economy in housing. [...] Until the currency reform of 1923, the main aim of state housing policy was to improve the supply of dwellings and distribute housing as fairly as possible. National legislation had to be carried out by local communities. All living space had to be registered, and building demolition or under-use of living space was prohibited. Officially a flat was under-occupied if there was less than one person per room. There were also controlled rental contracts, restrictions on freedom of movement, the establishment of mass accommodation and even restrictions on marriage (Teuteberg and Wischermann 1992:251-252).

In that sense, nationalization in Romania resembled a permanent wartime policy. It created full occupancy, eliminating any vacancies and bringing together distinct families and individuals into overcrowded apartments. Nationalization also created class desegregation, by distributing people of different classes into a single apartment or house. During those years, the state also engaged in a process of relocating previous privileged residents to poorer housing units and of distributing houses to the new upper class, formed during socialism.

The socialist state during those years functioned according to three different logics. Because of its physical expansion (Weber 1946), the state institutions occupied an important number of residential units for its own use. The situation is similar to what happened in the Soviet Union after nationalization, where, according to the summary of John Hazard (1939:14).

Ironically, a significant proportion of these were not then used as domestic residences, for with an expansion in the number of administrative bodies the more solidly built structures – which generally speaking were those



that had been nationalized – had to be designated for non-residential purposes. In so far as this withdrew 34% of the nationalized residential space from the housing sector, it only exacerbated the critical accommodation shortage.

Second, the socialist state functioned as a welfare state, distributing the houses it confiscated to people who had previously lived in over-crowded housing units, to newlywed or to tuberculosis patients. Finally, although the socialist state prided itself on creating equality, it functioned as the very site of creating inequality (Szelenyi 1983). These three different logics were competing among themselves, which shows that the socialist state, like any other state, is not a unified actor, but a field of forces (Bourdieu 1991).

As it is well known, states are not “formed” once and for all (Steinmetz 1991:9). Especially for the socialist state in its early days, it is more fruitful to view state-formation as an ongoing process of structural change and not as a one-time event. The way that the practices of the socialist state may be interpreted raises a difficult question. While they may be regarded as part of different things that states do in general, socialist state’s practices do not easily fit any particular theory.

Marxist theories emphasize the parasitical nature of the state and its instrumental nature for the ruling classes. The state confiscation of houses from the population in order to use the as office space and the distribution of good nationalized houses primarily to privileged state officials, point, indeed, in that direction. The fact that it allocated them to the needy and to people who were under-privileged may support a view of the state similar to that described in structuralist approaches, where the capitalist state is viewed as relatively independent from the ruling class, having an agenda of its own and helping capitalism to save itself.

Finally, to a certain extent, the limits of the state (Mitchell 1992) became rather blurred during those years. Some used the state to their own immediate advantage (e.g. to evict an owner in order to move in him/herself), while other officials attempted to establish and follow bureaucratic rules and procedures. Instead, one may say that the socialist state was the sum of multiple projects that some times conflicted and other times merged. New class formation, welfare concerns and the elimination of the pre-communist privileged class were all part of the same state project. The state itself became a site of class conflict and class formation.

## NOTES

- <sup>1</sup> I do that not because there is any link between nationalization and globalization (they were separated by 30 years or so), but simply because much of the current debates in social geography and urban sociology is carried out around the issue of globalization, global cities, etc.
- <sup>2</sup> There was another component which I do not analyze here, which had to do with the punitive policies directed towards war criminals, the German population and the confiscation of the belongings of large size agricultural owners.
- <sup>3</sup> *Legea 439/1945 pentru efectuarea de rechiziții pentru cartiruirea de persoane, autorități și instituții.*
- <sup>4</sup> More precisely from 1942. See *Legea 218 din 23 martie 1942 pentru prelungirea contractelor de închiriere.*
- <sup>5</sup> *Reglementarea raporturilor între proprietari și chiriași: Legea nr. 330/1946.*
- <sup>6</sup> Established through *Legea nr. 359/4 Decembrie 1948 pentru crearea, organizarea și funcționarea Oficiilor de Inchiriere.*
- <sup>7</sup> Fond MGCIL, File 27/1950, page 55.
- <sup>8</sup> Council of Ministers Decision nr. 55/February 4 1949.
- <sup>9</sup> The same file contains the translation of the Soviet author who wrote about this issue.
- <sup>10</sup> Part of the new regulations instituted by these Authorities was strict rent control. The new legislation established a uniform system of calculating rent for private and state apartments, all over the country.
- <sup>11</sup> Fond MGCIL,  *Direcția Industriei Locale*, File 527/1950, page 77.
- <sup>12</sup> *Legea nr. 119 din 11/06/1948 pentru naționalizarea întreprinderilor industriale, bancare, de asigurări, miniere și de transporturi.* Along with the production facilities, the state soon confiscated the residential buildings and recreational resorts locations that belonged to the enterprises (*Legea 10/1949; Decret 358/49*).
- <sup>13</sup> This was carried out in 1945 and it expropriated any agricultural holding larger than 50 hectares.
- <sup>14</sup> The nationalization of craftsmen's workshops and of retail business also meant the nationalization of the domestic space of those who worked. Domestic space and the work space of this group were often contiguous in the same building. The ground floor was designed for work while the upper floor was used as home. The archives of MGCIL (file 527/1950) contain the contestation (and its positive answer) of a nationalization decision from Ghineș village (Ciuc County). The former owner describes that he had been evicted from his building when his workshop has been confiscated.
- <sup>15</sup> *Decret nr. 302 din 03/11/1948.*
- <sup>16</sup> *Decret nr. 134 din 02/04/1949.*
- <sup>17</sup> *Decret nr. 303 din 03/11/1948.*
- <sup>18</sup> *Lege nr. 284 din 14/08/1947.*

- 19 Art. I, *Decret nr. 92/50 pentru nationalizarea unor imobile*, in *Buletinul Oficial* nr. 36, 20 aprilie 1950.
- 20 *Cum își indeplinesc sarcinile funcționarii de la Oficiile de închiriere*. In *Viața Capitalei*, Anul 1, nr. 39, 18 iunie 1949.
- 21 Obviously, one may make an analogy here with the debates in Russia in the first part of the 20<sup>th</sup> century surrounding land ownership. Lenin suggested that there was capitalism in the countryside and therefore conflicting classes of “have” and “have-nots” A. Chayanov’s theory (1966), and its echoes in Theodor Shannin’s work (1972), suggested that inequalities were cyclical and that that they had to do with the peasant family cycle, with accumulation in order to feed the family. One may also notice the simplification of state action by taking into account the notion of the developmental cycle in domestic groups advanced by Meyer Fortes (1958).
- 22 I do not discuss here the space that was rented out by some of such former owners.
- 23 MGCIL, Administrative Division, file 27/1950, page. 63.
- 24 MGCIL, Administrative Division; file 24/1950, page. 22.
- 25 This is similar to other situations of transformation of owner-occupied apartments into rentals. See, for instance, Plunz and Abu-Lughod (1994:64), who describe this process in mid 19<sup>th</sup> century New York City, where “former single-family row houses in older areas [...] were frequently divided into substandard cubicles for poor people.”
- 26 MGCIL, Department of Housing; File 81/1951; pages 29-32.
- 27 MGCIL, File 23/1954, page 20.
- 28 While it is not clear to what extent relocation to the periphery and to other cities happened in Bucharest, such processes did happen in other cities. One file of MGCIL (24/1950) contained the justification as well as the list of 37 persons from Bistrița that were to be relocated. I heard belatedly of other archival funds that described the relocation of families of Bucharest. This aspect needs further research and I limit the discussion to what I consulted during the fieldwork.
- 29 MGCIL,  *Direcția Industriei Locale*, File 527/1950, page. 19.
- 30 The agglomeration was worsened because of the demolition of insalubrious houses. Between 1948 and 1954 no less than 14% of the total area of the 1948 city was demolished (cf. MGCIL, File 208/1956).
- 31 *Decretul 78/1952*.
- 32 About ten years earlier there was another intrusive action of the Romanian state into the domestic space of the Jewish urban population, whose houses were confiscated (and then returned in 1945). But that was a one time intervention, without keeping track of the further residential movement of that group.
- 33 Alexandru Drăghici an infamous Ministry of Interior, head of the Militia in the early 1950s, denounced after 1989 by the former political prisoners of

the Communist regime. At the time of that meeting, he was the head of the Bucharest Party organization.

34 Before 1921, the Romania electoral system was restricted to those who possessed a certain amount of wealth.

35 *Ordonanța nr. 2 din 23 iulie 1949 a Direcției Generale din Ministerul de Interne.*

36 Obviously "election" is a misrepresentation for those years.

37 *Decretul nr. 524/1950*, second paragraph.

38 There is another interesting change. Whereas in the nationalization decree there is one person listed for that address, the restitution lists mention husband and wife as the re-endowed owners. This might be linked to the emergence of family legislation in 1955.

39 This decree is even stranger to me because it was never published in any official bulletin.

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## **Livres**

*Cyrano de Bergerac – du burlesque à la science-fiction*, col. « Istorie și teorie literară », seria « Monografii », Alba-Iulia, Editura ULISE, 2002.

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# DU COMIQUE ET DE LA SCIENCE-FICTION A LA RENCONTRE DU RÉEL / D'UNE REALITÉ – DEUX APPROCHES CONTRASTÉES ?

La présente recherche se situe dans le prolongement d'un projet formé de longue date et concrétisé par une thèse de doctorat ayant pour titre *Cyrano de Bergerac – du burlesque à la science-fiction*<sup>1</sup>. Cyrano de Bergerac a usé du comique avec une prédilection pour la forme du burlesque en vogue à son époque, et avec comme modalité de dissimuler le sérieux derrière le masque du sourire ; c'était une manière d'exprimer de manière voilée ses idées, revêtues des formes caractéristiques de ce que l'on appelle aujourd'hui science-fiction, ou plus précisément science-fiction spéculative. Pluralité des mondes habités, altérité, machines, voyages extraterrestres, autant de motifs d'un genre littéraire très controversé et volontiers relégué dans la paralittérature. *Les Etats et Empires de la Lune et du Soleil* nous ont orientée vers la découverte d'autres auteurs relevant inégalement de la science-fiction, et qui ont pris prétexte de la rencontre entre le comique et la SF pour transmettre leurs messages. Parfois, et c'est le cas – à des niveaux et des époques différentes – de Louis Desnoyers, Jules Verne et Philip José Farmer, ils ont repris des éléments du roman cyranesque en pratiquant l'intertextualité ; dans d'autres cas, comme celui de Jacques Sternberg, le comique survient comme un moyen de mettre en évidence les incohérences du monde contemporain.

La présence du comique dans la science-fiction n'est pas le trait le plus caractéristique d'un genre dont l'imaginaire est souvent marqué par une propension au sérieux. Compte tenu des limites assignées au présent essai, notre recherche ne peut viser à l'exhaustivité ; elle ne prétend pas rendre compte de l'ensemble des oeuvres du genre où le comique, sous ses formes d'expression diverses, fait sentir sa présence. L'intention, beaucoup plus modeste, est de signaler et analyser deux oeuvres : *Les*

*aventures de Robert-Robert et de son ami Toussaint Lavenette* de Louis Desnoyers et les *188 contes à régler* de Jacques Sternberg. Chez ces deux auteurs, la science-fiction nous conduit, par le biais du comique, vers une approche différente de la réalité.

Au XVII<sup>e</sup> siècle le public du roman cyranesque, bien peu nombreux d'ailleurs car il pouvait être taxé de libertinage, était constitué d'adultes. Au XIX<sup>e</sup> siècle, ce type de littérature orienté vers les écrits utopiques ou les voyages d'aventures à finalité pédagogique s'adresse à un public diversifié incluant la jeunesse. Aujourd'hui, le lectorat de science-fiction est constitué en bonne partie de lycéens et d'étudiants<sup>2</sup>. En notre qualité d'enseignante qui prépare à son tour de futurs enseignants, dans le contexte d'une société où l'intérêt pour la lecture parmi les jeunes est en baisse, nous sommes intéressée par la mise en oeuvre de nouvelles méthodes capables de renouveler cet intérêt. C'est pourquoi nous avons choisi d'orienter notre recherche vers un domaine qui pourrait inciter les jeunes à des lectures plus sérieuses par simple plaisir de la découverte. Et comment y parvenir sinon sous forme de jeu, en suscitant la rencontre entre le rire – parfois grinçant mais rire tout de même – et la science-fiction bien placée pour les séduire ?

## ***1. Les Aventures de Robert-Robert et de son ami Toussaint Lavenette : science-fiction et comique dans un roman pédagogique***

### **Situation de l'auteur et de son oeuvre**

Avant Jules Verne, il y eut au XIX<sup>e</sup> siècle en France une production hétérogène mais assez extensive de ce que l'on pourrait appeler science-fiction, si l'on signifie par ce terme des récits d'imagination conjecturale qui décrivent une société axiomatiquement différente de la société empirique entourant son auteur ; le but est de libérer l'imagination sociale et de promouvoir un rationalisme critique qui peut inclure une dimension satirique<sup>3</sup>. Les auteurs de ces récits qui, dans un classement par sous-genres, pourraient entrer dans la catégorie de la science-fiction spéculative<sup>4</sup>, ne sont pas tous marginaux. Chacun d'eux pourtant semble avoir eu l'idée de commencer à zéro, dans l'ignorance où il était de l'existence de ses prédécesseurs, à moins qu'il ne voulût pas les connaître. Marc Angenot dresse une liste chronologique de la science-fiction

française du Premier Empire (1802) à la fin du Deuxième Empire (1870). Cette liste comprend des auteurs et des titres qui vont de Rétif de la Bretonne (*Les Posthumes*, 1802) à P. Grousset (*Le rêve d'un irréconciliable*), T. Moilin (*Paris en l'an 2000*) et X. Nagrien (*Un Cauchemar*, 1869), en passant par Louis Desnoyers (*Les Aventures de Robert Robert*, 1836) et bien d'autres, car la liste est assez longue<sup>5</sup>. Ce dernier auteur, qualifié de romancier pour les enfants, utilise les thèmes de la science-fiction « in a silly wily way, with over simple devices (the world upside down, etc.) »<sup>6</sup>. Pour justifier notre choix et par souci de généralisation, nous faisons nôtre l'affirmation de Jean-Michel Racault selon laquelle souvent les oeuvres dites mineures permettent de fixer les constantes d'un genre<sup>7</sup>. L'ouvrage dont nous parlons a connu de nombreuses rééditions, notamment au XX<sup>e</sup> siècle, nous dit Françoise Sylvos<sup>8</sup>.

Avant Jules Verne donc, Louis Desnoyers écrit un roman dont la valeur littéraire n'est pas exceptionnelle, mais qui peut témoigner de la rencontre entre comique et science-fiction par le biais du monde renversé et de l'utopie. Dédié à Christine, sa fille, *Les Aventures de Robert-Robert* a connu onze éditions de 1836 à 1857. L'oeuvre était présentée comme la « deuxième étape de l'alphabet de la vie humaine » avec « tout ce qu'il a pu (lui) rester d'impressions comiques ou tristes », notamment celles de l'adolescence. L'idée fondamentale du livre appartient selon l'auteur « à tous les âges sous peine de n'appartenir à aucun » ; il y a jeté quelquefois « un peu d'allégorie, un peu même de grotesque sur la réalité [...] dans un but de contraste, de variété, et surtout de satire par allusion »<sup>9</sup>.

De manière étrange, les seules informations détaillées sur la vie de cet écrivain et journaliste (né en 1805 à Replonges, mort le 17 décembre 1868 à Paris) nous viennent d'Eugène de Mirecourt<sup>10</sup>, auteur d'une cinquantaine de biographies de ses contemporains. Nous y découvrons une vie entièrement consacrée au journalisme, sa première et constante passion. En témoigne, s'il en était besoin, l'anecdote selon laquelle le jour de ses noces, Desnoyers aurait « oublié » son épouse pour travailler à son journal jusqu'à une heure avancée de la nuit... Si l'on en croit le *Grand dictionnaire universel du XIX<sup>e</sup> siècle* de Pierre Larousse, sa femme lui « pardonna de grand coeur »<sup>11</sup>.

En 1833, Louis Desnoyers avait fait paraître un premier roman, *Les Aventures de Jean-Paul Choppard*, publié sous forme de feuilleton dans le *Journal des enfants*. Mais c'est le deuxième livre, *Les Aventures de Robert-Robert*, qui est cité par Jules Verne dans la préface à son ouvrage

*Seconde Patrie* comme faisant partie des oeuvres qui ont le plus marqué ses lectures d'enfance :

Les titres des ouvrages que je lisais avec tant d'avidité me reviennent à la mémoire : c'étaient le *Robinson de douze ans*, de Mme Mollar de Beaulieu, le *Robinson des sables du désert*, de Mme de Mirval. C'étaient aussi dans le même ordre d'idées les *Aventures de Robert-Robert* de Louis Desnoyers que publiait le *Journal des enfants* avec tant d'autres histoires que je ne saurais oublier [...] <sup>12</sup>.

Le comparant à Eugène Sue, Mirecourt qualifie notre auteur d'« écrivain qui fait de bons livres et qui n'a jamais empoisonné les masses ». Par contre, il considère la fondation de la *Société des gens de lettres* (1838), qui revient en grande mesure à Desnoyers, comme « une mauvaise action, un honnête égarement, une institution boiteuse » ; mais il a tort, car cette institution, toute boiteuse qu'elle lui parût, existe toujours.

Parmi les autres œuvres publiées par Louis Desnoyers – *Mémoires d'une pièce de cent sous*, *une Maison de Paris*, *Comment la gaieté revient aux dames*, *Études sur les femmes*, intéressant pour nous est un article qui sera repris dans l'Épilogue des *Aventures de Robert-Robert*:

un article surprenant publié dans *Paris révolutionnaire* où il formule, dix-sept ans à l'avance, le résultat d'idées en fermentation. C'est une véritable prophétie, annonçant la Révolution de février [1830] dans ses détails les plus intimes et en apparence les plus fortuits.

Il va jusqu'à parler de la rue Lamartine, sans dire néanmoins qu'elle supplantera la rue Coquenard <sup>13</sup>.

Publié à une époque mouvementée de l'histoire de la France, marquée par les Trois Glorieuses et l'avènement au pouvoir de Louis-Philippe (1830-1848), roi des Français et non plus roi de France, le caractère subversif de ce roman

passé d'abord par l'allégeance à une tradition irrévérencieuse, à la veine anti-romanesque et parodique de Rabelais, d'un Cervantès, d'un Swift et par la critique du roman pédagogique. En second lieu, voyageurs et personnages de ces récits fabuleux s'égarèrent, sont dérouterés de leur destination première. A l'égarément géographique se superpose le recours aux arborescences narratives, à la démultiplication des récits secondaires.

L'emboîtement narratif dissimule la satire au cœur de la narration. L'arabesque sert ainsi de discours progressiste qui met en cause les clichés et l'exotisme<sup>14</sup>.

L'action du roman couvre une période allant du début du XIX<sup>e</sup> siècle à 1832. Pour reprendre les termes de Françoise Sylvos, « l'image de l'insupportable » (l'esclavage<sup>15</sup> et la colonisation) et « un idéal social de tolérance » se font place à travers le voyage initiatique d'un jeune garçon de quatorze ans, Robert-Robert, qui veut arriver à l'île Bourbon (aujourd'hui île de la Réunion) afin de rencontrer son oncle. Sur le point de mourir, celui-ci doit en effet lui léguer un héritage important. Robert-Robert est accompagné par le majordome de la maison, Toussaint Lavenette, en qualité de mentor. Autodidacte qui prend à la lettre toutes ses lectures, y compris Robinson Crusoë, Lavenette donne une contre-leçon à son disciple qui, par ses qualités natives et par l'éducation reçue dans la famille, apprend petit à petit à se guider seul et sainement dans la vie, à développer son esprit critique. Le récit principal est coupé par une multitude de récits secondaires afin d'éveiller cette perspicacité de l'esprit critique, tant du héros que du jeune lecteur. À côté du brave marin Simon Barigoule, le personnage le plus attachant est celui du Parisien, « un distributeur ordinaire de farces »<sup>16</sup> qui sert des plats à sa façon, dont l'humour et le détachement dans les situations difficiles peuvent modifier l'état d'esprit des autres. Le Parisien réunit les caractéristiques des Français authentiques tels qu'ils apparaissent dans l'oeuvre de Jules Verne : « même dans l'excès, les Français gardent quelque chose de léger, une note de nonchalance et une dose d'humour et de relativisme, c'est dire qu'ils observent un certain équilibre même dans le déséquilibre. Les maniaques à l'état pur sont généralement des étrangers »<sup>17</sup> ou, en l'occurrence, des figures peu représentatives.

Dans l'ensemble du roman tel que nous venons de le présenter, deux épisodes relèvent à plusieurs titres de ce que nous appelons la science-fiction : *l'Histoire fantastique de mon cousin Laroutine et de son grand voyage au fin fond de la lune*, racontée par l'un des protagonistes, Le Parisien (cet épisode renvoie à *l'Histoire véritable* de Lucien de Samosate et au héros de Cyrano de Bergerac, au monde renversé de Cyrano et de Gulliver), et *Un songe creux de Robert-Robert en 1832*, contrepartie du voyage de Laroutine, et que l'on peut considérer comme une uchronie du Paris révolutionnaire.

### **Science-fiction et comique par le biais du monde renversé et pas seulement**

Comme toute activité mentale, le comique fonctionne à partir d'un imaginaire utilisé de façon plus libre et plus gratuite que dans le raisonnement. En ce sens, on peut dire qu'il relève davantage du principe de plaisir que du principe de réalité, le but étant de faire rire. En apparence seulement, car il recourt à des mécanismes linguistiques qui, par le jeu des distances et des distanciations entre divers éléments, lui permettent d'opérer des contresens, de renvoyer à la réalité par le biais de cet imaginaire.

Le monde renversé, l'utopie et la science-fiction jouent à leur tour sur la distance entre le connu – le Même – , et l'inconnu – l'Autre – , sans toujours avoir une finalité comique. Cette dernière apparaît lorsqu'un jeu de l'imaginaire sur des distances séparant le Même de l'Autre se manifeste : l'on peut bien regarder le Même avec les yeux de l'Autre ou envisager l'Autre avec l'esprit du Même.

Les deux mondes imaginaires décrits par Desnoyers peuvent entrer dans la catégorie des univers parallèles de la science-fiction, le premier relevant davantage du monde renversé à caractère burlesque que de l'utopie. Le monde renversé, pour reprendre les termes de A. Kibédy Varga, est un « monde dérivé, construit par des éléments fournis par le monde ordinaire »<sup>18</sup> , mais qui lui est opposé. L'utopie, en revanche, apparaît

lorsque dans le cadre d'un récit (ce qui exclut les traités politiques), se trouve décrite une communauté (ce qui exclut la robinsonnade) organisée selon certains principes politiques, économiques, éthiques, restituant la complexité de l'existence sociale (ce qui exclut le monde à l'envers, l'âge d'or, Cocagne ou l'Arcadie), qu'elle soit présentée comme idéal à réaliser (utopie positive) ou comme prévision d'un enfer (l'anti-utopie) qu'elle soit située dans un espace réel, imaginaire ou encore dans le temps, qu'elle soit enfin décrite au terme d'un voyage imaginaire vraisemblable ou non<sup>19</sup>.

Située au milieu du roman, l'« Histoire fantastique de mon cousin Laroutine et de son grand voyage au fin fond de la Lune » occupe plusieurs chapitres enchâssés dans l'action principale : débutant au chapitre XIV, le récit se poursuit au XV<sup>e</sup> pour s'achever au chapitre XVIII. L'appendice final, *Paris civilisé*, qui constitue le pendant de l'histoire de Laroutine forme un seul bloc. Le jeu entre le Même et l'Autre varie en complexité,

il se joue de manière différente dans les deux parties. Au niveau des personnages représentatifs, en identifiant le Même avec Laroutine ou avec Robert-Robert et l'Autre avec les Lunaires ou les nouveaux Parisiens, les perspectives divergent : la mise en dérision des routines d'une part, l'importance du progrès de l'autre. En considérant le Même comme point de référence neutre, hors texte, les possibilités de l'Autre varient du positif au négatif, l'auteur peut proposer au lecteur un jeu direct ou indirect. Dans le jeu direct, l'Autre peut devenir supérieur au Même (eutopie, Âge d'Or, Cocagne, rêves) ou bien inférieur (dystopies, anti-utopies, fantastique, cauchemars...). Dans le jeu indirect, plus complexe, en deux temps, l'altérité, double, apparaît successivement comme positive et négative et piège le lecteur<sup>20</sup>. Les deux récits en question font un jeu indirect : dans l'histoire de Laroutine, récit emboîté, par le monde renversé ou le Pays de Cocagne on fait place aux éléments utopiques et même anti-utopiques parfois ; dans celle de Robert-Robert, des éléments eutopiques se mêlent au rêve et à un final invraisemblable pour ce type d'écriture. On fait toujours appel à l'attention du lecteur qui, par ses connaissances encyclopédiques, telles qu'elles existent à son âge ou enrichies par le plaisir du jeu, peut découvrir les distorsions cachées dans la démarche « logique » du comique.

Entrons maintenant dans le monde lunaire avec Laroutine. Comme le suggère son nom, c'est une personne rétive à tout changement, un bourgeois bourré de préjugés – vu les changements politiques de l'époque le choix du héros n'est pas un hasard – et donc incapable d'accueillir la moindre nouveauté. « Mais ça ne s'est jamais vu ! » : telle est sa réflexion favorite qu'il répète à tout propos comme un leitmotiv. Il est assez inhabituel dans ce genre de littérature qu'un tel personnage devienne le héros principal d'une aventure aussi extraordinaire. Il en serait plutôt l'anti-héros. Son voyage dans la lune est un pur hasard provoqué par l'ignorance et le désir de gagner facilement de l'argent. Alors que le ballon devait partir du Champ de Mars avec 57 personnes préparées pour ce vol comme pour une « guerre aux alouettes », le voyage perd finalement tous ses candidats saisis soudain d'une peur inavouée. À son corps défendant, Laroutine se retrouve seul passager de l'aventure.

Celui-ci ne croit pas un moment que « la grosse machine », cette « vessie » amarrée « au moyen d'une foule de cordes aboutissant à un pied fiché en terre » parviendrait à bouger, car il s'agissait d'une première tentative osée d'après les feuilles publiques<sup>21</sup>. Et pourtant, elle bouge ! L'ascension est spectaculaire :

Le ballon montait, montait avec la rapidité d'un boulet. C'était à couper la respiration ! Mon cousin vit d'abord tout le champs de Mars, d'un seul coup d'œil ; puis tout Paris ; puis tout le département de la Seine ; puis tous les départements voisins, puis toute la France, puis toute l'Europe, puis toute une moitié de la terre. C'était un spectacle enchanteur !<sup>22</sup>

Peux-tou imaginer plus beau spectacle ? Le récit de cette grandiose ascension met en évidence le talent de conteur de Desnoyers. Le souci de précision scientifique n'est évidemment pas ici le but de l'auteur, et l'idée n'est pas davantage de faire de la pédagogie, mais de susciter l'émerveillement.

Tout comme les préparatifs et les modalités de l'ascension, la durée du voyage est fantaisiste (« quinze heures trent-cinq minutes d'ascension de Paris à la Lune »). On ne peut s'empêcher d'établir ici certains parallèles évidents avec les *Estats et Empires de la Lune* de Cyrano de Bergerac, notamment dans l'appréciation de la distance, la perception de l'espace, la force de l'attraction qui contraint le héros non pas à atterrir, comme il l'aurait souhaité, mais à alunir.

Après avoir monté ainsi pendant je ne sais combien de temps, et fait plus de mille lieues à l'heure, il arriva tout juste à moitié chemin des deux boules. Ce fut une situation diantrement dramatique ! Son ballon s'arrêta subitement dans le milieu, n'avançant plus, mais ne reculant pas, attendu qu'en cet endroit mitoyen il était également attiré par l'une et par l'autre.

Comment se tirer de là<sup>23</sup> ?

On note ici l'habileté avec laquelle l'auteur – via Le Parisien, en position de narrateur secondaire – entretient le suspense en donnant un tour dramatique à l'événement.

Parvenu non sans péripéties sur la Lune, Laroutine est déposé sur la cime d'un gros diamant. L'univers qu'il découvre évoque un Pays de Cocagne bien différent et même opposé à celui de la Terre, même s'il en reprend les éléments. Ce « nouveau séjour » qui « ne ressemblait nullement à celui qu'il venait de quitter »<sup>24</sup> bouleverse toutes les « routines » de notre personnage. Il y voit des villages, des rivières de rhum et de cassis, des ruisseaux de lait, de limonade, de l'orgeat, des animaux dont les caractéristiques sont inversées : les éléphants, les vautours, les éperviers et les aigles ne sont pas « plus gros que le pouce », les corbeaux gazouillent comme des rossignols, les troupeaux de loups, de tigres et de lions sont gardés par des brebis, les renards conduits par des poules. Les fruits sont



déjà cuits et les arbres sont petits, à portée de la main, les produits de l'agriculture atteignent des dimensions hyperboliques. Tout semble possible dans cette profusion, et l'on y « pourrait semer des boutons de culotte et avoir des pantalons tout faits »<sup>25</sup>. Les fourmis et les sauterelles traînent des voitures publiques. Les puces ont « quatre pieds de haut sur cinq de long » et Laroutine doit se battre en duel avec un exemplaire tout comme le pauvre Gulliver avec les mouches. On est plongé dans un univers burlesque, voire loufoque et versant dans la caricature, mieux approprié à un lectorat jeune qu'à un lectorat adulte, quoique les uns comme les autres puissent y trouver leur plaisir.

Comme Dyrcona, le héros cyranesque, et comme Gulliver au pays des géants, Laroutine est enfermé dans une cage et déposé à la ménagerie royale pour que les scientifiques décident de son sort dans le monde des vivants, car il n'est pas reconnu officiellement avant cet examen. Occasion pour l'auteur de parler des Académies de la Lune, aussi nombreuses et inutiles à ses yeux que celles de la Terre : académies littéraires, des inscriptions, des sciences morales et politiques, des beaux-arts, sans parler des autres (« il y en a de chantantes, de buvantes, de mangeantes, de jouantes, de chevauchantes, de labourantes, de négociantes, de conspirantes, de pérorantes et surtout d'endormantes »<sup>26</sup>). Cette satire appuyée des académies s'inscrit en contrepoint de l'Eldorado voltairien où une grande importance leur est accordée, ne serait-ce que par la place qu'elles occupent dans le récit. L'Académie des sciences rappelle aussi le voyage de Gulliver à Laputa où les scientifiques avaient construit une île flottante qui prenait la lumière ; on pense aussi aux académiciens de Lagado qui tentent d'extraire des rayons de soleil des concombres ou de transformer la glace en poudre à canon.

Le verdict de l'Académie des sciences porte sur l'aspect physique de Laroutine. Celui qui dit toujours « Ça ne s'est jamais vu » est jugé à son tour : pourquoi n'a-t-il pas un œil par devant et l'autre par derrière, ce serait plus économique ! Question de l'altérité liée au thème du racisme – un sujet abordé par Desnoyers dans son roman<sup>27</sup> – aussi bien qu'à celui du relativisme des coutumes et des mœurs, comme chez Diderot ou Voltaire. Les Lunatiques ont tout de l'extraterrestre des bandes dessinées d'aujourd'hui :

[ils] avaient généralement les cheveux bleu de ciel, les yeux rouges, la prunelle jaune, la peau verte, les lèvres violettes et les dents d'un beau noir d'ébène. Plus leur teint était vert, leurs yeux rouges et leurs dents noires, plus ils se croyaient beaux<sup>28</sup>.

Laroutine est finalement déclaré singe du roi, avec comme rôle de lui dépeindre les « routines de la terre », ce qui suscite évidemment le rire. Mais pas jusqu'à reconnaître, comme Dyrcona à la suite du procès intenté à Galilée, que la Terre est une Lune.

Les moyens techniques comme les comportements ayant évolué, et le burlesque supposant une adaptation permanente à la réalité, la publicité que l'on fait à notre héros diffère de celle décrite par Cyrano. Le buste et le portrait de Laroutine « figuraient par la ville à tous les étalages des marchands de gravures et de bric-à-brac »<sup>29</sup> et on fait sortir une feuille quotidienne qui rende compte de tous ses actes.

La valeur des richesses, tout comme dans l'Eldorado voltairien, est inversée : les pierres précieuses sont à portée de la main, le fer est plus rare et on en fait des bijoux.

Le roi ainsi que les fonctionnaires ont des maisons transparentes, une manière d'éliminer la corruption. Le monarque, choisi en fonction de son poids, est investi de la « légitimité kilogrammatique », ayant bien soin de ne pas « maigrir de patriotisme ». Faut-il y voir une allusion au roi de France devenu « roi des Français »? Nouveau pied-de-nez à l'esprit de sérieux : la société vit d'après le principe « liberté, égalité, fraternité, hilarité »<sup>30</sup>.

La capitale est dotée d'un nom étrange constitué uniquement de consonnes, *Krrrstlvmpfbchqngzx*, idée reprise des *Voyages de Gulliver*. Il ne faut pas oublier que les habitants sont ailés et que par conséquent leur langue doit s'adapter à leur aspect<sup>31</sup>.

La société des Lunatiques n'affiche pas que des côtés burlesques. Elle est décrite d'une manière plutôt avantageuse, et parfois même exemplaire par rapport à bien des aspects du monde terrien. Les grandes institutions fonctionnent pour le bien des citoyens. L'État est entièrement responsable de l'éducation et vise à former des Lunatiques libres, fraternels et égaux. Les routes sont bien entretenues ; musées, jardins et bibliothèques concourent au bien-être et à l'éducation du citoyen. Les représentations théâtrales peignent délicatement mais avec vivacité la nature humaine. Les tribunaux énoncent des jugements honnêtes et rapidement rendus. Il y a des caisses d'épargne et peu de casernes. On devine aisément que cette évocation de la société lunaire n'est pas dénuée d'arrière-pensées : elle constitue, par contraste, une satire sous-jacente du monde terrien qui n'est pas nouvelle ; elle fut abondamment pratiquée au XVIII<sup>e</sup> siècle, par exemple dans les contes de Voltaire, et notamment *Micromégas*.

Pour autant, le monde des Lunatiques n'est pas représenté comme le monde idéal et l'impression reste mitigée. Les ambitions s'y manifestent comme chez les Terriens et même la guerre n'y est pas absente. Deux empires voisins, l'un dirigé par « le vertueux Brrrrrrr » et l'autre par « l'ambitieux Crrrrrrr » revendiquent notre héros et son ballon aluni d'un côté et de l'autre de la ligne de démarcation des frontières. Un troisième monarque, « l'astucieux Qsssssss » servira de médiateur à son plus grand profit. Le choix d'un général d'armée dépend de ses performances au jeu (« meilleur joueur au domino de toute la cour ») ou de ses relations (via le « cousin de la tante de l'oncle de la mère de la sœur de l'ami du frère de la femme de chambre de la reine »<sup>32</sup>).

Les discours des deux armées avant la bataille sont presque identiques : chacun cherchant le plus grand avantage après la victoire, et « Vive le roi tant pis »<sup>33</sup>. La démagogie des chefs d'armée s'étale à la fin de la guerre, gagnée cela s'entend par le troisième au détriment des deux autres. Comment se déroulent les hostilités ? On se jette du tabac en poudre dans les yeux ou de la poudre de perlimpinpin qui provoque des démangeaisons, on creuse des trous que l'on remplit ensuite de confiture, on jette des actions, des tragédies, des symphonies fantastiques, des poésies qui endorment. Si la satire est toujours bien présente, tout cela, comme on le voit, n'est pas pris trop au sérieux. On revient une fois de plus au burlesque dont l'effet comique s'appuie sur des références appartenant au monde enfantin.

Laroutine profite d'un moment d'inattention des guerriers pour reprendre sa place dans le ballon et s'envoler vers la Terre où il raconte son aventure par écrit. Il est appelé Lunatique, à l'image d'un personnage biblique inventé par Cyrano, l'Achab féminin, fille de Noé (qui n'a en réalité qu'un fils) dont l'arche arrive par la force des vagues dans la lune<sup>34</sup>. Voilà donc une chose plus grave encore, celle d'attribuer le qualificatif de lunatique à un homme. Celui qui s'était voué à la routine est désormais victime de la routine des autres : il est enfermé dans une maison d'aliénés où il meurt « à force de douches ». Après sa mort, un examen de son crâne mène à la conclusion qu'il avait la tête faite pour les aventures. Le Même devient l'Autre pour ses concitoyens. Si l'altérité est apparue comme l'une des sources du comique, elle débouche ici sur la négation des mondes possibles et discrédite la rigidité d'une société figée où l'imaginaire est absent. Dénoncer dans l'Autre des éléments contradictoires signifie critiquer ce qui ne va pas dans le Même. La science-fiction, et tout particulièrement la science-fiction spéculative

sont présentes dans ce récit par cette critique du Pouvoir au triple niveau du système économique, des rapports interindividuels et de l'utilisation idéologique du langage.

### **Vers un modèle plus ou moins utopique où science-fiction et comique modéré s'entremêlent**

Dans l'Épilogue du roman, l'auteur, Louis Desnoyers, fait part de ses interrogations au sujet de Robert-Robert, principal protagoniste et héros de l'aventure. Celui-ci a-t-il réellement vécu ? Telle qu'elle nous est restituée dans l'Appendice, l'histoire de Robert-Robert ne serait-elle que le « rêve creux » d'un moribond dont le récit s'achève brusquement avec la mort du narrateur et son passage dans l'autre monde ? Le début de l'Épilogue nous avertit que ce personnage n'est « pas du tout mythologique », qu'il « avait réellement existé, comme Don Quichotte, comme Gil Blas, comme Lovelace, comme Candide, comme tous les personnages de roman, passés, présents et futurs, lesquels ne sont nullement imaginaires, c'est convenu »<sup>35</sup>.

L'Opuscule issu du rêve de Robert-Robert est publié en 1833 et celui qui le transmet reconnaît avoir éliminé certains passages considérés sans importance, d'où les points de suspension par lesquels débute le texte. Ce rêve « nervoso-bilioso-économico-philanthropique » est intitulé par l'auteur, Louis Desnoyers, « Petit voyage de l'innovation à travers les routines de la Terre, pour faire pendant au grand voyage de Laroutine à travers les innovations de la Lune. Un songe creux de Robert-Robert en 1832. Paris civilisé » avec le motto bien suggestif *Quantum mutatus ab illo !... – Combien il a changé par rapport à celui qu'il a été !* extrait de Virgile. La fièvre qui a emporté notre héros est évoquée en des termes où pointe l'humour : le bilieux est un rêveur et un mélancolique racheté par le rire et qui, loin de détester l'être humain, est capable de se sacrifier pour lui<sup>36</sup>. Le titre, qui manifeste également une certaine ironie, est construit sur une série de jeux de mots mis en parallèle (*routines / Laroutine ; innovation / innovations*) ou en opposition (*petit voyage / grand voyage*). Si sur la Terre l'innovation vient contrecarrer les routines existantes, les innovations de la Lune ne serviraient-elles qu'à aggraver les routines de la Terre ? L'année 1832 représente un moment critique pour la France : l'agitation révolutionnaire consécutive à l'avènement de la Monarchie de Juillet est favorisée par la liberté complète de la vie politique (liberté de presse, de réunion, de manifestation), l'affaiblissement de l'autorité

et la crise économique (augmentation du prix du blé, chômage), auxquelles s'ajoute le choléra qui fait vingt mille morts (dont Casimir Périer, président du Conseil). Toutes ces menaces incitent Desnoyers à prendre position<sup>37</sup>.

S'il fallait classer ce nouvel épisode dans le genre utopique, le cadre le plus convenable serait celui de l'utopie narrative classique telle qu'elle est définie par Jean-Michel Racault :

une description détaillée introduite par un récit ou intégrée à un récit, d'un espace imaginaire clos, géographiquement plausible et soumis aux lois physiques du monde réel, habité par une collectivité individualisée d'êtres raisonnables dont les rapports mutuels comme les relations avec l'univers matériel et spirituel sont régis par une organisation rationnellement justifiée saisie dans son fonctionnement concret. Cette description doit être apte à susciter la représentation d'un monde fictif complet mis en relation dialectique avec le monde réel, dont il modifie ou réarticule les éléments dans une *perspective critique, satirique ou réformatrice*<sup>38</sup>. (C'est nous qui soulignons).

On reconnaît ici les éléments de l'utopie positive tels qu'ils sont présentés par Raymond Trousson cité plus haut, à l'exception de la dimension satirique. Dans l'utopie narrative, description et récit alternent. Dans le cas présent, c'est par la description que Robert-Robert, mis en position de narrateur, nous introduit dans le monde nouvellement découvert. Il se retrouve dans une ville qui réunit les qualités de plusieurs autres grandes cités telles Londres, Pétersbourg, la Haye, Vienne, Pékin et à la fin, Paris, une ville où, dit-il, les ouvriers parlent un français plus pur que ceux de l'Institut de France<sup>39</sup>. La promenade dans cette ville lui réserve les plus grandes surprises : l'Arc de Triomphe est achevé<sup>40</sup> alors qu'en 1832, un seul ouvrier, disait-on, était encore chargé de son achèvement. L'avenue des Champs-Élysées, dont le charme et la grandeur ouvrait sur la misère, est propre et des plus plaisantes à voir. Le palais des Tuileries est devenu un espace public d'exposition où sont présentés annuellement les résultats de l'industrie nationale. Tous ces changements vont dans le sens de la commodité et de l'amélioration du confort, outre le soin apporté à l'élégance. Les objets exposés témoignent de l'esprit d'invention mis au service de l'intérêt général.

Vision idyllique ? Même si l'auteur accentue volontairement le trait, on doit reconnaître que ces changements étaient dans l'air du temps : après les guerres napoléoniennes, l'intérêt grandit pour les travaux publics

et les transports se développe, des voyages d'études sont organisés par les pouvoirs publics afin de prendre connaissance des innovations des autres pays et favoriser la venue de spécialistes étrangers. Au palais du Louvre, les expositions à caractère technique deviennent régulières durant la Restauration<sup>41</sup>. Si utopie il y a, celle-ci possède toutes les caractéristiques de l'utopie positive telles que Raymond Trousson et J.-M. Racault l'ont définie.

Mais allons plus loin dans la découverte. Dans l'utopie en général, les questions ayant trait à la politique, à l'économie, à la morale sociale ont une place éminente. De ce point de vue, la description faite par Robert-Robert se réfère à un idéal de société qui vaut non seulement à l'échelle du « Paris civilisé », mais à celle du pays, de son gouvernement et de son administration. Il serait vain et fastidieux d'en reprendre tous les éléments, on se contentera d'en souligner quelques aspects. Le système de gouvernement est marqué par les changements qui se sont produits en France à la suite de la Révolution de 1830, et qui ont vu l'avènement d'une monarchie constitutionnelle. Il y a désormais deux Chambres, l'une des Représentants, l'autre des Anciens. Les représentants « sont élus par la totalité des citoyens majeurs sachant lire, écrire, calculer, etc., etc., etc. (sic) » et « il suffisait d'être électeur pour être éligible »<sup>42</sup>. Les Anciens sont recrutés « parmi les représentants qui avaient été honorés de ce titre un certain nombre de fois »<sup>43</sup>. Ces dispositions n'ont rien de révolutionnaire ; elles correspondent à l'établissement du régime censitaire qui ne permettait alors qu'à une petite minorité (un Français sur cent-soixante-dix !) de participer réellement à la vie politique. On notera que ce système n'est pas remis en cause par le narrateur. N'ayant plus de dettes, le gouvernement cherche à diminuer les impôts, à développer l'agriculture, à offrir du travail à tout le monde. Le peuple est censé exercer une influence sur les décisions publiques, le droit du travail et le bien-être, mais on ne précise pas de quelle façon. Les droits de l'opposition sont en principe respectés.

Une importance particulière est accordée à la presse. Largement indépendante et exonérée de taxes, elle est relativement libre et en pleine expansion. La preuve en est fournie par la présence dans les omnibus d'une grande variété de journaux comme *Le Courrier*, *La Tribune*, *La Gazette des Tribunaux*, *Le Charivari* (dirigé par Louis Desnoyers), *Le Journal des Débats* et *Le National*, qui participent activement à la vie politique<sup>44</sup>. *Le National* a soutenu dès 1830 le parti du mouvement, d'orientation réformiste, opposé au parti conservateur de la résistance,

soutenu par *Le Journal des Débats*. Robert-Robert est « confondu » par la teneur d'un numéro du *National* dont le premier article est intitulé « Considérations générales sur l'état de l'Europe » :

Il y était question d'une démocratie espagnole, d'une démocratie portugaise, d'une démocratie italienne, d'une démocratie allemande, d'une démocratie polonaise, d'une démocratie britannique, et d'une démocratie irlandaise. Toutes ces démocraties vivaient heureuses au dedans, et paisibles au dehors. Et cela se conçoit : l'intérêt aristocratique, c'est-à-dire l'intérêt de domination interne et de conquête extérieure n'étant plus là, dans aucun de ces pays, pour armer les uns contre les autres, soit les citoyens, soit les peuples, il restait uniquement : – pour les citoyens, des questions d'administration pure et simple, lesquelles étaient décidées de la manière la plus calme par le vœu des majorités ; – et pour les peuples, des questions de douanes, lesquelles, comme toutes les questions commerciales, sont plus accommodantes que matamores, et se décidant aimablement, à l'avantage égal des deux parties, par l'arbitrage d'un congrès européen<sup>45</sup>.

Si cette vue de la « constitution de l'Europe » relève de l'anticipation, on peut considérer que la société décrite par Robert-Robert procède jusqu'ici d'une vision plutôt raisonnable et bien ancrée dans la réalité. Pour paraphraser Voltaire, c'est « le monde comme il va » – très imparfait certes – qui dans une bonne mesure détermine par antinomie la vision de ce qu'il devrait être – la cité idéale vers laquelle doivent tendre tous les efforts. À cet égard, on ne peut nier l'impact des idées développées par le socialisme naissant, en particulier du socialisme utopique sur lequel nous reviendrons.

La description s'étend aux nouveaux moyens de transport. On y découvre l'omnibus à vapeur : « Un fiacre sans attelage, et se mouvant mécaniquement par une impulsion électrique [...] un omnibus à vapeur pouvant contenir sans gêne près de cinquante personnes, qui m'en ramena d'une vitesse extrême »<sup>46</sup>. Le chemin de fer est en plein développement et son réseau parti du « vaste centre » irradie le pays « comme les rayons d'une brillante étoile »<sup>47</sup> : on travaille à la réalisation d'un port dans le bassin de la Seine...

Parmi les moyens de transport, le ballon mérite un développement particulier, car il est une composante importante de l'imaginaire. Dans le rêve de Robert-Robert, il est évoqué de manière plutôt utilitariste : chargé de passagers et de marchandises, il met trois jours pour arriver de New York à Paris, 15 jours pour faire le tour du monde et préfigure les

transports aériens d'aujourd'hui. À l'époque de Desnoyers, il n'est pas vraiment une nouveauté. Dans leur ouvrage *Triumful visătorilor (Le triomphe des rêveurs)*, Ion Hobana et Lucien Weveberg nous apprennent que les frères Montgolfier sont parvenus, le 5 juin 1783, à lancer leur ballon à presque 2000 mètres. Perfectionné ultérieurement grâce au remplacement de l'air chaud par l'hydrogène, en novembre de la même année, il permet au physicien Jacques Charles, accompagné du constructeur Anne-Jean Robert, de faire les premières observations scientifiques à 3000 mètres. Trois ans plus tard, la réalité rencontre la fiction avec Louis-Sébastien Mercier, auteur de l'utopie *L'An 2440, rêve s'il en fut jamais*. Dans un chapitre intitulé « L'aérostat », il imagine d'utiliser un carrosse suspendu à l'aérostat pour le voyage aérien en Afrique, en Amérique, à Pékin. On sait comment le ballon a inspiré depuis de nombreux auteurs de science-fiction, à commencer bien sûr par Jules Verne (*Cinq semaines en ballon*) ou, plus récemment, P. J. Farmer dans le troisième volume du *Fleuve de l'Éternité*<sup>48</sup>.

Ce rêve de voler existe depuis toujours. Enoch, le personnage que Dyrcona rencontre dans le paradis terrestre y parvient à l'aide de deux vases lutés hermétiquement, remplis de la fumée des sacrifices destinés à la divinité et qu'il place sous les aisselles. Le principe du fonctionnement du ballon est déjà là. L'intérêt pour cet appareil de vol s'est maintenu jusqu'à aujourd'hui, la difficulté consistant dans la capacité de résister aux courants d'air, de créer le gouvernail capable de leur tenir tête d'après le modèle des zeppelins<sup>49</sup>. L'idée de remplacer les avions polluants par des dirigeables beaucoup plus écologiques n'a pas disparu ; Jacques Sternberg sera peut-être heureux un jour de voir que l'on utilise dans les airs l'équivalent non polluant de sa bicyclette terrestre.

Face à ces bouleversements, le narrateur semble ne plus savoir où il est. « Mais quelle est cette ville ? Est-ce vraiment Paris ? » : cette question récurrente peut être considérée comme un deuxième leitmotiv de l'ouvrage après le « Ça ne s'est jamais vu » de Laroutine dans la Lune.

Comme dans la plupart des récits utopiques, il trouve un interlocuteur, lequel en l'occurrence « parle le français aussi bien qu'un Russe et le latin comme un Hongrois »<sup>50</sup> et dont le métier est celui de garçon d'épicier.

Le narrateur apprend alors qu'il se trouve à Paris, mais il s'agit du « Paris civilisé » ; avant de reprendre son travail, notre garçon d'épicier doit encore répondre à la dernière question : comment tout cela s'est-il fait ? C'est tout simple : on a découvert par chance un homme capable de changer le monde. S'agit-il de Robert-Robert ? L'identité de cet homme



providentiel ne sera pas dévoilée, et l'histoire se termine à ce moment précis par la mort de Robert-Robert. Moralité : « Quand on fait de si beaux rêves, on est heureux de ne plus s'éveiller »<sup>51</sup>.

Le schéma narratif classique du discours utopique tel qu'il est défini par Jean-Michel Racault comporte quatre critères qui se retrouvent tous dans cette histoire. La rupture progressive avec le monde réel survient à l'occasion d'une maladie ou d'un songe. La frontière utopique est franchie avec la distanciation géographique et la rupture temporelle. Le tableau utopique est décrit au fil d'un itinéraire et la description entrecoupée de dialogues avec l'utopien, ce qui permet d'entretenir l'effet de réel. Le progrès social et politique s'installe en même temps que le personnage dans le pays. C'est au moment où le héros apprend l'existence de l'homme providentiel que le rêve s'évanouit. Il est rare en revanche que la mort du héros survienne à la fin du récit. En général, il retourne dans son pays pour raconter ce qu'il a vu et entendu (comme Laroutine). Dans le cas présent, le récit se limite au rêve transmis – incomplètement – par le narrateur.

Prise dans son ensemble, l'histoire oscille entre réalité et invention. Cependant, le personnage de Robert-Robert étant des plus recommandables, nous sommes tentée de lui accorder notre crédit. Comme nous l'avons vu, il se situe dans la lignée de Don Quichotte ou de Candide. Son attitude n'a rien de commun avec celle de Laroutine, et son récit est plus fiable que celui du Parisien, enclin à l'exagération. Enfin, l'histoire est restituée par le narrateur lui-même, ce qui est de nature à rassurer le lecteur.

À coup sûr, beaucoup de nos lecteurs trouveront fort saugrenues la plupart des idées qui sont émises dans cet opuscule [...] Il n'est pas sans importance en effet pour les lecteurs sérieux, de constater où en étaient déjà certains esprits aventureux dès les premières années du règne de Louis-Philippe [...] Et puis à côté d'idées qui pourront sembler encore paradoxales, extravagantes, il en est d'autres qui ont déjà reçu leur complète application, ou qui seront bientôt en voie de mise en œuvre<sup>52</sup>.

L'auteur se place donc dans une perspective historique. Plutôt que de parler de « mensonge », terme utilisé par Christa Illef-Delahaye<sup>53</sup> pour caractériser les faits décrits dans ce rêve, il nous semble plus convenable de parler d'« invention » qui implique l'idée d'une projection de l'être humain vers l'avenir. Le rêve de Robert-Robert fonctionne en effet « à la

manière d'un récit d'anticipation qui s'inscrit dans la tradition du progrès de l'humanité »<sup>54</sup>.

Le rêve de Robert-Robert se ressent de l'influence du socialisme utopique, et la vision du monde qui s'en dégage porte l'empreinte « des songes des Saint-Simon, des Fourier, des Cabet<sup>55</sup>, des Pierre Leroux, des Robert Owen et de tant d'autres philosophes socialistes, communistes, amphigouristes », dont la pensée marqua les esprits dans les années 1830. Nous souscrivons volontiers à l'hypothèse formulée par Christa Ilef-Delahaye au sujet de la filiation de Robert-Robert. Robert Owen eut un fils prénommé aussi Robert. Dès 1825, Robert Owen père<sup>56</sup> avait fondé aux États-Unis, à Harmony (Indiana), une communauté basée sur ses préceptes qui s'est soldée par un échec. Son fils l'attribua au fait que son père avait admis dans sa communauté toutes sortes d'individus, idée reprise à sa façon par Robert-Robert lorsqu'il avance que les « législateurs de l'humanité n'oubliaient qu'une seule condition pour rendre leurs systèmes applicables : celle de refaire d'abord l'humanité »<sup>57</sup>. L'explication du redoublement du prénom en Robert-Robert est interprétée comme

une sorte de dépassement de la pensée du maître [...]. Tout se passe en fait comme si au Robert utopiste, succédait le Robert-Robert engagé dans une réforme de la société. On quitte en quelque sorte la sphère idéaliste pour rejoindre celle du « possible ». Il s'agirait donc d'une utopie somme toute raisonnable, définie non comme un objectif improbable, mais comme un nouvel aménagement de la société en direction de l'idéal inaccessible, compte tenu de la nature humaine<sup>58</sup>.

Le terme *amphigouriste* placé par l'auteur à côté de *socialiste* et *communiste* peut constituer aussi une prise de conscience de la proportion d'invention – ou pour certains de confusion – qui caractérise ces textes. Le nom du poète Lamartine présent dans l'épisode final en tant qu'amateur d'agriculture nous amène aux rapports existant entre romantisme et socialisme utopique. Vers les années 1820, le romantisme français se tourne vers le libéralisme et les Trois Glorieuses sont souvent qualifiées de « révolution romantique », qualificatif attribué également aux socialistes utopiques. Le terme de « socialisme » lancé par Pierre Leroux en 1832 désigne « ce groupe naissant qui trouve des réponses nouvelles à la misère se développant dans la société proto-industrielle »<sup>59</sup>. Le qualificatif d'« utopique » utilisé plus tard par Engels ne renvoie pas au

terme « utopie » dans son acception originelle (*ou-topos*, non-lieu). Il s'agit là d'un « discours réformateur, voire révolutionnaire visant à éclairer des choix et des comportements, donc à s'appliquer dans la réalité »<sup>60</sup>. Les romantiques ont en commun avec les socialistes la révolte contre l'ordre des choses, le rêve d'un monde pacifié et éternel, la recherche de l'harmonie, la réconciliation de l'individu avec la collectivité, une dimension sociale et affective. L'époque voit émerger l'idée d'une confédération européenne où chaque nationalité aurait sa place. « Avant même qu'on tente de les transposer dans la réalité, les utopies socialistes sont « littéraires »<sup>61</sup>. Mais à la différence des romantiques, les socialistes utopiques prétendent appliquer leurs théories ; ils se veulent avant tout des hommes d'action, soucieux d'expérimenter leur modèle et de se confronter à la pratique, ce qu'ils ont fait à une échelle réduite et sans grand succès car dénués de réalisme. Paradoxalement, c'est Lamartine, poète romantique, qui fut un véritable homme d'action comme député et homme politique très actif, mais aussi comme entrepreneur soucieux de moderniser l'agriculture ; il a mis en oeuvre des méthodes nouvelles qu'il a expérimentées avec succès dans son domaine situé en Saône-et-Loire. C'est lui qui aurait inspiré le choix de Robert-Robert devenu à son tour agriculteur ouvert à l'innovation.

La cité idéale se situe non dans un Ailleurs inaccessible, mais dans un monde en progrès travaillé par d'énormes transformations. Contrairement à Lavenette, l'un des protagonistes du roman qui n'a rien appris de son voyage, Robert-Robert en sort profondément changé. Tandis que dans la Lune, Laroutine rejoue le rôle de Lavenette, Robert-Robert va devenir un citoyen engagé dans l'amélioration et le progrès de la société, avec toutes les difficultés qui en résultent.

Eutopie<sup>62</sup>, utopie, uchronie, comment caractériser ces deux épisodes du roman de Louis Desnoyers ? L'uchronie est une « utopie appliquée à l'histoire, histoire refaite logiquement telle qu'elle aurait pu être et qu'elle n'a pas été »<sup>63</sup>. « Mais quelle est cette ville ? » se demandait Robert-Robert. Adoptons provisoirement le point de vue de Engels et admettons qu'il s'agisse d'une tentative pour réformer le monde – une uchronie avant la lettre projetée dans un futur proche et vigoureusement critique à l'égard de la société existante. La science-fiction, sous sa forme spéculative, permet cette conclusion, et elle le peut d'autant plus que la question de savoir si ce genre constitue ou non un prolongement moderne de l'utopie classique n'est toujours pas tranchée<sup>64</sup>.

Nous nous proposons maintenant d'aborder dans une perspective similaire une oeuvre appartenant à un auteur du XX<sup>e</sup> siècle. Bien que située dans une tout autre époque et relevant – pour cette raison mais pas seulement – d'une esthétique totalement différente, elle n'en offre pas moins des points de comparaison et développe des points de vue sur la société qui méritent d'être examinés et confrontés. Avant toutefois de tourner la page, laissons la parole à Louis Desnoyers : « Les principes de la morale ne changent pas, non sans doute, car le fond de l'humanité ne change pas non plus ; mais ce qui change, ce qui se modifie incessamment, ce sont les formes de l'humanité, et par conséquent, les applications diverses des grands principes qui la régissent »<sup>65</sup>.

## **II. De Jacques Sternberg et de l'humour dans la science-fiction : vers quelle réalité ?**

### **Qui est Jacques Sternberg ?**

Nous ne pouvons pas entrer dans l'analyse du volume *188 contes à régler* de Jacques Sternberg sans dire quelques mots sur cet auteur plus connu comme journaliste que comme romancier. Né le 17 avril 1923 à Anvers d'une famille de riche diamantaire juif russe, élève médiocre à l'école, particulièrement en français, il commence à écrire à l'âge de quinze ou seize ans, à Cannes, où sa famille s'est réfugiée. Ses débuts littéraires sont marqués par l'expérience déterminante de la guerre – camp de concentration, évasion, maquis – qui fixe, de façon durable, son nihilisme, son sens de la dérision, son humour glacé et la hantise de la mort, présente dans toutes ses oeuvres. La guerre terminée, il mène pendant dix ans la dure vie d'employé comme emballer, représentant de commerce, dactylo, vendeur, commis, publiciste, ce qui ne fait que renforcer ce fond pessimiste. « L'Anversois de Paris » est qualifié d'« enfant terrible » des lettres françaises, champion de l'humour noir, du sarcasme, de la dérision ou encore du délire glacé, que ce soit dans la science-fiction, le fantastique ou le roman d'amour ; il est sans rival dans le texte court, aux dires de son vieil ami Topor.

Des difficultés apparaissent cependant lorsqu'il s'agit de procéder à un classement générique de ses oeuvres. Dans la *Base de Données Francophone de l'Imaginaire* (BDFI), Sternberg est considéré comme auteur de romans, de recueils, d'anthologies, de nouvelles, d'essais et de

textes « hors genres »<sup>66</sup>. Si l'on confronte le classement des titres proposé dans les rubriques de la BDFI avec celui de Pierre Versins dans son encyclopédie de la science-fiction ou encore avec celui d'Henri Baudin (publié dans un article de la revue *Cahier comique et communication*)<sup>67</sup>, on ne peut que constater des différences notables. Sans pousser plus loin la comparaison, on peut au moins souligner le fait que dans le classement de la BDFI, les *188 contes à régler* sont placés, avec un point d'interrogation, dans la catégorie du roman mais aussi dans celle des « recueils, anthologies, omnibus... ».

### Science-fiction et humour

Dans l'*Encyclopédie de l'utopie des voyages extraordinaires et de la science-fiction*<sup>68</sup>, Pierre Versins présente non sans humour notre auteur :

Écrivain belge (1923 -) qui, si on l'en croyait, ne devrait pas figurer dans cette Encyclopédie. En effet, il a, dit-il, « abandonné la science-fiction après deux volumes ». Ce qu'il ne spécifie pas, c'est le titre des deux volumes en question, pour la bonne raison qu'ils ne paraîtront, si tout va bien, qu'en 2012 et 2024 (à cette époque, sa production ne sera plus – la fatigue sans doute – que d'un ouvrage tous les deux ans). Ils auront pour titres, respectivement, *La réalité dépasse l'affliction* et *Pourquoi j'ai brûlé la bibliothèque de Pierre Versins*. Il sera pendu pour cela, en 2053, après un long procès qui égaiera enfin sa vieillesse.

Dans un film documentaire, J. Sternberg affirme que le terme science-fiction est barbare : « Je ne supporte pas les romans de science-fiction qui se passent dans la galaxie bis 432, au quarantième siècle... Je ne fais pas de la science-fiction, je fais de la parodie de ce qui se passe sur Terre, c'est un tremplin pratique pour injurier l'homme »<sup>69</sup>. Pourtant, dans un autre documentaire, « Dérision et célébration »<sup>70</sup>, datant toujours de 1989, Sternberg évoque entre autres ses *188 contes à régler* qui marquent, après une pause de 25 ans, son retour à la science-fiction. À cette même occasion, il se réfère aux « contes » qui traduisent sa hantise de Dieu, à commencer par *La perte* : « Il était une fois un Dieu qui avait perdu la foi », où le conte de fée débouche sur l'irréparable (jeu de mots sur « fois » et « foi », passage du verbe « perdre » au passé) ; puis il lit le texte de *l'Invention*<sup>71</sup>, plus noir encore, qui révèle sa hantise de la mort :

Il avait inventé une petite antenne portable qui supprimait radicalement les pensées parasites du cerveau humain.

Il l'essaya avec succès sur sa propre personne. À peine avait-il donné le contact qu'il ne pensait plus qu'à la mort, à l'inutilité de toute entreprise, à la vanité d'avoir mis au point cet engin révolutionnaire. Le temps de penser à couper le contact, il s'était suicidé.

J. Sternberg joue bien souvent sur l'effet de suspense. Ce sont les possibilités de la technique qui l'amènent dès le début du texte à *inventer* cette « antenne portable » capable de supprimer radicalement les pensées parasites du cerveau humain. Les mots « avec succès » censés couronner l'entreprise sont rendus dérisoires face au résultat obtenu : « il ne pensait plus qu'à la mort, à l'inutilité de toute entreprise, à la vanité d'avoir mis au point cet engin révolutionnaire » qui le conduit au suicide : « Le temps de penser à couper le contact, il s'était suicidé ».

L'humour noir surgit du décalage entre l'intention et le résultat. On assiste à une sorte de fuite en avant alors qu'on s'attendait à un long commentaire. Les bonnes intentions ne sont pas toujours les meilleures, tout comme la vanité de l'être humain qui cherche le canot de sauvetage à l'extérieur. L'inventeur est piégé par sa propre invention et le lecteur lui-même piégé par le titre qui laissait présager un dénouement positif.

Dans un compte rendu de l'essai de J. Sternberg *Une succursale du fantastique nommée science-fiction*, H. Baudin souligne la préférence manifeste de l'auteur pour l'humour noir de la science-fiction américaine, situé très au-dessus de celui des humoristes français consacrés (Alphonse Allais par exemple) : « Si la propriété naturelle de cette mythologie moderne est d'être un reflet grimaçant de la démence propre à notre siècle, sa couleur ambiante est sans doute le noir. Même quand elle verse dans l'humour ou dans le saugrenu, la S.F. presque toujours reste noire »<sup>72</sup>.

Le regard distancié de l'extraterrestre, comme celui de l'étranger dans le conte philosophique, fait éclater l'absurde. Poursuivant son analyse, Henri Baudin ajoute que « par l'existence supposée d'une infinité d'ailleurs et d'autrement, la Science-Fiction nous soulage de notre routine, nous allège de nos contraintes, nous sort de nos limites ». En allant jusqu'au bout d'une science-fiction ouverte, on arrive à une sorte de spéculative-fiction.

Cet allègement de l'ailleurs est une euphorie voisine de celle du comique, et favorable à la prolifération de ce dernier. [...] La science-fiction offre la face grinçante d'une exigence libertaire, dans sa vision, son extrapolation ou son anticipation immédiate de la réalité présente, et une face libératrice dans son ouverture sur d'autres mondes et par son élargissement en Spéculative-Fiction ; *or, grinçant ou mousseux, le comique s'accorde avec ces deux orientations*<sup>73</sup>.

De l'avis même de J. Sternberg, ce n'est pas la peine de parler d'humour, car on ne peut absolument pas expliquer ce que c'est, ni convaincre les gens qui y sont allergiques. Jonathan Pollock considère néanmoins que si la définition de l'humour est souvent décevante, on peut apprendre à le reconnaître et à le mettre en valeur : « L'humour s'éprouve : c'est avant tout une sensation. » Parmi ses valeurs compte la dérision derrière laquelle ne se dissimule aucune autre valeur. J. Sternberg ne voit rien de constructif dans l'humour, issu d'un trop plein de lucidité, de vérité, de nihilisme. Pourtant l'humour existe, avec des modalités d'expression qui lui sont plus ou moins spécifiques.

Pour comprendre le phénomène de l'humour il ne faut pas négliger celui de la mélancolie<sup>74</sup>, le rapport entre humeur et humour. Une des caractéristiques de l'écriture humoristique consiste à jouer des variations de rythme, tantôt plus lent, tantôt plus rapide, « de l'inadaptation du ton au contenu, de l'incongruité du registre lexical, de la logique burlesque qui s'installe aux moments les plus graves, des digressions et des commentaires qui s'attaquent à la matière romanesque lui ôtant toute charge émotionnelle »<sup>75</sup>. Dans l'introduction de son ouvrage sur l'humour, Frank Evrard insiste sur la difficulté de le situer et de le définir dans une oeuvre littéraire, compte tenu de la variété des degrés, des thèmes, de son aspect subtil et diffus qui empêche de le réduire aux caractéristiques d'un trope spécifique.

Pourtant, s'il fallait saisir l'humour dans ses manifestations langagières, autrement dit comme langage, à l'instar du structuralisme triomphant des années 60, et en usant des ressources de la vieille rhétorique, le trope le plus approprié, selon Dominique Noguez<sup>76</sup>, serait la *syllèpse*. Pierre Fontanier en donne de son côté l'explication suivante : « prendre un même mot tout à la fois dans deux sens différents, l'un primitif ou censé tel, mais toujours du moins propre ; et l'autre figuré ou censé tel, s'il ne l'est pas toujours en effet ; ce qui a lieu par métonymie, par synecdoque ou par métaphore »<sup>77</sup>. Et Dominique Noguez de développer

l'explication : les deux sens ne sont pas *appréhendés* en même temps, y compris dans le cas où ils sont *donnés* en même temps ; le second sens ne remplace pas le premier, les deux sens coexistent au moins un moment. Dans un texte, nous pouvons avoir l'interférence de deux chaînes sémantiques, l'une constituant l'élément commun, l'autre l'élément « défigeant (ou décoagulant, défigurant, *dédoublant*) » de la syllepse. La première « postule et obtient la monosémie, ferme le sens », la deuxième « défige, perturbe, conteste, provoque la polysémie (ou plutôt la di-sémie), ouvre le sens »<sup>78</sup>. Mais Noguez se sent obligé de rajouter à la fin :

La syllepse qu'est l'humour introduit moins un deuxième sens qu'un deuxième degré. Quel est ce « je ne sais quoi » ou ce « presque rien » qui fait passer d'un degré à l'autre ? C'est moins un peu plus de sens qu'un peu plus de conscience. [...] L'humour est manque de conviction, sa carence vient d'une carence ontologique volontaire<sup>79</sup>.

À la syllepse, Jonathan Pollock ajoute dans un même registre la litote, l'exagération et l'hyperbole<sup>80</sup>.

### **Pour les formes brèves**

Dans la préface à ses *188 contes* qu'il a intitulé « Un dernier compte à régler », Jacques Sternberg affirme qu'à ses yeux il s'agit d'« un livre choc dans (s)on fluctuant parcours personnel ». Ces textes courts, parfois extrêmement courts (« L'ultra-bref, ma véritable patrie » dit-il) seront repris en 1988 après une interruption de vingt-cinq ans et republiés en 1998 :

C'est ainsi que mes contes furent écrits dans la hargne retrouvée, longtemps refoulée, vierge de tout adjuvant, ce qui me donna – en bord de mer et hors saison – une frénésie de me laisser dériver dans mes fantasmes les plus noirs, froidement rédigés, réduits à l'essentiel durement concentré : ma nausée de la mort, mon horreur de ce que l'humain fait de sa planète et de sa civilisation technocratisée, ma prédilection pour les dérapages sidéraux et les excursions galactiques qui tourment mal, ma haine de la névrose promotionnelle qui a tout perverti depuis les années 80, ma certitude de l'inutilité fatale de tout, que ce soit dans la réussite ou le ratage, et j'en passe<sup>81</sup>...

Dans les contes de Sternberg, c'est incontestablement la forme brève qui domine. Cette forme d'expression, comme l'indique Bernard



Roukhomovsky dans son étude *Lire les formes brèves*<sup>82</sup>, « recouvre un champ littéraire à géométrie variable ». Elle est marquée par un régime d’ambiguïtés « qui pèsent sur la notion de brièveté d’une part, sur le statut rhétorique de la forme brève de l’autre. La tradition rhétorique demande que par une forme brève l’on dise, évidemment, *beaucoup de choses en peu de mots* et, si possible, à faire penser plus qu’on ne dit »<sup>83</sup>. Du point de vue rhétorique, Roukhomovsky distingue deux régimes de la forme brève : d’une part, l’enchâssement c’est-à-dire « l’insertion dans un texte continu, à l’intérieur duquel elle demeure identifiable et conserve ses caractères spécifiques, mais avec lequel elle fait corps néanmoins : la maxime, le proverbe, l’anecdote, la citation... », d’autre part le montage en série qui consiste à rompre avec la norme du discours continu, « c’est-à-dire à composer une œuvre discontinue (mais qui se veut œuvre à part entière) par juxtaposition d’énoncés indépendants séparés les uns des autres par divers signes typographiques (alinéa, pied de mouche, numérotation, blanc interstitiel, etc.) : la problématique des formes brèves recoupe alors avec le discours discontinu. » Cette coupure dans la linéarité du discours continu offre au lecteur la possibilité d’inventer et de multiplier ses parcours de lecture.

De par ses dimensions réduites, le texte bref conduit à une pratique de la densité, il crée comme une relation dialogique entre l’auteur et son lecteur avec une certaine force de frappe. Le refus d’exhaustivité, l’écriture brisée sont appelés par Pascal Quignard « poncifs de la modernité ». Dans l’art moderne du moins, dit-il,

l’effet du discontinu s’est substitué à l’effet de liaison. [...] Peut-être la tête des modernes, par une lucidité plus douloureuse, « tourne »-t-elle, – les vérités ayant perdu tout caractère stable, [...], les maîtrises coutumières, religieuses, agricoles, prédatrices, artisanales, artistiques s’étant brisées – peut-être s’est-elle séparée à bon escient des cercles, des tous, des unités et des savoirs qui avaient trop apparence d’homme, de fantasma d’homme, de satisfaction de tête humaine<sup>84</sup>.

Comment donc caractériser les textes courts des *188 contes* : nouvelles, pour quelques-uns d’entre eux, simples anecdotes ou plus largement récits brefs ? Ce dernier terme aurait notre préférence. Le récit bref présente l’avantage de pouvoir naviguer d’un texte à l’autre de façon aléatoire, sans itinéraire contraignant ; il permet une lecture discontinue, laissant par là même une grande liberté au lecteur comme du reste à l’auteur.

Dans sa brièveté, le « conte » chez Sternberg peut se réduire à un simple énoncé, et s'apparente alors, d'un point de vue structural, à certaines formes gnomiques comme la sentence ou l'aphorisme<sup>85</sup>.

Cette prédilection pour le récit bref est clairement exprimée par Sternberg lorsqu'il affirme dans un autoportrait publié par le *Magazine littéraire* : « Ce que je n'aime pas, c'est écrire systématiquement un roman avec de la science-fiction d'un bout à l'autre. Je trouve ça très ennuyeux et c'est ce que je reproche à la science-fiction en général »<sup>86</sup>.

### **Thèmes et motifs de la science-fiction parsemés d'humour**

Dans les 188 *contes à régler*, ces récits brefs, assimilables parfois à « une mitraille de faits divers et d'informations réduites à quelques lignes » sont au nombre de 183, auxquels s'ajoutent cinq autres contes datant du début des années 50. On y retrouve, à l'instar d'autres textes de Sternberg, la veine du fantastique et de l'humour noir.

Écrits bien des années plus tôt, les *Contes glacés*<sup>87</sup> étaient organisés selon une thématique très large : Les objets, Les autres, Les animaux, Les lieux, Les êtres humains, L'ailleurs, Les lois de la nature, Les incidents. Dans les 188 *contes*, les différentes pièces se succèdent dans l'ordre alphabétique des titres (à l'exception des cinq contes plus anciens), quelle que soit la diversité des thèmes traités. Cette organisation n'est-elle pas une manière d'illustrer l'arbitraire de la vie en général ? À quoi bon tenter une classification dans le décousu général de ce monde ?

Cela nous amène à considérer l'un des contes les plus révélateurs de la vision du monde de J. Sternberg, *Le voyageur*<sup>88</sup> ; il met en scène un homme dont la vie a été traversée par un seul grand désir, une unique préoccupation : construire la machine à remonter le temps. À l'âge de soixante ans, sa machine peut le conduire dix, quinze, quarante ans même dans le passé pour des intervalles de dix minutes avec, comme résultat, le même souci de réaliser son rêve. À vingt ans déjà, en écoutant un disque de jazz, le jeune adolescent qu'il avait été griffonnait les calculs et les plans « de sa machine à remonter le temps ». Dans ce texte, la syllepse joue un rôle évident. Le texte est intitulé *Le voyageur*. Mais s'agit-il d'un véritable voyage ou devons-nous plutôt parler d'un voyage immobile, compte tenu de la hantise du personnage, habité par une idée fixe qui traverse toute son existence ?

Le classement personnel des 188 *contes* nous a permis de dresser, par recoupement, une liste significative des principaux thèmes de la

science-fiction récurrents dans l'ensemble du recueil : voyages de découverte vers d'autres planètes, voyages dans le temps, altérité (les Terriens découvrent d'autres planètes, les autres la Terre), machines (techniques modernes, résultats des découvertes), mondes parallèles, habitudes. Le grand nombre de contes nous a obligée à opérer un choix, réalisé à partir d'exemples significatifs mis en parallèle.

### **1. Les machines**

L'exemple précédent des machines nous incite à poursuivre notre investigation dans le même sens, avec cette fois comme motif l'ordinateur. Il est présent dans plusieurs récits, dont *L'affolement*, *L'avis*<sup>89</sup>.

Dans *L'affolement*, une guerre située en 1999 (la « guerre de 1999 ») fait appel à la mobilisation générale régie au moyen de l'ordinateur. Mais comme c'est une première, les ordinateurs, affolés, font « une légère erreur de numéro de code ». Il en résulte bizarrement que « toutes les femmes et les enfants de moins de douze ans » sont appelés sous les drapeaux. L'humour noir est bien là, la syllepse joue pleinement son rôle. Elle intervient dans le modèle bergsonien de l'interférence des séries: d'une caractéristique attribuée généralement aux êtres humains plus ou moins capables de maîtriser des situations difficiles, l'affolement se transmet ici aux machines qui perdent tout contrôle ou presque.

Dans un récit de moins de cinq lignes, *L'avis*, on raconte que le seul survivant, « dans l'unique maison encore intacte d'une banlieue de la capitale entièrement détruite » reçoit « là-bas un dernier avis avant saisie que lui envoyaient les contributions ». Le titre n'est pas là seulement pour illustrer le double sens du mot *avis* (au lieu de prévenir le survivant du danger encouru, il le menace de saisie), mais un jeu sur la troisième acception du terme, synonyme d'opinion. Le lecteur est invité implicitement à avoir son propre avis sur ce jeu absurde où tout raisonnement est renversé.

L'impact négatif des machines dans la société civilisée constitue un autre motif largement récurrent. Ainsi, dans *Le bois*, le rôle négatif de la civilisation conduit vers un mouvement à rebours : les produits en bois sont récupérés à grand frais pour fabriquer de petits arbres qui, implantés dans les plaines et les vallées pour se transformer en forêts, serviront à l'exploitation du bois. Dans *La boulimie*, les gens deviennent « pathologiquement inaptes à acheter quoi que ce soit » à la suite d'un excès de publicité. *Les clichés*<sup>90</sup> illustrent la folie de l'appareil photo

chez les Japonais : ils ont juste l'idée et le temps « de prendre un cliché de l'explosion atomique qui devait les tuer et raser Tokyo à la fin de la guerre sino-japonaise de 2014 ». Dans *La disparition*, le chiffre 2 a disparu du monde des mathématiques, avec toutes les conséquences qu'on peut imaginer, en l'occurrence la suppression de l'an 2002 qui devient, « avec une impitoyable logique, l'an 00 ». On peut encore citer *Les enchères*, où le frigidaire Bosch, modèle 1985, est adjugé « à une multinationale belge pour la somme de 7 millions de dollars » et pris « pour une œuvre du génial Jérôme Bosch ». Ou encore *Le record*, où un pétrolier « à la pointe de toutes les techniques, sans rival sur les mers » est capable de transporter 130 000 tonnes de pétrole dont il consomme la moitié pour une traversée océanique. Ces textes, comme tous les autres de ce volume d'ailleurs, sont écrits d'une manière très neutre, sans effet de style. Le langage est simple et sobre jouant sur la répétition de mots et de phrases parfois fort brèves. Ils expriment la réserve de l'auteur face aux excès de la technique. Sternberg n'a d'ailleurs pas eu son permis de conduire, il s'est toujours déplacé en Solex<sup>91</sup>.

## **2. Mondes parallèles**

*L'autre* tient dans une page écrite à la première personne. Sur P. Bis (Planète bis), comme pour les maisons mitoyennes, le narrateur-héros fait des expériences quelque peu différentes sans changer pour autant l'essentiel de ce qui constitue sa vocation. Sur la Terre il est un romancier « en marge de stupides boulots peu lucratifs » alors que sur P. Bis il est un « journaliste brillant, très connu et fort demandé ». Si sa carrière a « déraillé », c'est parce qu'il n'a pas épousé la même femme, mariée sur cette planète parallèle à un architecte de Boston ; ce dernier fut débarqué sur la place d'Arromanches le 5 juin 1944, date prévue initialement par l'état-major, et non pas le 6 comme sur la Terre, ce qui entraîna sa mort sur cette planète. Double jeu une fois de plus sur le mot du titre : « l'autre » peut désigner le romancier devenu journaliste sur P. Bis, mais aussi l'architecte de Boston ; il peut aussi représenter l'autre planète. Comme le récit est à la première personne, on pourrait y déceler une intention autobiographique.

*Le double* est un récit d'une page écrit à la troisième personne, ce qui crée une distanciation. Un voyageur intergalactique est engagé par une compagnie interspatiale avec le pressentiment d'arriver un jour dans un monde parallèle ; en congé d'une semaine, il reçoit l'ordre d'atterrir dans

« un vaste terrain destiné aux départs et aux arrivées des astronefs galactiques ». Cependant, « son double parfait » atterrit sur la Terre. Notre voyageur découvre le monde parallèle pressenti avec comme femme la sœur jumelle de la sienne ; celle-ci a « plus de douceur et de tendre ironie dans le regard ». Résultat :

« – Tu es déjà de retour ? demanda la femme.

– Oui. Le vol a été annulé, dit-il. »

La litote n'est pas difficile à découvrir lors du dénouement. Ni la syllepse jouant sur une équivoque : il peut s'agir du « double parfait », mais aussi du double moins parfait représenté par sa femme. Dans ces deux derniers textes, on observe que le thème des mondes parallèles est lié au motif du voyage et à celui de l'altérité. D'autre part, à cause de la brièveté du texte, on ne prend jamais dans ces récits le temps de s'installer dans le décor du monde décrit. Sternberg se contente d'objectiver tout sujet. L'élan vers un sens conduit à son contraire, il s'agit là d'un désespoir de sens.

Deux mondes parallèles, une nouvelle expression de l'altérité, dans la nouvelle *L'équilibre*<sup>92</sup> :

Alors, dans la nuit des temps, le premier homme pensant sorti de son antre, toisa le grandiose paysage qui l'entourait et crut sentir monter en lui le besoin larvaire, mais lancinant, d'autre chose.

Alors, ce matin de printemps, le directeur d'une banque sortit de son hôtel particulier, toisa sa journée bien remplie et crut sentir tourner en lui le besoin confus, pernicieux, d'autre chose.

Mais de quoi ? De quoi ?

Deux phrases de même longueur sont suivies d'une double question applicable en égale mesure à chacune des phrases précédentes. Le premier homme pensant, *sorti* « dans la nuit des temps » de « son antre » aspire à autre chose, tandis que par « ce matin de printemps, le directeur d'une banque » *sort* « de son hôtel particulier » en éprouvant la même aspiration. Les deux phrases commencent par l'adverbe « alors », marquant la fin d'une attente prolongée. Il s'ensuit que cette aspiration « monte » pour le premier, tandis qu'elle « tourne » pour le deuxième ; elle est décrite comme un besoin « larvaire mais lancinant » pour le premier, « confus et pernicieux » pour le second. L'un « toise » un « grandiose paysage », l'autre « sa journée bien remplie ». Et l'un et l'autre (mais peut-être aussi le narrateur) s'interrogent : « Mais de quoi ? De quoi ? ». Par syllepse,

l'équilibre devient signe de déséquilibre : les deux hommes venant d'époques différentes se posent la même question mais ne recherchent pas la même chose. Peut-être cherchent-ils ce que l'autre possède. Le lecteur quant à lui est surtout conscient de la vanité de cette quête où s'exprime l'insatisfaction ontologique de l'être humain.

La définition de l'uchronie, qui consiste à réécrire l'histoire à partir d'hypothèses différentes, montre la similitude existant entre cette forme de science-fiction et les mondes parallèles. Cette similitude nous était apparue déjà dans le récit intitulé *L'autre*.

*Le plan* évoque l'invasion de la Terre par des extraterrestres, avec comme objectif de « l'annexer, la coloniser ». Les événements de 1912 et 1933 ont été mis en place par « des agents parfaitement humains » envoyés par les Grydèges avec pour mission de « devenir des militaires, des pros du combat, des provocateurs, des tueurs gradés, des chefs de commandos ». La « Grande invasion » est prévue pour l'an 2000, mais leur plan échoue. Leur plan n'est plus un plan ; on ne peut pas faire des plans lorsqu'il s'agit des humains :

Les horreurs de la guerre révoltent moins les Terriens que celles du cul. Les tueurs ont toujours été leurs héros de prédilection. Fabriquer des armes est, partout, leur industrie la plus prospère. Au nom du fanatisme, on peut les envoyer au fond de n'importe quel charnier. Aller au combat leur paraît peut être moins humiliant qu'aller au bureau. Bref, ce n'est pas un *cochon* qui sommeille dans l'homme, mais un *canon*.

La forme proverbiale qui ponctue ce paragraphe est reprise de l'original : « Tout homme a dans son cœur un cochon qui sommeille » (d'après les notes tirées du carnet du sculpteur Auguste Préault, 1879)<sup>93</sup>. Cette sentence aux sens multiples est ici transposée, modifiée, reprise avec une distance ironique. La version originale invite à voir dans l'homme, entre cœur et cochon, un être mauvais, voire morbide. Dans sa réécriture, la formule proverbiale subit une « une modification susceptible d'en altérer le sens tout en préservant la structure ou son noyau ». Le double jeu consiste à dénoncer la sagesse un peu trop figée dont elle constitue le réceptacle ou le véhicule et à déjouer des attentes trop prévisibles<sup>94</sup>. L'homme peut s'avérer plus dangereux encore que dans le constat établi par Auguste Préault. Comme pour les surréalistes<sup>95</sup>, pour Sternberg le jeu est une forme d'activité qui dépasse le simple divertissement. La manipulation ludique d'une phrase toute faite peut

avoir partie liée avec une dénonciation de l'ordre existant et remettre en cause les systèmes de valeurs et le consensus de la société.

Le récit intitulé *Le film*, présenté comme tourné au début des années 90, est une « war-fiction à grand spectacle » qui « donnait une vision nouvelle d'une épopée classique de l'Histoire. [...] Il mettait en scène, avec une hallucinante vérité, le débarquement de Normandie qui se soldait par la sanglante débâcle des Alliés, rejetés à la mer après dix jours de combats désespérés. Mais, deux mois plus tard, les U.S.A. lançaient leur première bombe atomique sur Berlin et, le lendemain, l'Allemagne nazie capitulait. »

Ce film, qui eut un succès « colossal » et inspira « des avalanches de feuilleteurs télé et des milliers de bandes dessinées » finit par effacer totalement la réalité du 6 juin 1944 pour devenir l'histoire officielle. Pourquoi ? Parce que, un siècle plus tard, l'écrit devenu « si difficile à déchiffrer, ne représentait plus que le morne véhicule de la fiction, de l'utopie fallacieuse et du mensonge », « dans un monde où l'on ne comprenait plus que les images ».

Dans *La tempête*<sup>96</sup>, ce même événement du 6 juin 1944 est repris, mais le 6 juin 2044, lors de la célébration du « centenaire du débarquement des Alliés en Normandie ». Le film est tourné « sur les lieux mêmes de l'action, avec des moyens colossaux et, bien entendu, des armées de figurants en parfaite condition physique. » Tout se déroule de la manière la plus véridique et normale possible, on fait même « plus vrai que les actualités de l'époque » sans provoquer le moindre mal aux acteurs. « Mais un imprévu qui ne figurait ni dans le scénario ni dans les manuels d'histoire allait bouleverser le véritable suspense du film : le débarquement sur les plages ». En effet, quand des « centaines de barges de débarquement » remplies de « matériel humain » « fonçaient vers la plage d'Arromanches [...] le vent du nord-ouest déjà établi à force 4, passa à 7 en moins d'une minute puis, aussi implacablement, à force 9 ». Résultat : un vent puissant qui entraîne non seulement une masse de vagues mais aussi « des hordes de nuages aussi noirs que la nuit » suivis, évidemment, de la pluie. Les deux jours de la tempête ont fait que la fiction dépasse « de loin la réalité ». En 1944 seulement quelques dizaines de soldats « atteints par des balles ou des éclats d'obus en se ruant hors des barges n'avaient pas réussi à atteindre le sable des plages ». La longue phrase qui suit montre, par contraste, qu'en 2044, « seuls quelques centaines de soldats furent rejetés jusqu'au rivage, épuisés, assommés par les vagues, mais vivants, alors qu'on dénombra des milliers de morts par noyade à trois cent mètres

de la côte. [...] Tragédie spectaculaire que les caméras, emportées par les vagues, par les flots déchaînés, ne purent même pas capter. »

Humour noir, contresens ? Dans le premier texte, on fait appel à la mémoire historique des peuples qui peuvent interpréter les événements en fonction de l'évolution de leur société, dans le second, à l'orgueil de l'être humain qui, malgré le progrès technique, ne peut s'opposer à la nature.

### 3. *Altérité*

Le thème de l'altérité est lié au motif de l'extraterrestre avec ses trois types –humanoïdes, non humanoïdes, immatériels – auquel s'ajoute le mutant. Deux types de rapports régissent les relations entre les hommes et les extraterrestres : l'homme est un envahisseur et on rejoue la conquête de l'Ouest ; le territoire humain est envahi et l'on remet en scène les deux dernières guerres mondiales.

« Il était le premier extraterrestre à avoir posé le pied sur le sol de la Terre. Il venait de la planète Gryge, donc de plus loin que nous pouvions l'imaginer. » Ainsi commence *L'arrestation*, dont le motif est le mutant extraterrestre. On remarque dès le début l'imprécision des données et l'utilisation de l'imparfait. Les données deviennent plus claires lorsque nous apprenons la date et le lieu de son arrivée : l'année 1944 sur la Côte d'Azur, en pleine guerre, avec pour mission d'observer la planète sans « se singulariser ». Son sang est incolore, mais aucune autre particularité ne pourrait le distinguer des humains ; qui plus est, il possède une fausse carte d'identité au nom répandu de Marcel Robert. Pris par la Gestapo, il reste très calme, mais finit par provoquer « une réaction de stupeur » venue de la part de l'officier allemand, car le Grygien a des « yeux bleus, presque transparents » des « cheveux blonds presque blancs » et « un demi-sourire de défi ».

« – Toutes nos excuses. De toute évidence, vous ne pouvez pas être juif.

– Ah ! Non, reconnu l'étranger avec un flegme qu'on aurait pu croire britannique. »

À côté de ce Grygien, la plupart des Allemands « avaient l'air de juifs de l'Europe centrale ». C'est celui qui met en état d'arrestation qui devrait donc être arrêté ! Étrange relativité...

Venons-en au *Désert*, un autre récit de longueur comparable. Au milieu du XXII<sup>e</sup> siècle, des êtres intelligents surgis « du fond de l'espace » abordent



la Terre dévastée de fond en comble par une guerre atomique remontant au début du XX<sup>e</sup> siècle ». Tout est mort, sauf les endroits assez isolés les uns des autres où, dans des caves profondes, ils découvrent des « tonnes de papier découpé en rectangle, soigneusement rangés ; écrasés par des amoncellements de blocs de couleur jaune, très lourds, tous semblables entre eux, empilés les uns sur les autres ». Mais les extraterrestres ne peuvent pas comprendre la signification « occulte ou non, de ces murailles souterraines protégées avec tant d'ingéniosité et d'âpre prudence. » Le rôle des livres n'existe plus, le désert est vraiment désert. Peut-on croire à la pérennité de la création humaine ? On reste sceptique.

Dans *La discrétion*<sup>97</sup>, les « autres » font la « grande première galactique si longtemps attendue » en arrivant sur la Terre de manière très discrète, en pleine campagne, sous les yeux d'une population rustique qu'une Rolls « aurait suffi à stupéfier » dans « une seule fusée de taille modeste » d'où sort « une sorte de robot informe où se dissimulait sans doute une improbable créature ». Après avoir émis quelques signaux lumineux à l'intention des badauds, ils se retirent, et les villageois croient qu'ils ont pris quelques instantanés des habitants sans même « penser à prendre un cliché de la petite église romane du patelin, unique curiosité touristique de la région. » Vanité des vanités... Qu'est-ce que la technique peut apprendre à un groupe d'hommes vaniteux et en même temps bourrés de superstitions, quelle aurait pu être l'impression de ces extraterrestres aussitôt partis qu'arrivés, la grande première galactique est-elle une véritable première ?

#### **4. Habitudes. La religion**

*Le créateur* de la planète Fryge est imaginé sous la forme d'un « gigantesque cerisier dont la hauteur frisait les mille mètres et qui, à un rythme régulier dégorgeait à ras du sol, par ses racines, de petites cosses rouges grouillantes ». Ces petites cosses ressemblent à des cerises mais avec de « minuscules membres atrophiés et d'une basse intelligence qui leur permettait de vivoter de façon larvaire ». Les animalcules ne savent que grimper cet arbre par étapes, aucun d'entre eux n'étant capable d'arriver jusqu'au bout (leur limite extrême étant huit cent mètres) à cause du vent furieux. Ils n'avaient en fait qu'un « semblant d'existence se limitant à un seul acte : s'accrocher au tronc et aux branches de l'arbre pour y trouver leur nourriture végétale et monter au ralenti, millimètre par millimètre, le plus haut possible ». Les plus opiniâtres arrivent plus

haut mais, en perdant de leur énergie, tombent « à pic », « s'écrasant impitoyablement au pied de l'arbre Dieu. ». L'humour noir est bien présent dans ce récit. Il exprime le dédain du créateur pour ces créatures qui ne sont jamais capables d'atteindre leur but, fût-il tellement dérisoire. Concernant les habitudes des vivants sur d'autres planètes, Jacques Sternberg se tient en retrait ; la narration s'écrit à la troisième personne et à l'imparfait, manière de garder la distance. Par rapport au titre, quel genre de créateur est-il, celui qui finit par détruire ses propres créatures ?

Ce même volume comporte également des textes se référant directement aux Terriens et très critiques à l'égard de la papauté. *La date*, conte « ultra bref », est de ceux-là et relève d'une satire acerbe. Le pape, « touriste de la misère des années 80 », se « balade » dans le passé, se fait transporter en 1942 dans les chambres à gaz des camps nazis pour aider les déportés à mourir. L'inutilité de ce « voyage dans le temps » est le reflet de l'impuissance humaine et relève de la dérision, un procédé fréquemment utilisé dans la science-fiction.

Dans *La foi*, le pape est décrit comme l'« inlassable touriste des pays les plus déshérités ». Le contraste est frappant entre ses intentions et le luxe de son existence de tous les jours, du moins en apparence : montre Rolex « toujours en gros plan télévisé quand il se prosternait sur les terres de misère, ses Cadillac blanches, sa cage de verre blindé, son sourire de saint clown, sa carrure de catcheur de la promotion divine » qui « asperge les foules miséreuses de quelques poncifs de la consolation ». Contraste entre le luxe et cet acte d'aspersion à double sens : soit on arrose les plantes de fines gouttelettes pour pousser, soit on le fait pour un baptême. Ses visites, « de vrais shows, des spectacles « son et lumière », relèvent de la publicité, un « vrai battage promotionnel ». Mais un « fait divers » survient – la foudre tombe un jour « sur la scène, s'accrochant au micro que le pape tenait à plusieurs mains ». Fait divers si l'on veut, mais comme le dit Roland Barthes, le hasard fait signe, la révolte des croyants contre un Dieu capable de détruire le pape est tellement grande que le pape suivant « fut assassiné le lendemain de son élection ». Titre suggestif, *La foi* devient le récit d'une croyance perdue. La description et le vocabulaire ne dépassent pas de beaucoup les articles des journaux ou de l'Internet qui parlent de Benoît XVI, le pape actuel. Ainsi, lors de sa visite à Cracovie le 26 mai 2006, « sa papamobile roulait au ralenti dans les rues noires de monde »<sup>98</sup>. Comme journaliste, J. Sternberg a sûrement pu rencontrer souvent ce genre d'articles qu'il met en dérision.

Les choses ne s'arrangent pas vraiment avec *La récupération*<sup>99</sup> : un pape choisi par ordinateur et dont la politique « d'intox mystique à haute dose » est mise en oeuvre par des « hordes de missionnaires » qui débarquent dans le Tiers Monde, aidant indirectement « les principales puissances européennes » à récupérer leurs colonies. Par rapport au texte précédent, *La foi*, le titre *La récupération*, est ambigu. On récupère la foi ou bien des territoires ?

Même si J. Sternberg affirme ignorer des sentiments d'identité belge ou juive, la relation entre humour et esprit juif mérite d'être établie. D'une manière plus générale, les indications fournies par Jonathan Pollock à ce sujet nous semblent intéressantes, notamment celles sur le rapport entre l'humour et le religieux. L'humour comme la religion ne procèdent-ils pas de l'idée que « nous ne sommes rien et ne pouvons rien » ? L'humour serait « la conscience de la dissonance intime : ne pouvant plus concilier les termes contradictoires, elle joue avec eux, comme dans un accès de jovialité désespérée, pour supporter leur conflit »<sup>100</sup>.

L'origine juive de Sternberg n'est sans doute pas étrangère non plus à son goût pour la science-fiction. Si l'on considère que l'humour juif « prend ses racines dans la littérature biblique et surtout talmudique, aussi bien dans son *expression formelle* que dans son *esprit* »<sup>101</sup>, les choses deviennent encore plus claires. La foi qui permettait aux ancêtres de croire que les paroles divines devaient tenir leurs promesses a été échangée par leurs descendants contre le sens de l'humour ; le *schlemiel*<sup>102</sup> exprime par là sa solitude et la pratique de l'auto-dérision qui en découle. Se référant à l'importance de l'humour dans la Genèse, Joë Friedmann souligne que, pour éviter le risque que la Création comportait, celui

d'aller se perdre dans la prise au sérieux par la créature elle-même [...], au-delà de l'exaltation première, le sourire divin, plus retenu, mais aussi plus profond, intervient dans le but de faire saisir à l'homme le caractère relatif de sa présence au monde. Le sérieux et l'absolu, l'humour et le fragmentaire, qui doit être appréhendé dans la légèreté, et au début au moins, dans la non-contrainte. Au commencement, ne pouvait être que l'humour<sup>103</sup>.

Mais, comme l'auteur de cet article le dit un peu plus loin en paraphrasant Elie Wiesel, en octroyant à l'homme la faculté de rire, Dieu, qui voulait le soumettre à ses desseins, a fait une erreur : « Il ignorait

que plus tard, ce ver de terre s'en servirait comme moyen de vengeance »<sup>104</sup>.

Avant de conclure, il nous semble intéressant de mettre en discussion le problème de l'intertextualité et de l'auto-intertextualité chez Jacques Sternberg avec le récit *Les rats*<sup>105</sup>.

Les rats sortent de la terre pour détruire ou plutôt pour occuper le monde terrestre. Ainsi, « sortant de leur monde souterrain des égouts, les rats montèrent à l'assaut de la civilisation, en une seule gigantesque armée qui déferla dans les coulisses de la capitale ». Leur programme est bien mis au point : ils commencent « par saboter les centrales électriques pour couper le courant ; vital pour l'homme, inutile pour eux » ; ils envahissent « tous les centres nerveux et commerciaux de l'alimentation, se livrant à un pillage impossible à réprimer ». Leur grand atout, le nombre. Les citadins paniqués, épouvantés, dominés par la répulsion deviennent hystériques.

Mais voilà la surprise qui va tout remettre en cause. L'action se passe au mois de juin, « par une journée caniculaire [...] qui faisait de toute la ville un gigantesque brasier de puanteur toxique, de merde bétonnée surchauffée, de pollution qui bouffait chaque centimètre cube d'air stagnant ». Résultat : le soir même, « contre toute attente, on vit les rats regagner leurs égouts, titubants, à moitié asphyxiés, intoxiqués. Ils ne revinrent jamais à la surface du sol. Il fallait un être humain pour supporter, à l'air libre, de pareilles conditions de vie. »

Un récit des *Contes glacés*<sup>106</sup> porte le même titre, *Les rats*. L'auteur y donne même la date de l'événement, 1975, et la première phrase du récit est identique. Le second texte, celui des *188 contes à régler* est, cette fois encore, plus élaboré. À côté de l'auto-intertextualité, la référence intertextuelle est présente dans l'allusion à *La peste* de Camus. Il ne s'agit plus de la peste qui décime la population, mais des rats qui méprisent le monde des humains, capables de supporter les misères de la pollution. L'homme peut être plus primitif que l'animal.

S'agissant des techniques d'écriture rencontrées chez Jacques Sternberg, nous ne devons pas négliger l'importance des inventions verbales, par exemple dans la désignation des planètes. Certains des contes sont repris et modifiés d'un volume à l'autre ; la même planète qui dans un texte s'appelle Fryge devient dans le suivant Dryge, et Tryge dans le troisième. Jeu sur les mots qui pourrait cacher une certaine ironie à l'égard de la science-fiction aussi bien qu'à l'univers : tout est subjectif, tout est inventé, tout est jeu de l'imaginaire.

Dans ces « contes à régler », dont le titre est devenu maintenant plus explicite, la double présence de la science-fiction et du réalisme apparaît comme évidente. Jacques Sternberg le reconnaît lui-même dans l'autoportrait du *Magazine littéraire* « J'aime bien mêler la science-fiction au réalisme et qu'un employé de bureau comme dans *Attention planète habitée*, aille passer son repos, de midi à deux heures, dans les galaxies, mais j'aime bien aussi qu'il revienne au bureau à deux heures. » Autrement dit, c'est bon de rêver de temps en temps, mais tout aussi indispensable de revenir à la réalité de son époque, en être conscient et assumer son destin. Pourtant, la vie de tous les jours est perçue par Sternberg comme un cauchemar que traduit l'expression « métro-boulot-dodo ». L'horreur, c'est le quotidien. « Mon vrai mythe, c'est la terreur beaucoup plus que la science-fiction ou même que le fantastique »<sup>107</sup>.

Exprimées en termes non voilés, les idées de l'auteur sur l'être humain sont d'un pessimisme radical. L'homme, nous dit-il, est en théorie un être humain, mais, pratiquement, « c'est un tuyau percé aux deux extrémités » ; il ne cesse de dénoncer son amour-propre excessif, son orgueil tellement dérisoire, l'aliénation qu'il subit dans la société de consommation, sa prétention à la culture (« Si le papier était comestible le mot "culture" aurait enfin un sens. ») ; engloutie par le travail, sa vie n'est que l'antichambre de la mort (« Du bureau au cercueil il n'y a que quelques centimètres ») et l'utilisation qu'il fait de la parole la vide de sa substance. Telles sont les opinions professées dans la *Lettre ouverte aux Terriens*, ouvrage publié en 1974<sup>108</sup>.

Dans un monde où règne selon lui l'esprit de sérieux, « l'humour ne peut être que l'exception, le parent pauvre, le cousin taré, l'indésirable. Sous l'humour, tout s'écroule ; avec le sérieux, tout s'édifie »<sup>109</sup>. Mais il faut aussi tenir compte des appréciations sur les « terriers de Terriens » : « Dis-moi où tu te terres, je te dirai qui tu hais ». J. Sternberg pense aussi que la science-fiction « voit souvent noir, mais clair »<sup>110</sup>.

Nous sommes d'accord avec Henri Baudin lorsqu'il écrit :

*C'est que si l'humour a besoin de la Science-Fiction pour l'éclat de sa dureté, la science-fiction a besoin de l'humour pour ne pas se banaliser dans l'accoutumance* ». Sternberg auteur use donc d'une Science-Fiction élargie, mêlée de réalisme et de burlesque, en précurseur de la Spéculative-Fiction imminente.

*C'est que, pour lui comme pour la Spéculative-Fiction, le cocktail comique + imaginaire est un moyen de dénoncer notre insupportable humanité ordinaire*<sup>111</sup>.

Et pour donner une fois de plus la parole à Jacques Sternberg, les chats seraient plus intelligents que les humains car, nourris et servis par ces derniers, ils parviennent à les dominer. Ils passent leur temps à réfléchir, mais aussi, ce qui est plus important encore, à découvrir le secret de l'immortalité :

Les chats avaient eu beaucoup de temps pour penser. Ils avaient beaucoup pensé. Mais alors que les hommes pensaient à tort et à travers, au superflu de préférence, les chats, eux, n'avaient pensé qu'à l'essentiel, sans cesse, sans se laisser distraire. Ils n'avaient médité, inlassablement, au cours des siècles, qu'un seul problème.

Et, à force d'y penser, ils l'avaient résolu<sup>112</sup>.

Un peu comme Derrida, Sternberg se livre à une « déconstruction » de l'être humain. Dans une conférence intitulée « L'animal donc que je suis », prononcée lors d'une rencontre organisée à Cerisy-la-Salle en 1997 et publiée cette année chez Galilée, Derrida constate qu'à force de définir « l'animal » en général par tout ce qui lui fait défaut (raison, pudeur, rire, inconscient...), la pensée moderne se serait rendue aveugle à la finitude et au dépouillement qui constituent le propre de l'homme. « Rien ne m'aura jamais tant donné à penser cette altérité absolue du voisin ou du prochain que dans les moments où je me vois nu sous le regard d'un chat », écrit-il<sup>113</sup>.

Tenter une comparaison entre Louis Desnoyers et Jacques Sternberg, dont une partie seulement de leurs écrits occupe l'espace de ces analyses, n'est pas chose facile. Comme nous l'avons indiqué plus haut, ils ont en commun leur métier de journaliste, et comme pour la plupart des écrivains SF d'aujourd'hui, la création littéraire constitue pour eux une activité secondaire liée étroitement à leur profession. Il n'est donc pas surprenant de découvrir chez eux une science-fiction spéculative moins centrée sur les techniques que sur l'observation de l'être humain saisi dans le rapport avec son milieu, et dans une perspective non dénuée d'idéologie. S'ils n'ont pas la stature d'un Cyrano de Bergerac ou d'un Jules Verne, le regard qu'ils nous offrent sur le monde nous aide à redécouvrir et remettre en question des étapes de l'évolution de l'humanité. L'optimisme modéré de Desnoyers rencontre le pessimisme assumé de Sternberg. Le premier propose un modèle de société. Le second, marqué par la guerre, autodidacte grandi en marge des systèmes d'enseignement et des systèmes en général, se tient à l'écart de tout engagement politique. Mais décider

de ne pas faire de la politique est une autre politique qui lui donne pleine liberté de dire ce qu'il n'aime pas. L'un comme l'autre manifestent une même capacité d'observation du monde et de distanciation liée au sens du comique : goût pour les jeux de mots, humour prenant des formes dissemblables de l'un à l'autre. Par rapport au but de notre recherche, qui vise entre autre à éveiller la curiosité des jeunes, élèves ou étudiants, les aventures de Desnoyers et les contes de Sternberg invitent à une meilleure compréhension du monde et de la vie, quel que soit le contexte dans lequel l'histoire les a placés.

## NOTES

- 1 Thèse publiée sous le même titre, coll. « Istorie și teorie literară », série « Monografii », Editions Ulise, Alba Iulia, 2002.
- 2 Un des sondages peu nombreux qui se font en ce domaine, réalisé du 3 au 28 septembre 2002 par Louis Harris – FNAC et publié dans *Livres Hebdo* du 18 octobre 2002 montre que les jeunes lisent davantage de romans de science-fiction que de bandes dessinées, que, dans l'ordre de leurs préférences, après les romans de science-fiction se situent les romans policiers, les romans traditionnels, le théâtre, la poésie et les essais. Cf. Stéphane Manfrédo, *La science-fiction*, coll. « Idées reçues », Le Cavalier Bleu Editions, 2005, pp. 59-60. Stéphane Manfrédo est formateur et critique de science-fiction.
- 3 C'est l'opinion de Marc Angenot dans l'article « Science Fiction in France before Verne » (traduit par J. M. Gouanvic et D. Suvin), in *Science Fiction Studies* 14, Volume 5, Part 1, March 1978, site Internet : <http://www.depauw.edu/sfs/backissues/14/angenot14art.htm>
- 4 À la différence des trois autres sous-genres, à savoir le *space-opera*, la *heroic-fantasy* et la *hard-science*, la science-fiction spéculative ou speculative-fiction qui est la plus récente s'impose après la deuxième guerre mondiale comme une littérature d'idées censée traduire l'irruption des préoccupations nouvelles – formelles et idéologiques – au sein du genre. C'est une science-fiction plus ambitieuse, plus originale qui s'intéresse aux sciences humaines. C'est ce que les inventeurs du terme, Robert Heinlein et Harlan Ellison pensent en remplaçant le S de SF considéré trop restrictif : la speculative-fiction est une « pure spéculation sur le réel par une certaine manipulation du matériau littéraire » (Denis Guiot, *La science-fiction*, Coll. « Le monde de... » MA Editions, Paris, 1987, p. 210. L'invention du terme n'a rien à voir avec l'existence du sous-genre dans les siècles précédents.
- 5 À la même époque, d'autres auteurs ont publié leurs œuvres à caractère science-fictionnel, tels Félix Bodin avec *Le Roman de l'avenir*, Pierre Boitard avec les *Etudes astronomiques* (1839), Louis Geoffroy avec *Napoléon et la Conquête du monde* ou *Napoléon apocryphe* (1839). Cette dernière est qualifiée comme la première grande uchronie. Napoléon n'est pas vaincu en Russie et ne meurt pas à Sainte-Hélène. Il devient Empereur du Monde et meurt à Paris en 1832 en pleine gloire ; c'est une parodie fine des discours institutionnels (historiques, statistiques, législatives, etc.). Cf. Marc Angenot, *art. cité*, p. 5.
- 6 *Ibid.*, p. 6. « d'une manière bête et futée, avec des moyens ultra simples (le monde renversé, etc.) ».
- 7 Jean- Michel Racault, *L'Utopie narrative en France et en Angleterre (1651-1761)*, The Voltaire Foundation at the Taylor Institution, Oxford, 1991, p. 5.



- 8 Françoise Sylvos, « Dérives bourbonnaises dans *Les Aventures de Robert-Robert* de Louis Desnoyers », consultable dans *Les Représentations de la Déviance*, Corinne Duboin dir., *Cahiers CRLH* n° 13, pp. 150-155 ou sur le site Internet <http://www2.univ-reunion.fr/~ageof/text/74c21e88-675.html>, p. 4.
- 9 Louis Desnoyers, Préface aux *Aventures de Robert-Robert et de son fidèle compagnon Toussaint Lavenette*, Garnier Frères, Libraires-Éditeurs, Paris 1957, pp. VI-VII.
- 10 Eugène de Mirecourt, *Louis Desnoyers*, coll. « Les contemporains », Gustave Havard Éditeur, Paris, 1858, Consulté en ligne sur Gallica : <http://gallica.bnf.fr>
- 11 *Grand Dictionnaire universel du XIX<sup>e</sup> siècle* de Pierre Larousse, t. VI, p. 574. Voici les termes exacts utilisés dans l'article consacré à Louis Desnoyers : « Un trait assez curieux montre avec quelle conscience Desnoyers prenait sa mission au sérieux. Il se maria le 30 novembre, et le *Charivari* devait paraître le 1<sup>er</sup> décembre. Pour que l'attente du public ne fût point trompée, il passa la première nuit de noces... à l'imprimerie. Ce fut d'ailleurs, hâtons-nous de le dire, son premier et son dernier tort envers sa femme, qui lui pardonna de grand cœur. »
- 12 Jules Verne, Préface, « Pourquoi j'ai écrit *Seconde patrie* » du roman *Seconde patrie*, suite à un roman de Rudolph Wyss, le *Robinson Suisse* lui-même une suite du *Robinson Crusoe* de Daniel Defoë, site Internet : <http://jv.gilead.org.il/zydorczak/sepat00.htm> réalisé par Andrzej Zydorczak.
- 13 Eugène de Mirecourt, *op. cit.*, p. 62-63.
- 14 Françoise Sylvos, *art. cité*, p. 2.
- 15 Aboli par la Révolution française, l'esclavage a été rétabli par Napoléon en 1802. Louis Desnoyers a pris à cet égard des positions vigoureusement abolitionnistes.
- 16 Louis Desnoyers, *Aventures de Robert-Robert et de son fidèle compagnon Toussaint Lavenette*, Garnier Frères, Libraires-Éditeurs Paris,, 1957, p. 257.
- 17 Lucian Boia, « Les points cardinaux chez Jules Verne. Imaginaire et idéologie », in *Jules Verne entre Science et Mythe*, revue *Iris*, Centre de Recherche sur l'Imaginaire – Université de Grenoble 3, n° 28, 2005, p. 47.
- 18 A. Kibédy-Varga, « Le burlesque – le monde renversé selon la poétique classique » in *L'image du monde renversé et ses représentations littéraires et para-littéraires de la fin du XVI<sup>e</sup> siècle au milieu du XVII<sup>e</sup>*, Actes du Colloque International de Tours, 17-19 novembre 1977. Études réunies et présentées par Jean Lafond et Augustin Redondo. Librairie Philosophique J. Vrin, Paris, 1979, p. 154 sq., cité dans *Cyrano de Bergerac – du burlesque à la science-fiction*, éd. citée, pp. 57, 186.
- 19 Raymond Trousson, *Voyages aux pays de nulle part*, Bruxelles, Éditions de l'Université de Bruxelles, 1999, p. 24. cité par Dimitri Roboly, « Jules Verne ou l'échec de l'utopie », in *Jules Verne entre Science et Mythe*, revue *Iris*, Centre de Recherche sur l'Imaginaire – Université de Grenoble 3, n° 28, 2005, p. 129.

- 20 C'est un point de départ proposé par Jean Raynaud dans « R. Sheckley, « A ticket to Tranai : Humour, non-sens et utopie », article publié dans *Humour et imaginaire*. Actes du Colloque du Centre d'Études et de Recherches sur les Littératures de l'Imaginaire Limoges, 22-23 janvier 1983, coll. « Trames » Travaux et Mémoires de l'Université de Limoges U.E.R. des Lettres et Sciences Humaines, pp. 107-120, que nous adaptons à nos besoins.
- 21 Louis Desnoyers, *op. cit.*, pp. 226-227.
- 22 *Ibid.*, p. 228.
- 23 *Ibid.*, p. 229. Ce moment est décrit par Cyrano de la manière suivante: « Je connus bien, à la veritté, que je ne retombois pas vers nostre monde ; car encore que je me trouvasse entre deux lunes, et que je remarquasse fort bien que je m'esloignois de l'une à mesure que je m'approchois de l'autre, j'étois très assuré que la plus grande estoit nostre terre... » (Cyrano de Bergerac, *Les Etats et Empires de la Lune*, édition critique de Madelaine Alcover, Librairie Honoré Champion, Paris, 1977, p. 31). Ces quelques lignes témoignent évidemment de la différence d'intérêt existant entre les deux héros si ce n'était que par la dénomination des deux astres : deux « boules » pour Laroutine, deux « lunes » dont l'une est la terre pour Dyrcona.
- 24 Louis Desnoyers, *op. cit.*, p. 256.
- 25 *Ibid.*, p. 263.
- 26 *Ibid.*, p. 270.
- 27 Dans les derniers chapitres il parle de la traite des esclaves, le mythe de l'île bienheureuse est renversé.
- 28 Louis Desnoyers, *op. cit.*, p. 274.
- 29 *Ibid.*, p. 273.
- 30 *Ibid.*, p. 288.
- 31 Ceci nous fait penser à un article de *L'encyclopédie du savoir relatif et absolu* de Bernard Werber, écrivain SF contemporain qui jouit d'une forte popularité auprès du grand public français. La partie qui nous intéresse est intitulée « Mouvement de voyelles ». Nous la citons intégralement :
- « **Dans plusieurs langues anciennes, égyptien, hébreu, phénicien, il n'existe pas de voyelles, il n'y a que des consonnes.** Les voyelles représentent la voix. Si par une représentation graphique, on donne la voix au mot, on lui donne trop de force car on lui donne en même temps la vie.
- Un proverbe dit : "Si tu étais capable d'écrire parfaitement le mot armoire, tu recevrais le meuble sur la tête."
- Les Chinois n'ont pas eu le même sentiment. Au VIII<sup>e</sup> siècle, le plus grand peintre de son temps, Wu Daozi, fut convoqué par l'empereur qui lui demanda de représenter un dragon parfait. L'artiste le peignit en entier à l'exception des yeux. "Pourquoi as-tu oublié les yeux ?" interrogea l'empereur. "Parce que si je dessinais les yeux, il s'envolerait", répondit Wu Daozi. L'empereur insista, le peintre traça les yeux et la légende

assure que le dragon s'envola. » (Bernard Werber, *L'Encyclopédie du savoir relatif et absolu*, Editions Albin Michel S.A., 2000, pp. 71-72.)

Ce texte, comme tous les autres de cette encyclopédie, est destiné à faire « pétiller l'esprit » et à éveiller la curiosité sur des territoires inconnus d'après les dires de l'auteur dans l'avant-propos. Ce serait une autre modalité d'inciter le lecteur vers des recherches sérieuses, une invitation à vérifier l'authenticité des affirmations de B. Werber. Dans notre cas, cette interprétation attire l'attention sur l'importance de la parole. Au moment où les mots sont non seulement écrits, mais aussi prononcés, comme le fera Robert-Robert dans son rêve creux, ils sont passibles de se transformer en réalité.

Pour ce qui est de la science-fiction, le recours aux lettres peu utilisées dans le vocabulaire français, tout particulièrement les consonnes (comme qwxyz...), est évoqué par Simon Lequeux dans un article intitulé « En martien dans le texte : panorama du vocabulaire extraterrestre dans la littérature de science-fiction », in *L'invention verbale en français contemporain. Les Cahiers du CIEP* (Centre International d'Études Pédagogiques), Éd. Didier, 1963, pp. 46-54.

32 Louis Desnoyers, *op. cit.*, p. 297.

33 *Ibid.*, pp. 298-299.

34 Cette Achab veut rester, avec les animaux, dans le paradis terrestre situé dans cet astre, d'où l'interprétation littérale de la croyance populaire qui soutient que les femmes ont « dans la teste un quartier de la lune » : dans les dictionnaires de l'époque la lune et la folie sont mises en parallèle. Voir *Cyrano de Bergerac – du burlesque à la science-fiction*, éd. citée, p. 170.

35 Louis Desnoyers, *op. cit.*, p. 485.

36 Voir plus loin, note 74, le rapport entre humeur et humour.

37 Cf. « Juillet (Monarchie de) » in *Encyclopaedia Universalis*, France S.A., 2002.

38 Jean-Michel Racault, Introduction générale à *L'Utopie narrative en France et en Angleterre 1675-1761*, The Voltaire Foundation at the Taylor Institution, Oxford, 1991, p. 22.

39 Louis Desnoyers, *op. cit.*, p. 493.

40 « L'Arc de Triomphe à la gloire des campagnes napoléoniennes est inauguré en 1836, l'année de transfert des cendres de Napoléon aux Invalides. » Cf. à l'article « Monarchie de Juillet », in *Wikipédia*, l'encyclopédie libre, p. 3, site Internet [http://fr.wikipedia.org/wiki/Monarchie\\_de\\_Juillet](http://fr.wikipedia.org/wiki/Monarchie_de_Juillet)

41 Cf. Michel Cotte, *La diffusion de l'innovation durant la première industrialisation. Les actions publiques et associatives, les revues périodiques*, site Internet [http://fig-st-die.fr/actes/actes\\_2001/cotte/article.htm](http://fig-st-die.fr/actes/actes_2001/cotte/article.htm), pp. 3, 6.

42 Louis Desnoyers, *op. cit.*, p. 503.

43 *Ibid.*

44 Le jeu de mots sur les primes et dividendes « anticipés » mis pour « anticipés » (chiper = voler) dont il est question dans le journal absurde qui doit sa parution à la présence de Laroutine dans la Lune (p. 293) est annulé par le *National* du *Paris civilisé*.

45 Louis Desnoyers, *op. cit.*, p. 502.

46 *Ibid.*, p. 500.

47 Un autre rêve, car Dominique de Place a présenté en 1981, sur des fonds d'archive, un mémoire sous le titre *L'incitation au progrès technique et industriel en France 1783-1819 d'après les archives du Conservatoire des Arts et Métiers* qui dit des choses différentes. Ainsi, dans la troisième partie de ce mémoire qui traite de l'évolution des techniques au cours de cette période, mais aussi de l'apparition du machinisme confirmée par l'importation de machines les années suivantes (1817-1835), l'auteur nous dit, p. 10 : « Les chemins de fer ne sont alors encore qu'à leur début et nous avons seulement connaissance de l'importation de cinq locomotives. Il s'agit en août 1835 d'une locomotive [...] pour le chemin de fer de Lyon à Saint-Etienne. [...] En 1836, deux locomotives dont " La Seine " Paris-Saint-Germain sont importées en franchise [...] . » Site Internet [http://www.cnam.fr/cdht/MemEhess3\\_deplace-cdht.html](http://www.cnam.fr/cdht/MemEhess3_deplace-cdht.html). On peut pourtant lire dans un article de Wikipédia, encyclopédie libre, sur la Monarchie de Juillet, p. 5, que, sous la direction de Guizot, « tête pensante du gouvernement », en 1842, « une loi organise le réseau ferré national qui passe de 600 à 1850 km ». Site Internet [http://fr.wikipedia.org/wiki/Monarchie\\_de\\_Juillet](http://fr.wikipedia.org/wiki/Monarchie_de_Juillet)

48 Le chapitre VII, « Machines et intertextualité » de Cyrano de Bergerac – du burlesque à la science-fiction, *éd. citée*, pp. 207-223 met en discussion l'évolution de la terminologie dans le domaine, qui peut sembler comique parfois aujourd'hui, à travers l'ascension d'Enoch, le ballon de J. Verne et celui de P.J. Farmer.

49 Cf. Ion Hobana et Lucien Weveberg, *Triumful visătorilor*, Nemira, 1998, pp. 66-74.

50 Louis Desnoyers, *op. cit.*, p. 516.

51 *Ibid.*, p. 522.

52 *Ibid.*, pp. 491-492.

53 Christa Illef-Delahaye, *Le Romanesque de voyage et la littérature de jeunesse en France dans la seconde moitié du XIX<sup>e</sup> siècle*, Tome 2, Thèse de doctorat sous la direction de Monsieur Jean Perrot, Université Paris-Nord, 1995, Bibliothèque de l'Université Paris-Nord, quatrième chapitre, « La forme majeure de la boucle : *Les Aventures de Robert-Robert* ou comment ne pas écrire à l'aventure », notamment la partie C qui parle du songe creux de Robert-Robert en 1832, pp. 438-450. Il s'agit d'une analyse extrêmement pertinente.

54 Christa Illef-Delahaye, *op. cit.*, p. 448.

55 Étienne Cabet, avec son *Voyage en Icarie*, figure dans l'article cité de Marc Angenot, p. 6, comme auteur de science-fiction. Il est le promoteur du socialisme icarien, nous dit Marc Angenot, sa doctrine acquérant cette forme fictionnelle pour des raisons opportunistes : il voulait être lu par les dames. L'oeuvre n'a pas de valeur littéraire, mais sa valeur sociologique est grande.

Opposé à Fourier, son modèle est centripète et fétichiste : un menu, un costume, un journal, un modèle d'appartement, tout cela pour l'étonnement des Européens qui visitent l'endroit.

56 Robert Owen père est né en Angleterre en 1771. Enfant précoce, il devient l'aide de son maître d'école et quitte assez tôt sa famille, pour connaître de l'intérieur les problèmes de la société industrielle qui s'installe à ce moment. À l'âge de vingt ans, il devient propriétaire d'une grande filature qui lui permet de prendre en mains les destinées d'un village entier, New Lamark. Il y veut mettre en pratique un système social sur l'amélioration de l'habitat, sur la réduction des heures du travail et surtout sur la législation régissant le travail des enfants. Il voudrait aussi, par l'éducation et l'exemple du travail, éliminer l'ignorance, les mauvaises habitudes et le manque d'emploi. Ses idées sont réunies dans un livre intitulé *Une nouvelle conception de la société* (1813). La communauté ordonnée par ses préceptes, fondée en 1825 aux États-Unis se solde par un échec trois ans plus tard et il y perd la totalité de sa fortune. Cf. Christa Illef-Delahaye, *op. cit.*, pp. 441-443, qui cite comme sources Bernard Montanier, « Robert Owen », in « Socialistes utopistes et monarchistes », *Les grands révolutionnaires*, Romorantin : Éditions Martinsart, 1977, pp. 77-108 et Joseph-Philippe Rey, *Lettre sur le système de M. Owen*, Paris : A Sautelet, 1828, cité par Jacques Valette, in « Utopie sociale et utopistes sociaux en France vers 1848 », p. 53, in *1848, les utopistes sociaux*, Paris : SEDES-CDU, 1981, pp. 13-110 ; notes 141, 142.

57 Louis Desnoyers, *op. cit.*, p. 490.

58 Christa Illef-Delahaye, *op. cit.*, p. 444.

59 Baris Gocdemir, Gaël Hilleret, Mélissa Juan, Jonathan Morice, *Le socialisme utopique, un romantisme ?*, site Internet <http://perso.orange.fr/david.colon/sc-po/socialismeutopique.pdf>, p. 1.

60 *Ibid.*

61 *Ibid.*, p. 3.

62 Toujours dans son Introduction générale, *op. cit.*, pp. 15-16, J.-M. Racault rappelle que le *u* du mot utopie transcrit soit le préfixe mélioratif *eu*, soit le préfixe négatif *ou*. Par conséquent, *ou-topos* signifie « non-lieu » tandis qu'*eu-topos* signifie le « lieu-où-tout-est-bien ».

63 Le Larousse ajoute que le terme a été forgé par Renouvier en 1876.

64 Cf. J.-M. Racault, Introduction générale, *op. cit.*, p. 3.

65 Louis Desnoyers, *op. cit.*, p. III.

66 [http://www.bdfi.net/auteurs/s/sternberg\\_jacques.htm](http://www.bdfi.net/auteurs/s/sternberg_jacques.htm)

67 Henri Baudin, « Histoires belges : science fiction et comique chez P. vann Herck et J. Sternberg », in *Cahier comique et communication* n° 2, 1984, pp. 41-69. les références à J. Sternberg – J. Sternberg : la spéculative dérision, pp. 56-69.

- 68 Pierre Versins, *Encyclopédie de l'utopie, des voyages extraordinaires et de la science-fiction*, Éditions de l'Âge d'Homme, Lausanne, 1972, 2<sup>e</sup> édition, 1984, p. 835.
- 69 Jacques Sternberg : *Portrait en deux temps : 1974 – 1989*, TA8421. Production : R.T.B.F. – Portrait – 1989 – réalisation : Frédéric Vanbesien – Durée : 32' – Couleur [http://www.lamediatheque.be/CENTAUTEURS.html/sternberg\\_jacques\\_.htm](http://www.lamediatheque.be/CENTAUTEURS.html/sternberg_jacques_.htm)
- 70 *Dérision et célébration*. Production : R.T.B.F. – Livres parcourus – 1989 – Réalisation : A. Podolsky – Couleur – 30' – TA2981. Cette émission a été composée de deux séquences, l'une consacrée à Jacques Sternberg (13'), l'autre à Alexis Curvers (13'). Information fournie par le site : [http://www.lamediatheque.be/CENTAUTEURS.html/sternberg\\_jacques\\_.htm](http://www.lamediatheque.be/CENTAUTEURS.html/sternberg_jacques_.htm)
- 71 « L'invention », in *188 contes à régler*, Illustrations de Roland Topor. Édition revue par l'auteur, Éditions Denoël, 1988, 1998, p. 186.
- 72 Jacques Sternberg, *Une succursale du fantastique nommée science-fiction*, Éd. Le Terrain Vague, 1958, cité par Henri Baudin, in *art. cité*, p. 57.
- 73 *Ibid.*, p. 59.
- 74 Le terme *mélankholè* tel qu'il est analysé par Jonathan Pollock dans *Qu'est-ce que l'humour*, Klincksieck, 2001, « désigne tour à tour une substance dans le corps et une disposition de l'esprit », ce que l'on appelle d'ordinaire bile noire et mélancolie. Aristote, aussi bien qu'Hippocrate considèrent que les hommes d'exception sont mélancoliques, que la bile noire serait la cause de cette autre forme d'excès qu'est l'extase furieuse ou la manie, communément attribuée à l'intervention de la puissance divine ». Ce rapport entre la manie (fureur divine) et la présence excessive de la bile noire (qui peut être très chaude et très froide en même temps) dans le corps n'ont pas pour conséquence une diminution des facultés intellectuelles de la personne (l'exemple donné est celui de Démocrite), au contraire, il contribue à leur accroissement et constitue la principale ressource d'une lucidité hors du commun. Or la conscience aiguë de l'inconscience des autres, l'appréhension d'une folie pire que celle de la personne en question, entraîne le fou rire, l'humour donc, la misanthropie, perçus par le vulgaire comme signe de folie malsaine « que seule leur folie à eux induit d'interpréter de la sorte ». Car, « si la bile noire soulève le rire fou, c'est la folie des hommes qui suscite le fou rire. » Car, et nous reprenons la citation de l'*Encyclopédie* d'Isidore de Séville, « nous rions par la rate, nous nous irritons par le fiel, nous goûtons par le cœur, nous aimons par le foie. » (pp. 12-27)
- 75 Frank Evrard, *L'humour*, coll. « Contours littéraires » dirigée par Bruno Vercier, Hachette Livre, Paris, 1996, p. 5.
- 76 Dominique Noguez, « La syllepse, clef de l'humour ? », in *Humoresques. L'Humour d'expression française*, Actes du Colloque International Paris, 27-30 juin 1988. Actes publiés avec le concours financier du Commissariat Général de la Langue Française, 1989, Tome 1, pp. 39-45.

- 77 Pierre Fontanier, « Manuel classique pour l'étude des tropes (1830) », in *Les*  
*Figures du discours*, Flammarion, Paris, 1968, p. 105.
- 78 Dominique Noguez, *art. cité*, pp., 42-42.
- 79 *Ibid.*, p. 45.
- 80 Jonathan Pollock, *op. cit.*, p. 108.
- 81 Jacques Sternberg, *188 contes à régler*, illustrations par Roland Topor,  
 Éditions Denoël, 1988, 1998, p. 9.
- 82 Bernard Roukhomovsky, *Lire les formes brèves*, coll. « Lettres sup. », Nathan  
 Université, Paris, 2001, p. 3.
- 83 *Ibid.*, pp. 3-4.
- 84 Pascal Quignard, *Une gêne technique à l'égard des fragments*, Fata Morgana,  
 1986, p. 20-25, cité par Bernard Roukhomovsky, *op. cit.*, p. 140.
- 85 Pour la définition des formes gnomiques, voir *Dictionnaire des termes*  
*littéraires* / Henrik van Gorp, Dirk Delabatista, Lieven D'Hulst, et al., Éd.  
 Champion, Paris, 2001, pp. 208-209.
- 86 Jacques Sternberg, « Mon vrai mythe c'est la terreur », in *Magazine littéraire*  
 n° 38, mars 1970, p. 36.
- 87 Jacques Sternberg, *Contes glacés*, Illustrations originales de Roland Topor,  
 André Gérard, Marabout, Verviers (Belgique), 1974.
- 88 Jacques Sternberg, *188 contes à régler*, éd. citée, pp. 351-352.
- 89 *Ibid.*, pp. 21, 42.
- 90 *Ibid.* Les récits, dans l'ordre mentionné se trouvent aux pages 49, 52, 64,  
 120-121, 141, 278.
- 91 Information fournie par le Dossier réalisé par Joseph Duhamel in *Contes*  
*glacés*, Collection Espace Nord Zone J, Éditions Labor, 1998, p. 96.
- 92 Jacques Sternberg, *188 contes à régler*, éd. citée. Les trois récits sont à  
 trouver aux pages 39-40, 125-126, 146.
- 93 Extrait de TLFI (Trésor de la langue française), <http://atilf.atilf.fr/tlf.htm>. Le  
 même exemple figure également dans le Petit Robert.
- 94 Sur le proverbe et son rapport avec la sentence, l'apophtegme, la maxime,  
 l'axiome et l'adage voir B. Roukhomovsky, *op. cit.*, la partie réservée à la  
 nébuleuse des formes sentencieuses, pp. 65-78.
- 95 Pour ce qui est du penchant surréaliste de Sternberg, dans le documentaire  
*Jacques Sternberg : Portrait en deux temps : 1974-1989* cité plus haut, en  
 décrivant le climat littéraire des années cinquante (quand Michaux, Ionesco  
 ou Tardieu n'étaient pas appréciés), Éric Losfeld, son éditeur, affirme que,  
 « tout comme Cocteau ou Cendrars, Sternberg serait réintégré au monde  
 surréaliste » (droit qui ne lui était pas reconnu par les représentants du  
 mouvement).
- 96 Jacques Sternberg, *188 contes à régler*, éd. citée. Les trois récits se trouvent  
 aux pages 247-248, 161, 320-321.
- 97 *Ibid.* Toujours dans l'ordre de la présentation, les récits se trouvent aux  
 pages 29-30, 108, respectivement 119.

- 98 Cf. <http://fr.news.yahoo.com/26052006/202/benoit-xvi-dechaine-enfin-lenthousiasme-des...> 5/27/2006
- 99 Jacques Sternberg, *188 contes à régler*, éd. citée. Les récits en question se trouvent aux pages 81-82, 83, 163-164, 279.
- 100 Jonathan Pollock, *op. cit.*, pp. 73-74. Dans cette partie, intitulée « Pourquoi l'humoriste est-il proche du religieux ? », à partir des réflexions de Sören Kierkegaard (*Post-scriptum aux Miettes philosophiques*) et de Joseph von Eichendorff, l'auteur parle de la contradiction qui existe dans le comique, du fait que l'humour constitue « le plus haut cercle du comique » car, en vertu de son côté tragique, « il se réconcilie avec la douleur, dont le désespoir, bien qu'il ne connaisse aucune issue, veut faire abstraction ». À la différence du religieux, l'humoriste « révoque la souffrance par la forme de la plaisanterie ».
- 101 Judith Stora-Sandor, « Introduction » in *L'Humour juif*, n° 1, octobre 1990, Z éditions, Nice.
- 102 C'est toujours Judith Stora-Sandor qui explique, note 8 de son « Introduction », ce mot. Le *schlemiel*, et aussi *shlimazl* mots yiddish, désignent des personnage typiques du folklore juif avec à peu près la même signification : le malchanceux qui attire tous les malheurs ou, comme elle le dit dans le texte, « Celui qui tombe sur le dos et se casse le nez ! »
- 103 Joë Friedmann, Univ. Hébraïque de Jérusalem, « La Genèse : au commencement était le rire », in *L'Humour juif*, n° 1, octobre 1990, Z éditions, Nice, p. 16.
- 104 *Ibid.*, p. 20.  
 Dans une interview lors de la parution de son livre *Dieu, moi et les autres*, en parlant des raisons qui l'ont déterminé d'écrire le livre en question, J. Sternberg souligne, entre autres : « à la parution des *188 contes* Cioran m'a écrit une lettre qui disait : "Sachez Sternberg que vous êtes toujours au sommet de votre forme quand vous vous adressez vous, petit Juif comme inquisiteur face au responsable de ce merdier cosmique." Ça a fait tilt, je me suis dit, là il y a un recueil à faire. Et que personne n'a fait. Pour la bonne raison que les écrivains pensants savaient très bien que ça ne se vendrait pas. » Cf. [http://www.lmda.net/din/tit\\_lmda.php?ld=3972](http://www.lmda.net/din/tit_lmda.php?ld=3972)
- 105 P. 270-271.
- 106 Jacques Sternberg, *Les rats*, in *Contes glacés*, éd. citée, p. 106.
- 107 Jacques Sternberg, « Mon vrai mythe c'est la terreur », in *Magazine littéraire* n° 38, mars 1970, p. 36.
- 108 Jacques Sternberg, *Lettre ouverte aux Terriens*, coll. « Lettre ouverte » animée par Jean-Pierre Dorian, Éditions Albin Michel, Paris, 1974.
- 109 *Ibid.* p. 105.
- 110 *Ibid.* p. 200.
- 111 *Ibid.*, pp. 57-58.
- 112 Jacques Sternberg, *Les chats*, in *188 contes à régler*, éd. citée, pp. 56-57.
- 113 Cf. Jean Birnbaum, « Autobiographie de l'homme nu », in *Le monde des livres*, du 09.06.2006.





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# THE SOCIAL CONSTRUCTIVIST APPROACH TO INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS

Theories of social constructivism and international relations are the two sides of this paper. Their stories are first outlined separately, after which the focus shifts on their point of confluence: social constructivism in international relations theory. Section 1 offers an overview of the discipline of international relations (henceforth abbreviated IR, to be distinguished from “international relations,” which denotes its subject matter), up to the relatively recent import of social constructivism (henceforth SC) from social theory. Section 2 gives a general presentation of SC, including a classification of its philosophical kinds. Three distinct constructivist approaches to IR are also presented. Finally, section 3 analyzes the concepts of “identity” and “interest,” which underlie the intentionality of every player in world politics. The analysis emphasizes SC’s capacity to overstep some limits of its competitors: neorealism and neoliberalism. The main theses that will be spelled out and defended on the account of SC are the following:

- (I) Social entities are constructed through various mechanisms that rely on collective action, and can likewise be dismantled.
- (II) The identities and interests of international actors are, to an important extent, socially constructed. This is reflected in their behavior in world politics.

Arguing for these propositions demands many philosophical detours, partly to introduce concepts and draw distinctions, partly to criticize flawed theoretical proposals. Thus, a substantial portion of the paper was needed to explicate the notion of “social constructivism” (2.2). Although apparently of philosophical interest alone, the analysis excludes some habitual sources of social constructivist IR theory.

I argue against the relativist inclinations that many constructivist thinkers display, and support a version of SC compatible with the scientific realist principle that there is an objective reality, independent of our thoughts

and language, which is also knowable through epistemically objective methods. Thus, while most constructivists put the language before the world, I insist that ontology comes first, followed by epistemology and semantics. The domain of IR receives considerable attention (section 1), since I have assumed that the contribution of SC can only be grasped against the backdrop of the main standard models of IR. However, I do not value SC as an alternative *theory* of international relations, because I regard it as a mere conceptual framework that, although able to expose some weaknesses of the mainstream theories, needs them in order to operate. In other words, I believe that the most promising approach to IR is a version of neoliberalism (1.2) enriched with social constructivist insights.

## **1. International relations theory: an outline**

### ***1.1. Realism and liberalism***

There is virtual unanimity among IR theorists that the scene of international politics is *anarchic*, i.e. it lacks a monopoly on the legitimate use of violence. Unlike domestic (internal) politics, where the state is presumed to have exclusive authority to implement legal norms and punish their violation, the international world knows no overarching authority entitled to enforce global law and order. In the face of anarchy and inevitable conflicting interests, the crucial problem concerns the way in which sovereign states, as primary actors of world politics, should behave so as to advance their interests.

The natural answer seems to be that states should follow their interest by increasing their power. This is the answer given by the doctrine of *realism*. According to Hans Morgenthau (1949/1993), the grandmaster of political realism, interests are advanced through the exercise of *power*, where power is understood, à la Max Weber, as one's ability to make the others act according to one's own will. For the international order, this ability translated into military capability.

So dominant was the idea of the overwhelming importance of military power in the realist thinking that the other founder of modern realism, the British historian Edward H. Carr, took it in his *The Twenty Years Crisis: 1919-1939* to the extreme claim that modern wars were fought not for territories, but just for the display of military superiority. Hence, neither domestic policy, nor public opinion had any role to play in states' foreign policy, other than as mere instruments of military power. The underlying

thought was that, in the international world, power creates its own right; morals, ideas and values were *flatus vocis*.

Hence, understanding international politics required observation of the “big players” – the major world powers. Behind their action stood the *statesmen*, those tragic characters of Morgenthau’s play whose mission was to acknowledge and act according to the national interest. As he details in his exposition of the second “principle of political realism,”

We assume that statesmen think and act in terms of interest defined as power... That assumption allows us to retrace and anticipate, as it were, the steps a statesman – past, present, or future – has taken on the political scene (1948/1993: 5).

Morgenthau’s conception of *interest* refers to the objective needs of a state, the fulfillment of which goes beyond the “simple moralistic and legalistic” thinking of the “popular mind.” As such, realism’s prescriptions are *amoral*: while the statesman bears a moral responsibility toward the members of his society, the moral norms of no particular nations can be rightly made universal.

For Morgenthau, war was a possible and not unusual effect of the conflict-ridden international anarchy. The self-interested action advocated by realism is best accommodated by a mistrustful mindset urging statesmen to engage in counterbalancing alliances against the hegemon of the day, for otherwise its strength would grow uncontainable. “If you want peace, prepare for war” is the dictum that epitomizes this logic. Self-interested action is directed not only at maximizing the power of the *self*, but also at decreasing the power of threatening *other*. The resulting structure is a *balance of power* on the international scene, exemplified by the pentarchic equilibrium of the European powers in the 19th century, or the bipolar balance of power during the Cold War. The strategy of each state was to preclude a distribution of military might in which any other single power would dominate. *Prima facie*, this reasoning is somewhat simplistic, but the point is not that realism has ignored the richness of affinities and privileged relations among states bound by history and mutual interest. Realism should rather be taken as a fundamental explanatory scheme, to which every pattern of inter-state interaction, regardless of complexity, is supposedly reducible.

It is by now transparent what the realist answer has been to the question that gave birth to IR as an academic discipline in the aftermath of World

War I: "Why do wars occur?" The general cause of wars, the realist argument goes, is the inherently conflictual nature of international anarchy. Yet one of the perverse effects of this reasoning is the so-called *security dilemma*, a token of which was phrased by Thucydides: "What made war inevitable was the growth of Athenian power and the fear which this caused in Sparta." The idea is that the increased military power acquired by one state creates a feeling of insecurity in the others. If one does not increase one's military capability, one risks being exposed to others' aggression. If one does increase one's military capability, the others feel threatened and try to contain the threat by arming themselves. Hence, either way, there is a menace of an escalating arms race.

It is, indeed, an upshot of realism's worst-case-scenario predilection that an increase of military power eventually leads to less security for everyone – except, maybe, for the strongest actor. This predicament has led other thinkers to the belief that international anarchy is an environment of potential cooperation among states. An *international community* is developing – that is, an agreed upon hierarchy of states in which mutual help stemmed not only from the recognition of mutual interest, but also from the assumed altruism of human nature.

This view, known as *idealism*, is part of the liberal tradition of political thinking which, as Charles Kegley and Eugene Wittkopf (1997: 19) put it, has at its core "an emphasis on the impact of idea on behavior, the equality and liberty of the individual, and the need to protect people from excessive state regulation." Here is how the two authors characterize idealism's optimistic and moralistic world view:

(1) Human nature is essentially 'good' or 'altruistic,' and people are therefore capable of mutual aid and collaboration. (2) The fundamental human concern for the welfare of others makes progress possible. (3) Bad human behavior is the product not of evil people but of evil institutions and structural arrangements that motivate people to act selfishly and to harm others. (4) War is not inevitable and its frequency can be reduced by eradicating the anarchical conditions that encourage it. (5) War and justice are international problems that require collective or multilateral rather than national efforts to eliminate them. (6) International society must reorganize itself institutionally to eliminate the anarchy that makes problems such as war likely. (Kegley and Wittkopf 1997: 20)

In the tradition of founding political philosophy on a theory of human nature, idealism emphasizes that there is a fundamental goodness in people,

which can be corrupted by improper forms of social organization. Realism shared the concern for human nature, but held opposite views. Influenced by the Christian realism of Reinhold Niebuhr, Morgenthau emphasized the human incapacity to refuse temptation, and hence its fallibility. Idealism, on the other hand, shares the Enlightenment's belief in the possibility of human progress. One of its main strands draws on Woodrow Wilson's *Fourteen Points* program (1918), in which the creation of the League of Nations was proposed as a piece of a vaster agenda of constructing a peaceful *postbellum* Europe. Key to the program was Wilson's call for democratic domestic institutions, as he was convinced that democratic societies were the most effective hindrance to war. Idealists hold that the origin of conflicts consists in communication blocks between citizens and their rulers, blocks that are most likely to happen in the undemocratic and unenlightened regimes. Therefore, a peaceful international society demands the spread of democracy in the world. The so-called *democratic peace* – the fact that modern democracies have virtually never waged war against each other – has often been adduced as evidence.

Ostensibly, different IR theories select particular sequences of historical events as evidence for their views and against their opponents' theories. Carr (1946) discredited utopian Wilsonism by pointing at the rubble of Europe after World War II, the horrors of Holocaust, and the outbreak of the Cold War. On the other hand, several global tendencies of the post-Cold War era seem to confirm the liberal worldview: the spread of democracy,<sup>1</sup> an increased global free trade, the emphasis on human rights and humanitarian interventions, the joint efforts to mitigate the effects of environmental disasters, the multitude of arm-control agreements, etc. But then, again, pessimists point at the poorly motivated wars waged by democracies against states that posed no direct threat; the unwillingness to intervene for humanitarian reasons in several of last decade's obvious crises; the caveats of free-trade agreements that led to compensatory increases of tariff barriers, and the apparent recoil of democracy in some of the world's main state-actors.

Besides, there are conceptual problems that idealism seems unable to deal with. First, it lacks a principled basis to distinguish between the extension of a particular dominant state in the world and the international society. Political rallying and bandwagoning by ever more sovereign states around today's world leader is not tantamount with the creation of an international society. Second, idealism seems to ignore the power of threat and its unifying effects upon individual states, as well as the external

manipulability of national symbols and collective emotions. Nonetheless, the gist of idealism is not so much to explain the historical *status quo* as it is to explore the conditions under which improvements become possible.

### **1.2. Neoutilitarianism**

*Neoutilitarianism* is a label coined by John Ruggie (1998) to designate the *neos* of realism and liberalism – neorealism and neoliberalism – because both of them rely on utility maximizing calculations on the assumption of given ordered sets of preferences. As Ruggie observes, the neoutilitarian rational-choice framework has become the orthodoxy of IR, with remarkably little dissent between its variants. Let us first examine the specifics of neorealism and neoliberalism.

Kenneth Waltz's influential *Theory of International Politics* (1979) introduced the *microeconomic* method of market analysis into the study of international politics. He made an analogy between the economic behavior of individual firms, which by pursuing their interests end up generating a market structure, and the behavior of states, which generate an international political structure. Apart from bringing in rigor and clarity, Waltz's turn to microeconomics stimulated the assimilation in IR using the game theory models of nuclear deterrence and military strategy inaugurated pioneered by Thomas Schelling (1960), and later developed by Steven Brams (1985).

Waltz distinguished between the following levels or "images" of IR: (a) the constitution of human nature, which basically comes to a theory of human nature in the British empiricist tradition; (b) intra-state interactions, i.e. the behavior patterns of the interactions within the state; and (c) the international system, consisting of the entire set of sovereign states and their relations. Waltz, unlike Morgenthau, does not focus on the qualities of the individual in modeling international politics. For Waltz, individual behavior is largely irrelevant with respect to the events and processes of the international scene, and so is the political physiognomy of the state. What really matters is the "third image," that is, the international system itself, whose anarchic structure determines the behavior of states. The basic function of the international system is to bring in order and security. There is no plan or design for implementing international order, because it results from the unplanned self-interested action of individual states. The main concern of a state is its *security*, which is to be pursued through *self-help* strategies in the competitive



environment of world politics. Wars between states do occur, though they are not inevitable but merely possible:

In politics force is said to be *ultima ratio*. In international politics force serves, not only as the *ultima ratio*, but indeed as the first and constant one. ...One who knows that pressing too hard may lead to war has strong reason to consider whether possible gains are worth the risks entailed (Waltz 1979: 113-114).

While for Waltz the structure of the international system is determined by the global action of the strong actors, more recent analyses (e.g., Kupchan 1998) observes that the post-Cold War world is parted into large geographical and cultural regions. Instead of an integrated international system, there actually is a global pluralism of regional systems, each gravitating around some local power and encoding specific worldviews and communication forms. Others have tried to render neorealism more empirically adequate by taking into account the “second image” of Waltz’s tripartition, namely the constraints that the domestic policy exerts on foreign policy. Buzan, Jones, and Little (1993) show the importance for foreign policy of the interplay between politics, mass media and public opinion interests.

Among the contemporary descendants of idealism, Robert Keohane’s *liberal institutionalism* has been among the most influential. Keohane has faulted realism for being “too pessimistic about the prospects for cooperation and the role of institutions” (1993: 271) under conditions of existing common interests among the states. However, liberal institutionalism lies much closer to neorealism than idealism was to classical realism. To use a simple scheme, while neorealism basically consists in classical realism’s dimension of interest as power plus a micro-economic method of analysis, neoliberalism adds to these the dimension of international institutions with an appreciation of their role in transforming the structure generated by materialist individualism. The result is a remarkable convergence of the approaches to IR, and a fruitful standardization of methodological tools. As Ruggie succinctly summarizes,

Both take the existence of international anarchy for granted, though they may differ as to its precise causal force. Both stipulate that states are the primary actors in international politics. Both stipulate further that the identities and interests if states are given, a priori and exogenously – that is to say, external to and unexplained within the terms of their theories. On that basis, both assume that states are rational actors maximizing their own

expected utilities, defined in such material terms as power, security, and welfare. (Ruggie 1998: 9)

Indeed, the disagreements between neorealism and neoliberalism reduce to underlining different aspects of structural anarchy. Neorealism stresses that the states strive for security, and that the structure of the international world is the aggregate effect of this. On the other hand, neoliberalism examines the ways that cooperation can be achieved under anarchy. Neoliberalism emphasizes international cooperation instead of competition. Both the means for and the expression of cooperation are *international institutions*, namely international *regimes* and international *organizations*. International regimes are complexes of norms and rules, which regulate the behavior of member states in specific issue domains such as trade, arms control, human rights, protection of animal species, etc. According to the *Oxford Companion to the Politics of the World*, international organizations “generally constitute the central decision-making components of international regimes and influence the development of these regimes.”

There are several ways in which international organizations contribute to the development of international regimes. First, through their bureaucratic administrative structures – headquarters, secretariat, and regularly scheduled meetings – they facilitate cooperation among member states. Second, they allow less powerful states to associate and exert influence through numbers, thus being able to obtain concessions from the powerful states. Third, international organizations are usually in charge with overseeing the compliance of states with agreements, settling disputes and sanctioning delinquents. It is thus comprehensible how difficult international cooperation would be without the mediation of international institutions.

Nonetheless, different IR doctrines have different ways of accommodating this fact of today's world politics. For neorealists, institutions are “merely intervening variables” (Mearsheimer 1995: 13), mere facilitators of agreements among states. Their use is justifiable in economic terms. They are useful only so long as they keep transaction costs lower than the continuing competition for relatively advantageous positions and are to be discarded when this is no longer the case (Krasner 1985: 5ff). As such, they serve to consolidate the actual pecking order, for otherwise the hegemonic powers would seek different arrangements. By contrast, neoliberals ascribe a substantial role to institutions, which they see as pivotal agents of the international “political market.” First, neoliberals are more sensible than

neorealists to the fact that states typically engage in repeated interactions, so that they must acquire credibility in order to maximize their gains. This, in turn, requires them to be transparent and play by the rules, which actually generates international institutions. Then, neoliberals are not as obsessively preoccupied with security as neorealists, which makes them less mistrustful and self-centered. They also regard *employment* and *economic prosperity* as fundamental dimensions of the national interest and, given the global economic interweaving, they realize that governments alone have insufficient means to solve these problems. Businesses and banks, not nation-states, are the main actors in the international profit-making game. States can only be efficient in pursuing their economic interests if they design and implement rules and norms to regulate the border-transcending action of these non-state actors. Yet this takes us back to international regimes.

It is worthwhile to notice that by admitting the salience of the international agency of non-state actors, neorealists have to consider more carefully the domestic political life of the state. This “entanglement of domestic and international politics” has made the object of Robert Putnam’s (1989) “two level” approach of IR. Putnam has shown that explanations must go beyond both “second image” analyses that focus on the domestic causes of international events, and “second imaged reversed” accounts that center on the international causes of domestic events. He has extended the conceptual framework of game theory to the interplay between the “second” and “third” images:

The politics of many international negotiations can be usefully represented as a two-level game. At the national level, domestic groups pursued their interests by pressuring the government to adopt favorable policies, and politicians seek power by constructing coalitions among those groups. At the international level, national governments seek to maximize their own ability to satisfy domestic pressures, while minimizing the adverse consequences of foreign developments. Neither of the two games can be ignored by central decision-makers, so long as their countries remain interdependent, yet sovereign. (Putnam 1988: 434)

Finally, another motivation for neoliberals to confer great importance on international institutions is certainly related to the classic idealist search for peaceful world governance, inspired by Kant’s liberal idea of *perpetual peace* through a cosmopolitan federation of constitutional republics. After all, Kant’s (1795) “articles” describing the steps to be

taken in order to avoid future war would be only achievable within an international framework constituted by institutions such as mutually recognized sovereignty, a “law of nations” and a “law of universal citizenship.”

Summing up the differences and similarities between neorealism and neoliberalism, the main commonalities between the two schools of thought are the assumptions that the international world is anarchic; that sovereign states are the fundamental actors of the international scene; and that states act rationally so as to maximize their interests. Dissimilarities regard the characterization of anarchy – as competitive by neorealists, and as possibly cooperative by neoliberals. Hence their different attitudes about international institutions: while neorealists treat these as mere instruments used in the self-help strategies of states, neoliberals take them as actors of the same level with states; not merely as disposable cogwheels that work to forward the self-interest of the dominant powers, but as genuine sources of norms and regulations that facilitate and oversee international cooperation and also penalize their infringements.

In viewing states as *self*-interested and following *self*-help courses of political action, both neorealist and neoliberals take the *self*, i.e. the identity of the state actor, as well as its interests, as *given*, that is to say pre-formed and serving as independent variables in the rational-choice models that account for the behavior of states in the world. As such, both schools largely neglect the role that ideas and values have in reshaping identities and their associated needs. It is in connection with this insufficiency that SC entered the IR scene.

## **2. Social constructivism**

The first part of this section (2.1) gives a general presentation of the social constructivist philosophy, with a distinction among several kinds of SC and an assessment of its most logically robust version. Subsection 2.2 connects to the philosophy of social science, focusing on the support that SC receives from scientific realism. Subsection 2.3 deals critically with Searle’s theory of institutions, one of the best-articulated accounts of social reality, and 2.4 introduces the three main versions of constructivist approaches to IR.

### ***2.1. The ontology of social entities***

As a general theory of existence,<sup>2</sup> ontology catalogues the existent kinds of objects, relations, events, and properties. This includes garden-variety kinds of our common-sense experience, such as stones and trees and cats, as well as the natural kinds posited by our best-confirmed scientific theories about electrons and fields of force. If such kinds exist, then they exist *objectively*, i.e. independent of our thoughts, languages, and theories. But there is a “corner” of ontology that contains entities dependent on our mental states and social behavior. Let us call them *social kinds*.

Money is an example, since it serves as money only to the extent that most of the people of our culture acknowledge the purchase and exchange function performed by particular types of paper notes or metal coins, or other forms of physical support. This sort of value cannot subsist absent the intentionality that created it in the first place. For illustration, the bills that serve as money in times of hyper-inflation quickly become worthless paper notes, for the society transfers their previous function to other commodities. From the viewpoint of their genesis and functioning, money is a social institution, and so are marriages, universities, states, and peace treaties. Each of them is socially constructed, because they are outcomes of specific mechanisms of collective intentionality and exist in strict dependence on the continuing performance of particular social practices. Apart from institution, the same is true about artifacts – such as sandwiches, statues, books, and computers – deliberately created to serve socially defined purposes. Artifacts are socially constructed in a trivial sense.

Whether specific ontological kinds are constructed or not is not always obvious. For example, the gender status of women is, according to feminist activists, an outcome of social forces and circumstances that resulted in the social ascription of a set of attributes of femininity that many women consider burdensome. The opposite view is to take femininity as given by nature, grounded in the putative biological and psychological distinctiveness of women. Gender is but one instance of a multitude of examples whose social vs. natural features is debated. Ian Hacking (1999), one of the finest observers of constructivism’s nuances, put together a long list of entities claimed to be socially constructed. The list includes authorship, brotherhood, the child viewer of television, emotions, facts, gender, homosexual culture, illness, knowledge, nature, quarks, reality, serial homicide, women refugees, the mind, etc. Some of these kinds are obviously constructed, while accepting that others – such as quarks, reality, or knowledge – are constructed seriously

stretches our intuitions. We shall see below that there is a radical version of SC which accommodates this view. But now I want to emphasize the ideological stake of the constructivist discourse.

The ongoing debates over the meaning of “gender,” “science,” or “culture” are deeply value-immersed, and the debates typically get started by the critics of the *status quo*. There is something “wonderfully liberating,” as Hacking puts it, about the idea that “motherhood and its meanings are not fixed and inevitable, the consequence of child-bearing and rearing” (1999: 2). And some will feel eased by holding that science and its truths are just one set of social practices among others. Certainly, this is emancipation by devaluation; the focus is not on the object of scientific investigation and the corresponding results, but on the “human, all too human” social aspects of science. Besides, even if enlightening, not every kind proven to be a social construct has liberating effects. Among other things, Hacking’s substantial study of the *transient mental diseases* – mental pathologies that burgeon in particular spatial, temporal, and cultural contexts – teaches us about the arguably constructed nature of, for instance, anorexia. Although just as objective in its symptoms as a bone fracture, anorexia appears to be socially “learned.” If this is true, then the real work consists in discovering the mechanisms of such learning.

Now, trying to define SC, it is useful to once more turn to Hacking:

Social constructionists about *X* tend to hold that: (1) *X* need not have existed, or need not be at all as it is. *X* is not determined by the nature of things; it is not inevitable. *X* was brought into existence or shaped by social events, forces, history, all of which could well have been different. (2) *X* is quite bad as it is. (3) We would be much better off if *X* were done away with, or at least radically transformed. (Hacking 1999: 6)

Though descriptively useful, (2) and (3) are not essential to SC’s meaning. They are characteristic of a moral discourse on social kinds. But since my primary interest ontological, I shall focus on the *historical contingency* of social kinds, i.e. on the *evitability* of their existence. Fundamentally, social constructs are not effects of natural necessity, but products of contingent social forces and circumstances. In André Kukla’s words, “the type of possibility at issue in constructivist claims is the *option of free agents to do something other than what they actually did*” (2000: 3). Though there is no single overarching mechanism by which social kinds are generated, a salient feature of their contingency is that

they are done and can be undone by adequate collective action. Hence, SC must include theoretical accounts of the ways in which collective action produces social kinds. Some thinkers have focused on speech acts theory (Searle 1995), others on symbolic interactionism (Wendt 1999), while still others chose particular versions of system theory (Onuf 1989).

I choose Searle's most influential approach and subject it to a brief critical discussion. My view is that even if we can come up with adequate theories of such key constructivist concepts as "collective intentionality" and "collective action," it is hopeless to search for a single overarching theory of social kinds. Following Merton's (1967) injunction to elaborate "middle-range theories," I take it that different classes of social kinds are the outcomes of different sorts of social mechanisms that relate the individual (micro) level with the collective (macro) level.

## **2.2. Varieties of social constructivism**

In line with Kukla, I distinguish between a metaphysical, a semantic, and an epistemic brand of SC. *Metaphysical constructivism* is the claim that the world we live in is socially constructed. This can either mean that *some* facts about the world are socially constructed – a moderate statement; or that *all* facts, actual and possible, are socially constructed – a strong statement. Within *strong metaphysical constructivism* it is interesting to distinguish between social constructs that are knowable to us and those that are not.<sup>3</sup> The thesis that both knowable and unknowable facts are socially constructed can be labeled *radical metaphysical constructivism*. For those with naturalistic intuitions, there is a compelling reason why radical metaphysical constructivism cannot be coherent. Metaphysical constructivism – both moderate and strong – presupposes the existence of an unconstructed realm of brute facts, out of which social kinds get constructed. To buttress the idea – quite unproblematic outside philosophical circles – that there is an external, unconstructed part of reality, Searle (1995) resorts to a transcendental argument.<sup>4</sup> He distinguishes between the brute reality of the external world and the constructed facts:

The simplest way to show that is to show that a socially constructed reality presupposed a reality independent of all social constructions, because there has to be something for the construction to be constructed out of. To construct money, property, and language, for example, there have to be raw materials of bits of metal, paper, land, sounds, and marks, for example.

And the raw materials cannot in turn be socially constructed without presupposing some ever rawer materials out of which they are constructed, until we eventually reach a bedrock of brute phenomena independent of all representations. The ontological subjectivity of the socially constructed reality requires and ontologically objective reality out of which it is constructed (Searle 1995: 190).

Thus, radical constructivism's truth demands a version of monistic idealism in ontology, denying the very notion of brute facts and professing the existence of a mental substance. But the existence of such a substance would also be socially constructed, and the existence of the existence too, and so on, *ad infinitum*. Consequently, Ockham's razor is well used in rejecting radical metaphysical constructivism.

A different kind of constructivism is of *epistemic* nature and regards the warrant of our rational beliefs. Epistemic constructivism is the claim that rational belief warrant is socially constructed, hence dependent on the social practices of one community or another. In other words, rational belief warrant is relative to a culture or paradigm. This is, indeed, just another name of *epistemic relativism*. Finally, a *semantic* kind of constructivism should also be distinguished, according to which *meanings* are socially constructed, i.e. byproducts of social practices. Still, not only are social practices specific to different societies, they are also liable to fortuitous change. Hence, as the argument goes, meanings are undetermined.

It is important to clarify the dependence relations between these variants of constructivism. While it is relatively easy to argue that the ontology of natural kinds is separate from their epistemology and semantics, there are good reasons hold the contrary about social kinds. For one thing, social kinds elementarily depend for their existence on the beliefs of sufficiently many members of a social group. Accordingly, under certain conditions, epistemic constructivism entails metaphysical constructivism. For another, it has frequently been suggested that the construction of social reality occurs through the mediation of constructed meaning (Guzzini 2000: 149). This comes down to a putative entailment from semantic to epistemic to metaphysical constructivism. Guzzini is certainly right about drawing our attention to the importance of *reflexivity* – understood as the process through which the ascription of meaning creates matters of fact. Nonetheless, it will be show that, along with most constructivists, Guzzini overstates the extent to which reality is constructed through the imposition of meanings through our linguistic practices.



Let us pause here and discuss in more detail the question of reflexivity. As we have stated, reflexivity denotes the phenomenon through which, by attributing a meaning to a social entity, the characteristics and behavior of that entity change unpredictably. Hacking coined the notion of *looping effect of human kinds* to designate the fact that classifying people in certain social categories modifies their expectations. This, in turn, alters not only their behavior, but also the very content of the categories they have been put under:

People [classified within one kind or another] can become aware that they are classified as such. They can make tacit or even explicit choices, adapt or adopt ways of living so as to fit or get away from the very classification that may be applied to them. (Hacking 1999: 39)

Thus, the idea of a detached observer of a social phenomenon becomes problematic, as the action of observing creates significant ways of connection with the observed phenomenon. Then, the possibility of discovering laws of social sciences (i.e. universal generalization over conditional forms of behavior) is controversial, for the very fact of getting acquainted with such a generalization can alter the behavior patterns so as to invalidate any prediction. Self-fulfilling prophecies and “suicidal” predictions serve as apt illustrations. They support the belief of some philosophers that there are no social laws, while others insist on the possibility of framing probabilistic regularities of social behavior (Rosenberg 1988).

In the methodological analyses of social science, reflexivity refers to the situations in which a theory is affected by its own injunctions, taking itself as an object. In the case of SC, this is rendered transparent through the following reasoning: if facts of the world are socially constructed, is the fact that those facts are socially constructed itself socially constructed? We can ascend indefinitely with the same sort of interrogation, up to higher and higher logical levels. I have given a detailed discussion of this kind of reflexivity in Dudău (2003: 133-39). The analysis has to take into account the specifics of each of the three major kinds of constructivism. Concerning metaphysical constructivism, I emphasized the difficulty of its radical ilk to explain away the incoherence it engenders by claiming the constructed nature of *all* facts about the world. The very fact of this construction would then be socially constructed, and so would be the meta-level fact of constructing the construction, and so on, endlessly. Yet the moderate versions of metaphysical constructivism,

which admit that some parts of the world are independent of intentionality, have no difficulty with reflexivity.

Epistemic constructivism/relativism's admission that every belief is warranted relatively to a paradigm entails the belief that every belief is warranted only relatively to a paradigm, which in turn is warranted relatively to a paradigm. Therefore, the assumption that epistemic constructivism is warranted self-defeatingly implies that it is not epistemically warranted. One attempt to avoid this inconsistency is to admit that epistemic relativism is warranted only relatively to a paradigm. However, a relative relativism is equivalent to the claim that only relatively to a paradigm can the belief that relativism is warranted relatively to a paradigm be warranted, which takes us aback into an infinite regress. Another attempt is to pick a paradigm of reference, relative to which all beliefs seek justification. In this privileged paradigm, the belief in the relativity of rational belief warrant would be absolutely warranted.

Eventually, however, it remains unclear how could an absolute warrant for relativism be itself exempt from relativism. Arguing for the existence of some epistemic bedrock<sup>5</sup> implies either paying mere lip service to relativism, or discarding it altogether. This verdict will appear too blunt and simplistic to believers in the constructed character of knowledge. As already noted, the attraction of this idea comes from the thought that semantic constructivism entails epistemic constructivism, which further entails metaphysical constructivism. This order needs to be entirely reversed. But, for now, we turn to the discussion of semantic constructivism's reflexivity.

Recall that semantic constructivism consists in the claim that meanings are undetermined, because they are the outcome of social practices, which makes them liable to unpredictable change. Insofar as different social practices can accommodate the use of a linguistic expression, their empirical content remains undetermined. Applying semantic constructivism reflexively to itself, we obtain that the empirical content of the sentence "S has no determinate empirical content" is undetermined. It is not immediately clear what logical consequences follow from here, so we have to deploy further argumentative capabilities of semantic constructivism.

The notion that the meaning of an expression consists in its use comes from Wittgenstein's philosophy of language: the *use* theory of meaning. According to Wittgenstein (1953), language is a social practice governed by rules and conventions. Linguistic activity is led by rules just as a game is played according to rules. In fact, he coined the term "language game" to characterize this conception. There is a language game of

marriage, one of arithmetic, another of justice, etc. Now, there are obvious virtues to this theory, since it easily accounts for the conventional character of meaning and its spatio-temporal variability. Nevertheless, its chief vulnerability is the neglect of the referential relations between expressions and the external world. This raises several problems.

First, as shown by a famous series of mental experiments conducted by Hilary Putnam (1975) and Tyler Burge (1978), expressions having the same use in two virtually identical linguistic communities can nonetheless have different meanings. Imagine, for instance, together with Putnam, a planet identical to ours with the exception that the word "water" would refer not to H<sub>2</sub>O, but to some substance with the chemical structure XYZ. Imagine a denizen of planet Earth and its counterpart of Twin Earth pointing to identical glasses of "water." They would refer to different things, although both their mental states and linguistic uses of "water" would be the same.

Second, the *antirepresentationalism* inherent to the use theory of meaning, i.e. its refusal to associate the meaning of an expression with its property of representing external fragments of reality, leads to the absurd possibility of learning a language without understanding it. The idea was developed by Searle (1980) in his "Chinese room" argument. Searle imagines himself secluded in a closed room in which he receives paper scraps with Chinese ideograms. Although he does not understand a bit of Chinese, he returns intelligible signs that he mechanically writes down following the instructions of a very detailed textbook that he has at disposal. The textbook simply presents him with the pragmatically acceptable options of associating other signs with the presented ideogram. Provided enough time and sufficient syntactic information, one could thus effectively communicate in an alien language without a drop of knowledge of that language. This possibility is, of course, highly unlikely, yet there is little that the use theory of meaning can object to it.

The results of the above analysis may eliminate the concern of some constructivists that the construction of meaning entails the construction of knowledge. Kratochwil (1989), for example, takes the following antirealist argument: we approach the external reality by means of particular descriptions. These descriptions are unexceptionably anthropocentric, culture-dependent and, to an important extent, conventional. Hence, they cannot "carve out nature at its joints." What and how we know is determined by how we ascribe meanings and characterize the world thus articulated. Notice that there is no denial of an objective reality, independent of our minds and theories. Nonetheless,

what remains beyond human meaning-ascription, description, and categorization is part of a realm “without kinds or order or motion or rest or pattern,” as Goodman (1978: 20) put it, undifferentiated and uncategorized. Kinds and structures, the argument goes, come as a matter of human imposition, in a contingent and conventional manner.

The world we live in could have been differently represented, for our most successful theories could have looked quite differently. They could have dealt in radically different categories and conceptual schemes. This argument is typically adduced by semantic and epistemic antirealists and aims at establishing a semantically determined version of ontological relativism. Certainly, the attribution of meaning cannot be utterly arbitrary, for unless our descriptions of the world were significantly empirically adequate, we would be unable to survive.

There are external constraints on our linguistic practices, and this is something that no reasonable supporter of ontological relativism would deny. But the idea is that in order to successfully cope with the constraints of the outside world it is not required to assume the truth of the descriptions about the world, but merely their empirical adequacy, i.e. their ability to “save the phenomena.” Similarly, efficient social practices can be performed without assuming that they rest on true descriptions of the world. All they need is pragmatic adequacy. But, first of all, we want to know *why* a particular linguistic practice is pragmatically adequate. Again, the use theory of meaning does not have much to say about that. Second, the following question poses itself: of all the indefinitely many possible ways of dealing with the natural world, how have the actual ones been selected? The antirealist answer is that various possible worldviews undergo a competition for *power*, the winner of which comes to enjoy unquestioned authority.

So, an analysis of power is indispensable for any complete constructivist account – be it of ontology, knowledge, society, or politics. Thus, the current scientific view of the natural world – admitting, for the sake of simplicity, that there is only one such view – has come to be accepted by way of a process through which the textual output of the scientific establishment gained so much authority as to become “facts.” According to Latour and Woolgar’s celebrated *Laboratory Life* (1986), scientific facts are merely “hardened pieces of text.” The authors see science as an association of “graphomaniacs” trying to persuade the society that their discursive output represents objective facts. “Facts” are inscriptions invested with so much authority that, once established, are never challenged or reinvestigated. To get their own texts to enjoy this status,

scientists need *credibility*, the main currency of scientific practice. Credibility can be gained and traded according to market principles. One must invest credibility to make certain that further gains will be in place. In sum, “scientific facts” are whatever “pieces of hardened text” happen to win the power battle within the scientific “tribe.”

Foucault’s (1975) genealogical approach underlines in a more sophisticated manner the connection between knowledge and power. His disciplinary “bodies of knowledge” are intrinsic parts of the systems of social control. Interestingly, however, Foucault does not deny the possibility that bodies of knowledge objectively reflect reality, but insists that they will always serve power interests. They are inevitably selective, for bodies of knowledge are generated about the subjects of social control. Yet the institutionalization of knowledge has a subversive potential, since it can transcend “the project of domination” which is meant to serve. While in general *social power* designates the capacity to affect the interests of agents as well as their rights and duties, Foucault’s insight is that power has not only a “repressive” dimension, but also a “productive” one, obviously related to the Hacking’s earlier introduced *looping effect of human kinds*. The act of naming, classifying, and diagnosing people as criminals, homosexuals, or insane actually constructs criminals, homosexuals, and insane people.

Critics have questions the coherence of this view, for reasons common to all “hidden interests” or “dominance” theories. Since the knowledge it conveys is an intrinsic part of a project of domination, hence of a form of social power, Foucault’s genealogical account is itself a power discourse among others. Besides, the conflation between the actual production of social agents and the production of identities that agents assume rests on the controversial assumption that nothing transcends the discursive frame of social construction. This has been implicitly rejected by the endorsement of Searle’s transcendental argument for the existence of brute facts. Nonetheless, the gist of Foucault’s account served as a fundamental ingredient for Stephen Lukes (1974), whose original view is that power not only concerns the actors’ conflictually carrying out their will to pursue their interests, but also, and more fundamentally, how actors perceive and define their interests. We will return to identities and interests in section 3.

### ***2.3. Searle’s theory of institutions***

There are three fundamental notions introduced by Searle that he takes to explain “institutional reality” in its entirety: *collective intentionality*,

the *assignment of functions*, and *constitutive rules*. *Collective intentionality* denotes a “we”-mode of functioning of individual intentionality. For instance, every member of a football team acts during the game in a we-mode, irreducible to his/her representation of the game-roles. Searle considers collective intentionality a primitive concept, characterizing a fundamental feature of social consciousness. To be sure, it is not that Searle has in mind something like a supra-individual mental substance. Collective intentionality is, putatively, an aspect of the individual mind, conceived as different from self-referring mental states plus the beliefs about the behavior of others. Anyway, it is beyond the purpose of this paper to discuss collective intentionality in detail. Suffices to mention that (a) Searle does not offer sufficient empirical evidence for the claim that collective intentionality is a biologically primitive phenomenon, and (b) the issue of its irreducibility is also questionable, for *we-intentionality* can be understood as individual intentionality along with the beliefs and expectations that the individual forms by way of social interaction.

The *assignment of function* involves taking a particular object and it ascribing to it a social function. A river can be designated as the border between two countries that people have a right to cross only under certain conditions. The object can also be social: slips of paper printed by the state are assigned the function of money, so that they can function as a medium of exchange. The social functions thus assigned to objects are labeled by Searle *status function*, for reasons that will become transparent below.

*Constitutive rules* are rules that not merely regulate (as in “drive on the right-hand side of the road”) but also give rise to some new domain that would not exist without them. The distinction between *regulative* and *constitutive* rules, central to virtually any version of social constructivism, is aptly drawn by Searle:

I distinguish between two sorts of rules: Some regulate antecedently existing forms of behavior; for example, the rules of etiquette regulate interpersonal relationships, but these relationships exist independently of the rules of etiquette. Some rules on the other hand do not merely regulate but create or define new forms of behavior. The rules of football, for example, do not merely regulate the game of football, but as it were create the possibility of or define that activity. The activity of playing football is constituted by acting in accordance with these rules; football has no existence apart from these rules. I call the latter kind of rules constitutive rules and the former kind regulative rules. Regulative rules regulate a pre-existing activity, an activity whose existence is logically independent of the existence of the rules.

Constitutive rules constitute (and also regulate) an activity the existence of which is logically dependent on the rules. (Searle 1965/1998: 131)

The *game of chess* simply is the formal rules of the game, since it could not exist without them. This is quite unlike the case of traffic regulations: driving would still be possible in their absence, though it would be more dangerous. Searle formalizes constitutive rules as

$X$  counts as  $Y$  in context  $C$ ,

where  $X$  denotes the object upon which the status function is assigned,  $Y$  denotes the new status, and  $C$  represents the context – social and cultural – in which the ascription takes place. In the case of the game of chess, “ $X$  [a move] counts as  $Y$  [checkmate] in context  $C$  [chess]” (Searle 1995: 28). Because  $X$  does not temporally precede and is not independent of  $Y$ , they cannot stand in a causal relationship. This is the test for the constitutive character of a rule, as opposed to the regulative ones.

Searle regards the scheme “ $X$  counts as  $Y$  in  $C$ ” as explanatory for all institutional facts, and indeed for all social life, given his conviction that social kinds are all institutional. This is a claim in need of argumentative support, because it opposes the strong intuition that institutional facts comprise only a limited part of the social phenomena. It is therefore important to understand the importance that Searle’s speech acts theory plays in his views on social reality (Searle 1995) and rationality (Searle 2001). The status-ascription scheme formalizes the speech act of an actor whose authority to perform it is socially accepted: “We accept that  $S$  has the power to do  $A$ ”, where  $A$  is the status-ascription scheme. Further, we *accept* that  $S$  has that power because of the status  $S$  acquired through a prior speech act, and so on. We have thus the picture of a complex network of constraints that regulate our social behavior, constraints that result from speech acts such as promises, proclamations, assertions, threats, apologies congratulations, requests, etc. Their normative power constitutes, according to Searle, the binder of social life.

However, there are concerns that Searle overvalues the normative power of speech acts. In the language of moral philosophy, the key to Searle’s account of normativity is to identify what Bernard Williams (1981) called *external reasons*, i.e. reasons for human action that are not part of the agent’s “subjective motivational set.”<sup>6</sup> Searle’s thesis is that speech acts create external reasons for action. While Williams believes that

there is no such a thing as an external reason, Searle argues that speech acts create desire-independent reasons for action. He presents the argument informally by means of the following scenario:

Suppose I go into a bar and order a beer. Suppose I drink the beer and the time comes to pay for the beer. Now the question is, granted the sheer fact that I intended my behavior to place me under an obligation to pay for the beer, must I also have a reason independent of this fact, such as a desire to pay for the beer, or some other appropriate element of my motivational set, in order to have a reason to pay for the beer? That is, in order to know if I have a reason to pay for the beer, do I first have to scrutinize my motivational set to see if there is any desire to pay for the beer, or to see if I hold any general principles about paying for the beer that I have drunk? It seems to me the answer is, I do not. In such a case, by ordering the beer and drinking it when bought, I have already intentionally created a commitment or obligation to pay for it, and such commitments and obligations are species of reasons. (Searle 2001: 186-187)

The commitment to pay for the beer is part of the language game of placing an order for it. No further motivation is required, according to Searle. He states that “the obligation to keep a promise is internal to the act of promising, just as the commitment to truth telling is internal to the act of statement making” (Searle 2001: 193). But why are other rational agents required to accept the truth of my utterance? And how does my promise create an external reason that constrains my action? He elaborates that “the obligation to keep a promise derives from the fact that in promising I freely and voluntarily create a reason for myself. The free exercise of the will can bind the will...” (2001: 199). And yet, where exactly rests the constraining force of a reason that I voluntarily create for the sake of semantic cooperation? Why is it, in general, that I cannot promise without being forced to keep my promise?

It does not seem to me that Searle’s account can rest on semantics alone. Generally, as I see it, what makes me abide by my promise is an external constraint, such as the desire of avoiding the unpleasant consequences of breaking the obligations created through my speech acts. Such consequences can either consist in punitive measures against particular rule-breakings, or exclusion from similar future social interaction. Hence, the sole kinds of motivations for action are desires and needs, whether we are aware of them or not. There are no external reasons for action, but merely internal ones, as the “classical” view has it.



The above argument shows that there is more to institutional facts than the normativity characteristic of language games. This normativity rests on the agent's subjective motivational set, and it is not external to it. Moreover, Searle neglects the overwhelming mass of social facts, events and processes that are *unintended* consequences of collective action. Institutions are relatively stable and predictable patterns of interaction that rest on a texture of social rules, but they frequently favor unpredictable forms of social behavior, and sometimes even to their own destruction. We mentioned above the self-fulfilling prophecies, of which a *bank run* is an example: when a majority of a bank's customers withdraw their deposits for fear of insolvency, the outcome is likely to be insolvency, regardless of whether the fear was justified or not. Hence, there is more to the social world than institutions and the class of facts related to their workings.

#### **2.4. Social constructivist approaches to IR**

There are three important versions of constructivist approaches to IR. Chronologically, the first constructivist theory of international relations was given by Nicholas Onuf's complex work, *World of Our Making* (1989). Then, Friedrich Kratochwil established himself as a key constructivist, especially through his important *Rules, Norms, and Decisions* (1989). But undoubtedly the most influential constructivist thinker in IR matters is Alexander Wendt, upon whose work I shall insist in greater detail. I start with brief presentations of Onuf's and Kratochwil's versions of constructivism.

Onuf understands constructivism as an explanatory frame applicable across the whole spectrum of science. In general, the social world is constructed through the imposition of meaning upon the raw facts of nature. Meaning, in his view, is essentially dependent on following rules. Thus, he takes an analysis of rules to be the starting point of any inquiry of social life. Rules, according to Onuf, are 'statements that tell people *what [they] should do*' (1998: 59). Rules provide guidance for human behavior and thereby make shared meaning possible. Also, rules create the possibility of agency, for people can agents in society only insofar as they *follow* rules – or at least *according to* rules.

There is a remarkable similarity between Onuf's conceptualization of rules and the one of Searle, as Onuf also grounds the normative power of rules on the performance of speech acts. His reasoning is that speech acts are successful insofar as their occurrences have consequences of the same type. Repetition turns them into social conventions. Some conventions get

institutionalized in virtue of being accepted as obligatory; thus they become rules. Certainly, much of the criticism raised against Searle's speech acts theory of normativity applies here. Speech acts do not seem to have sufficient constraining force to account by themselves for social norms.

At a different juncture, Onuf's constructivism takes an antirealist twist. He endorses the view that both the knowledge we acquire and the truths we subscribe to are relative to specific contexts, where contexts are regarded as constituted by linguistic rules and practices. Meaning is the fundamental link between language and reality. Our view of the world is inescapably signification-laden, as the matter under investigation is indelibly related to the language we use. Since meaning consists in adequately performed speech acts, it follows that both *what* and *how* we know depend on our linguistic performance. We cannot step outside of the world of our social constructions and have a neutral perspective. Thus, we end up with the earlier mentioned determination of both epistemology and ontology by semantics. Nonetheless, we have shown that there is no need for such a neutral lookout from which to compare words with the world and hand down decisions regarding their correspondence. The empirical success of our best scientific practices is not context-relative, and neither is ontology.

The foundational interest in the role of language is also shared by Kratochwil, though his focus is rather on how the norms and rules that guide human behavior are produced by everyday language. He asserts that international politics must be analyzed from the viewpoint of *norms*, for human behavior is influenced not merely by instrumental rationality, but also by rules and norms understood as "antecedent conditions for strategies and for the specification of criteria of rationality" (Lapid and Kratochwil 1996: 219). Kratochwil takes inspiration from Habermas' theory of communicative action in his account for social normativity. Communication is crucial to his theory, because speech acts and rules depend on successful communication. They succeed only insofar as they achieve the desired effect in the addressee.

Further, *meaning* is a matter of social endorsement expressed through intersubjectively shared norms. Social interaction is possible only on the ground of – at least partially – shared meanings. There is an intrinsic interpretive element in social action which cannot be eliminated, as the social choices of individuals are regulated by norms and values. Therefore, there is no neutral (*wertfrei*) discourse on social affairs. In individual decision making, norms and values come in through the use of a *narrative*,

i.e. an interpretative story developed out of a particular *topos* or commonplace that offers a shared understanding of the issue. Rules and norms are interwoven in the texture of intersubjectivity and are thus fundamental for grasping meaningful action.

Wendt's version of constructivism revolves around the *identity* of the actors involved in international politics. Recall that realism and liberalism, as well as their "neos," assume that the identities and interests of the state actors are exogenously given and, on that basis, prescribe rational strategies for maximizing those interests. Wendt's insight, on the other hand, is that the identities and interests of states are socially constructed in the process of social interaction. Also, the environment of interaction is shaped through the process of interaction.

Wendt conceptualizes this in terms of Giddens' dichotomy between *agent* and *structure*, which he regards as mutually constitutive and as having equal ontological standing. Wendt shares with neorealism – the main target of his criticism – the assumption that the international world is anarchic, that the state is the fundamental agent on that scene, and that states pursue self-help courses of action. However, he denies that anarchy is necessarily competitive, arguing that the characteristics of anarchy depend on the process of international interaction. "Anarchy is what states make of it," as he put it (1992). He also turns to meanings and intersubjectivity in order to support this claim. People act on the basis of the meanings they ascribe to object, and meanings are themselves the output of interaction. Wendt is careful not to take the excessively interpretivist line of Onuf and Kratochwil. On the contrary, he has embraced a vigorous scientific realism that allows him to separate language from reality and knowledge. So, he can easily embrace a moderate social constructivism, ontologically compatible with the belief that there is an unconstructed world, independent of our intentionality, and that it is knowable and, indeed, partly accurately represented by our best theories.

Wendt develops his constructivist account of IR based on the belief that anarchy does not have to be competitive, and hence that conceptions of interest do not have to be self-centered. Behavior, according to Wendt, is influenced by intersubjective rather than material structures. Intersubjective structures are responsible for the formation of identities, defined as 'relatively stable, role-specific understandings and expectations about self' (Wendt 1992: 397). Further, as will be seen in the next section, identities are constitutive of interests, which are defined in the process of conceptualizing situations. The most significant consequence of Wendt's

view of the socially constructed character of identities and interests is, I think, that “social identities involve an *identification* with the fate of the other” (1996: 52). The boundaries of the Self have a remarkable degree of plasticity. They can be shrunk to the core, “personal” dimension of the Self, or expanded over the whole collective of actors engaged in cooperation. In order to grasp this adequately, we need a closer look at the cogs and wheels of his theory.

### 3. Identities and Interests

It has been noted that both neorealism and neoliberalism take the *self*, i.e. the identity of the state actor, as well as its interests, as exogenously *given*. But what does the *self* stand for when talking about *self*-interested states pursuing *self*-help strategies? There is a strong representation of the empiricist camp in the political philosophy of the state, according to which the state is, ontologically speaking, a mere useful fiction or metaphor. It allows us, by presuming its autonomous agency, to readily explain and anticipate international politics. For example, Stephen Krasner (1999: 7) considers that

the ontological givens are rulers, specific policy makers, usually but not always the executive head of state. Rulers, not states – and not the international system – make choices about policies, rules, and institutions (Krasner 1999: 7).

There is no state in the sense of an independently existing agent, argue the empiricists. There is a long and respectable philosophical tradition behind this stance, going back to Hobbes and Locke, of regarding the states as a form of collective authority, an aggregation of individual wills that follow from individual delegations of authority in order to better pursue the interests of the many. However, Wendt see the state as a genuinely existing entity with substantive ontological status. He deals at length with the inability of the instrumentalist thinking about state agency to reduce it to individual action without explanatory loss.

It is not my main interest here to address the pros and cons of the notion that the state is a unitary actor. Yet I find very apt and useful the dimensions and distinctions that Wendt has introduced to analyze the concept of state, its identity and interests. There are five characteristics that Wendt singles out as definitional for the notion of state:

(1) an institutional legal order, (2) an organization claiming a monopoly on the legitimate use of organized violence, (3) an organization with sovereignty, (4) a society, and (5) territory” (Wendt 1999: 202).

The notions of “institutional legal order,” “monopoly on the legitimate use of violence,” “society,” and “territory” are sufficiently transparent for our purposes, although there are salient philosophical aspects to discuss about them. The concept of “sovereignty” is much more in need of clarification. Wendt distinguishes between an *internal* and an *external* kind of sovereignty, where the former refers to “the state as the supreme locus of political authority in society,” and the latter to “the absence of any external authority higher than the state, like other states, international law, or a supranational Church.” (1999: 207-208). He takes external sovereignty as “relatively straightforward,” but recent research on the topic displays the potential source of confusion that is the concept of sovereignty in IR. The best analysis of sovereignty belongs to Krasner (1999). He distinguishes four distinct meanings that have been ascribed to the term “sovereignty”:

*International legal sovereignty* refers to the practices associated with mutual recognition, usually between territorial entities that have formal juridical independence. *Westphalian sovereignty* refers to political organization based on the exclusion of the external actors from authority structures within a given territory. *Domestic sovereignty* refers to the formal organization of political authority within the state and the ability of public authorities to exercise effective control within the borders of their own policy. *Interdependence sovereignty* refers to the ability of public authorities to regulate the flow of information, ideas, goods, people, pollutants, or capital across the borders of their state (Krasner 1999: 3).

Krasner admirably documents that these four sorts of sovereignty do not covary, meaning that “a state can have one but not the other” (1999: 4). He turns to March and Olsen’s older distinction between the *logic of expected consequences* and the *logic of appropriateness* to construct his theory of sovereignty.

Logics of consequences see political action and outcomes, including institutions, as the product of rational calculating behavior designed to maximize a given set of unexplained preferences. Classical game theory and neoclassical economics are well-known examples. Logics of

appropriateness understand political action as a product of rules, roles, and identities that stipulate appropriate behavior in given situations. (Krasner 1999: 5)

Using this terminology, Krasner argues that the logics of consequences dominates the scene of international politics, and that the institution of sovereignty is being hypocritically used in an instrumental sense, under the appearance of institutionally regulated behavior. He puts it bluntly under the slogan "Sovereignty is organized hypocrisy." The domestic life of states is dominated by the logic of appropriateness, for the domestic social and political system is strongly institutionalized and the roles of the political actors are strongly regulated. However, the international environment, characterized by conflicts of interests, power asymmetries and the lack of an overriding authority, offers the actors in particular situations the possibility to choose from different rules and follow those that best promote their interests. For example, the conflicting rules of nonintervention in another state's essential jurisdiction and humanitarian intervention are given course according to the instrumental interests of the decision-makers.

Now, where do *identity* and *self* fit into this analysis of the concept of *state*? It is easier to answer this by taking into account the four aspects of identity that Wendt distinguishes in a social kind, namely the *personal/corporate* (depending on whether it concerns particulars or corporate agents, respectively), *type*, *role*, and *collective* aspects. The personal/corporate identity refers to the distinctive material constitution of the entity. For states, corporate identity can be spelled out along the definitional characteristics delineated above, where sovereignty is to be taken in its internal sense. Type identity "refers to a social category or 'label' applied to persons [or entities] who share ...some characteristics, in appearance, behavioral traits, attitudes, values, skills, knowledge, opinions, experience, historical commonalities, and so on" (Wendt 1999: 225). An actor – individual or corporate – can have multiple type identities simultaneously, as it can share various sets of values and opinions, and display different forms of behavior in relationship with different other actors. Through shared beliefs and values, type identity introduces a cultural element in the overall analysis of identity.

Further, role identities are cultural *par excellence*, as they designate the culturally conditioned roles that an actor plays in relation to the others. Roles are assigned relational predicates, such as "son," "teacher,"

“ruler” with respect to individuals, or “ally,” “enemy,” “hegemon” with regard to states. Each of them presupposes at least another object in order to apply validly. The “learning” of roles is a matter of the actors’ collective knowledge of each other’s beliefs and expectations. By acquiring such collective knowledge, each of the actors bound by relational predicates internalizes adequate behavior rules, which position them with respect to one another. Thus, the *self* reflects itself in the *other* and this reflection is assimilated in the actor’s identity.

Finally, collective identity is reached though a cognitive process “in which the Self-Other distinction becomes blurred and at the limit transcended altogether” (Wendt 1999: 229). Collective identity is the most salient aspect of Wendt’s account of IR. Unlike neorealism and neoliberalism, SC observes the circumstances under which the boundaries of the self extend over, or are engulfed by, the other. Obviously, given the essential distinctiveness expressed in the personal/corporate aspect, identity cannot be collective in every respect, but only regarding some issue-specific properties.

Interests follow from the nature of identity, because what an actor *wants* depends on who an actor *is*. Ultimately, interests are motivational factors whose fulfillment contributes to the reproduction of their underlying identity. But we must distinguish between the actor’s *subjective* perception and opinions of what her needs are, and the *objective* actions that must be taken in order to meet the identity’s needs. Both kinds of interest have to be properly explained. Subjective interests are important because they are the proximate motivators of political actors. Statesmen, for instance, typically define and assess the national interest according to their information, values, and ideology. It is, therefore, salient to have a proper description of their subjective views on what the national interest is and how it is to be pursued.

Naturally, if political decision-makers constantly pursue a subjective national interest that diverges from the objective one, the identity underlying their political views will perish. But then how can one ever ascertain what the national interest really is? Is it something that only some elites, maybe privileged by way of skills and information, can grasp? Or it is simply what the majority of a society decides it is best for the most? Incidentally, the former can be true, yet the elites of undemocratic states can lack the legitimate means to pursue their objective interest. On the other hand, though democratically sanctioned ways of action are legitimate, majorities can be wrong or short-sighted

(suboptimal). It is relevant to delineate some salient aspects of the national interest.

George and Keohane (1980) identify three dimensions of the national interest: physical survival, autonomy, and economic well-being, to which Wendt adds "collective self-esteem" (1999: 235). Fundamentally, the national interest concerns the *survival* of the society and its individual members. Realism and neorealism assume that survival is the only thing that matters to the national interest of a state. But of course, our intuitions command other dimension too, since they are not indifferent to *how* the members of a state live in actuality.

Yet before turning to the remaining dimensions of national interest, recall that the parsimonious realist model is rather an attempt to give a reductive explanation of rational foreign policy, in which any kind of interest that a state may have on the international scene relies on the fundamental one: survival. *Autonomy* refers to the ability of a state to retain exclusive control over the allocation of its resources and the choice of its government. It is a characteristic of the internal sovereignty of a state. Further, *economic well-being* designates the material resource base of a state. The economic status is crucial not only for the possibility of survival, but also for its sovereignty and *self-esteem*. Wendt aptly notices that "self-esteem is a basic human need of individuals, and one of the things that individuals seek in group membership" (1999: 236). Self-esteem is a psychological factor unmistakably influenced by culture, hence also by the relationship between the *self* and the *other*. These four dimensions of national interest may not be concomitantly achievable – in fact, they can even diverge. Yet, "in the long run all four must be satisfied. States that do not will tend to die out." (1999: 239)

Summing up, the issue is not really whether states can act altruistically, that is motivated by something else than self-interest. Philosophically, any action, even the most generous one, can be explained as a matter of self-interest, for there is no motive for action outside of the subjective motivational set of the agent. The genuine theoretical contribution of SC is that the *self* can expand so as to merge, in certain significant respects, with the *other*, to the effect that altruism can be understood as the effect of a transformed self-interest. Once a particular group of states form a collective identity, self-interested action is actually perceived as cooperative. The European Union is the favorite source of evidence for SC. The issue of constructing an European identity can be analyzed as a



process of social groups progressively “learning” to identify with others in “concentric circles,” as Wendt put it.

Nonetheless, I choose the following concluding example to show not only the theoretical resources of constructivism, but also some obvious limits of neorealism. In a controversial article published in the *London Review of Books* in March 2006, John Mearsheimer and Stephen Walt maintain that the amount of economic and military help that the US provides Israel in virtue of their privileged partnership defies the logic of self-interest that Washington should follow according to the neorealist prescriptions. The authors list a series of measures of material support that the US has given Israel after World War II, which they deem disproportionate relative to both the benefits that such a support brings Washington, and the objective needs of Israel as an industrialized country. They identify the reason for this level of support in the domestic American politics, and particularly in the efficient “Israel Lobby,” which, as they surmise, has managed to divert America’s Middle East foreign policy from the American national interest. I shall not here review the pros and cons that have been expressed in the debate triggered by this paper.<sup>7</sup> The point of bringing forward this particular case is to show that the neorealist conceptual framework, from within which Mearsheimer and Walt argue, makes difficult for them to see the possibility of an increasing perception of collective identity between Israel and US, grounded in historical, cultural, moral, and civilization elements of identity. Consequently, there is a dominant perception of similarity of interests in both Americans and Israelis regarding many coordinates of their foreign policy, as well as an empathic understanding of each others’ security fears. Up to a certain point, it is open to discussion whether Washington had more to gain in terms of security and economics from a more pro-Arab attitude in the Middle East. Yet no sophisticated foreign policy analysis can ignore actors’ identities in accounting for the ways they act in order to achieve their interests.

## NOTES

- 1 As Kupchan and Wittkopf (1997: 47) point out, "Between 1974 and 1980, more than thirty countries converted their governments from dictatorial to democratic rule. This pace accelerated during the 1980s in democratization's 'third wave'... By 1992, more than half the world's governments were, for the first time, democratic. Although modest reversals have been evident since 1993 and Russia's commitment to democratization was in doubt in 1996, the long-term global trend toward democratization appears to be entrenched."
- 2 Our interest here is not in analyzing the concept of "being," or what it is for something to exist, but in dealing with the question "what exists?" or "what kinds of general things are there?"
- 3 In the special case of social ontology, there is a mutual dependence of ontology and epistemology that is not in place in the realm of natural kinds. Since social kinds are the outcome of collective action, it is useful to distinguish between the *intended* (hence acknowledged as least as possible) and *unintended* results of social action. Conceivably, some constructed facts are inaccessible to human knowledge by any means of inquiry. Kukla calls the facts inaccessible in principle *noumenal*.
- 4 In transcendental arguments, the assumption is made that a certain condition holds, and then the presuppositions required by that conditions are depicted.
- 5 Just to make clear, *absolute* refers here to the relation of epistemic warrant of any belief by a given epistemic context. As such, it does by no means conflict with the idea of fallibility of any knowledge claim.
- 6 The *subjective motivational set* includes desires, patterns of emotional reaction, attitudes, etc.
- 7 A very good sample is given in the July/August 2006 issue of *Foreign Policy*.

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# ROMANIAN CONSTITUTIONALISM AND THE STATE OF THE EUROPEAN UNION

« L'histoire est une galerie de tableaux où il y a peu d'originaux et beaucoup de copies. »

Alexis de Tocqueville, *L'Ancien Régime et la Révolution*

## 1. Introduction

Given the challenges posed by the breadth and depth of the topic and due to the space limitations imposed by editorial constraints, a few caveats and preliminary clarifications are necessary from the onset. The European Union accession can be seen, from a theoretical legal standpoint, as a meeting of two legal worlds. More importantly, from a socio-legal viewpoint, this process of acculturation and transfer of legal norms, attitudes, values, is a feat of unprecedented dimensions. Even for a national jurisdiction such as ours, well accustomed to processes of modernization by way of Western legal transfers (the Civil Code is a slightly modified translation of the Napoleonic model, the 1866 Constitution a fairly faithful copy of its 1831 Belgian counterpart, etc.), adoption of the approximately 80.000 pages of the *acquis communautaire* (*acquis de l'Union*) is a task of momentous proportions. Accurate empirical studies of the actual implementation of this legislation will probably be of the essence, for public lawyers and legal sociologists alike, in the years to come.<sup>1</sup> Yet, this study is not and cannot be just a technical lawyerly survey of specific legal transformations undertaken by the Romanian political and constitutional system in view of the accession. Such a survey would in the present setting at the same time largely surpass and fall short of the task at hand. Neither will we undergo a survey of all the transformations related to the so-called “political conditional” *acquis* requirements, an area which is of more direct interest to a constitutional and administrative

lawyer. Although practical changes will be inevitably mentioned, their purview will be merely exemplary of the broader argument. The scope of this paper is more limited and yet more foundational.

The development of the European Union seems to have already transformed or at least critically challenged both the classical constitutional practices modeled on the 'ideal-typical' structure of limited government in the nation state (e.g., in terms of separation of powers, hierarchy of norms, forms and structures of representation) and the conceptual justifications underlying those practices (the understanding of state, sovereignty, democracy, legitimacy, legal/political, public/private, etc.).

In this respect, the sheer fact that the *Treaty establishing a Constitution for Europe* has failed in the course of the ratification process is largely immaterial from the respective standpoints of future European constitutionalism and the future of constitutionalism in Europe. The process of adopting this treaty commonly referred to as the "European Constitution" reflects tensions and ambiguities which lie deeper in the making of the Union and thus will not disappear with the demise of one legal document. Most of these ambiguities can be reduced and related to the vacillations of the European project between a form of supranational "governance" (neutral social and economic regulation) and a form of "government" (a state-like structure of political union).

These ambiguities are further complicated or compounded in the newer member states and accession countries. Clashes of paradigm are aggravated in legal systems where the paradigms themselves are largely 'inherited,' without sufficient prior internalization, by means of forced and fast cultural and legal translations. The overnight modernization brought about by means of the political conditionality *acquis* adoption, although beneficial overall, is not an unqualified good.

Furthermore and related, one could reasonably argue that the process and substance of this modernization do not necessarily always represent the proper and unquestionable demands of liberal constitutionalism. To wit, in Romania, the top-down and wholesale nature of the 'political conditionality' reforms, undertaken usually without public debate, pushed rapidly through the parliamentary legislative machine under pleas of necessity or (most commonly) sped up by the circuitous means of governmental regulation, added a number of peculiar antinomies and further complications to the preexistent contradictions created by the post-communist instrumental attitude towards the rule of law.



As a last caveat, complementary to the previous remarks, it should be restated that the accession process has by now already had many beneficial effects on the Romanian legal, social, and political system.<sup>2</sup> Yet, the benefits are well known and there seems to be little shortage of panegyrics in the literature on the EU ‘constitutional process.’ Moreover, a public lawyer committed to constitutionalism must of necessity focus on the shortcomings, dangers, and tensions of a given legal development. The cast of mind presupposed by the theory and practice of limited government is, after all, one of healthy pragmatic skepticism. In what follows, therefore, the downfalls only will be heeded.

## **2. European Constitutionalism between Governance and Government**

“‘Governance’ is the standard buzzword for the perplexing maze of order and edict, directive and regulation, and administrative law and judicial interpretation that comprises the purportedly sacred and irreversible corpus of law and administrative fiat—the *acquis communautaire*—by which Brussels tries to rule Europe. It must be disentangled to be understood.”

John Gillingham, *Design for a New Europe* (2006)

“The despot is not a man. It is the ... correct, realistic, exact plan... that will provide your solution once the problem has been posed clearly...It is the Plan...drawn up well away from the frenzy in the mayor’s office or the town hall, from the cries of the electorate or the laments of society’s victims. It has been drawn up by serene and lucid minds. It has taken account of nothing but human truths.”

Le Corbusier, *The Radiant City: Elements of a Doctrine of Urbanism to be Used as the Basis of Our Machine-Age Civilization* (1967 (1935))

### **2.1. The Uses and Abuses of Terms**

Many have wondered, especially after the French and Dutch ‘No’ votes on that confounding contraption, the Draft Constitution Treaty, whether it had been wise to proceed with such fanfare to the adoption of a “European Constitution.” Might it not, perhaps, would have been better, prudentially speaking, to let the changes occur slowly and organically? Thus, this new empire would have surreptitiously just ‘happened’ upon

its subjects somehow more naturally, perhaps even “in a fit of absence of the mind,” as the historian Seeley once claimed the British Empire ‘just happened’ upon the world. Others have wondered (and justly so) why the document was so voluminous, more verbose than the longest constitution in the world, that of India. Other observers still have pointedly opined that a proper constitution should be comprehensible to those subject to it. For instance, in contrast with the clarity, precision, and concision of the American 1787 fundamental law, deciphering the European document poses a challenge even to a specialized legal audience (the current writer will happily bring testimony to this effect). Yet, in spite of the punctual correctness of all these observations, the most bewildering occurrence of all is precisely that language and conceptual frameworks have been distorted to such extent that an informed conversation about the European constitutional treaty could unselfconsciously and indiscriminately analogize by building on assumptions properly attached to nation-state constitutionalism. Simply put, most commentators do not question the labeling and the package (“constitution”, “constitutionalism”) as such.

This state of affairs is not accidental but rather the crowning of a long process of taking liberties with terms and concepts. As John Gillingham, a particularly astute observer of the European developments has noted (I will take the liberty of citing at some length): “The subject of integration has a distinctly postmodern flavor; for much of its fifty-year history, the argument that only words have meaning is often persuasive. Language capture has been an important part of the European story.... Euro words may imply either more or less than evident, mean different things to different people, or simply mean nothing at all. It is thus necessary to cast official language aside whenever possible and use standard terms and common measurements in order to demystify ideas, events, and deeds as well as provide bases for comparison.”<sup>3</sup>

## ***2.2. Governance and Government***

While there are many factors which influenced this exact configuration of events in the adoption and ratification process of the Constitutional Treaty, on a more fundamental level the change was an inevitable consequence of EU evolution. It can be neatly categorized as yet another wavering of the European project between governance and government.<sup>4</sup>

What follows is anything but an empty exercise in nominalism. Terms, especially in public law, have a telling power with respect to the ways

in which they showcase the realities for which they serve as referents and especially with regard to the manner in which they structure our understanding of the underlying implications that they short-hand. Even terminological confusion or interchangeable use of terms tells us something about the world we are living in. Namely, it shows that our conceptual framework fails to master the facts, perhaps as a result of the fact that our practices are straying too far from their initial justifications.<sup>5</sup>

In English language, the word “governance” was used until the late Middle Ages to refer to, define or describe the overlapping normative orders within and across each polity and also the interaction of Church authority and secular power within European Medieval Christianity. As a trite reminder, Medieval Europe was a normative pluriverse and a polyarchy (many powers). The etymological sibling of governance, the word “government” ‘replaces’ slowly the use of the term governance, as far as the present author could find out by undertaking a cursory etymological quest, after the advent of Reformation and the appearance of the state as a locus of sovereignty. I am not a linguist but one could venture to think that the word as such, in and of itself, is perhaps better fit to describe a new reality, since, unlike “governance,” which is a pure noun of action and therefore has an alluring neutral overtone, a breezy sort of abstractness attached to it, “government” speaks of actions which have somehow already been consolidated or solidified into an institution. “Government” has therefore more authoritative overtones.<sup>6</sup>

Tellingly, to exemplify this transition, Cromwell’s written constitution, adopted right after the Civil War and before the Protectorate, in 1653, is styled *An Instrument of Government*. It may also be telling to observe, in relation to the interconnectedness of the use of the word “government,” the notion of sovereignty, and the appearance of the modern state that, for instance, whereas in 1628 Lord Chief Justice Coke writes that “good governance and full right is done to every man,” two decades later, in 1651, Hobbes would know nothing of the sort. A mere twenty years divide the two writings and yet, since the Civil War had answered with finality the question of sovereignty (I regard the Glorious Revolution to be a mere re-assertion of an already given answer), Hobbes’s *Leviathan* is replete with use of the term “government.”

And rightly so, since what the word truly conveys, besides overtones related to new command and control normative mechanisms and authoritative leadership is sovereignty, political unity. The state is the embodiment of political unity and such a unity which stands above all

factions, a self-contained political universe. This terminology corresponds fairly well to the post-Westfalian European political reality. The role of government of course differs largely from Absolutism through to the liberal state (Benjamin Constant's *pouvoir neutre*) but the difference is one of degree or scope rather than kind, since the main assumption is that the state will stand above society and its various subdivisions. The issue is not just that the state governs in the sense of administration, that it steers the community or that it has a demarcated sphere of reach (liberal constitutionalism) but rather that the state has a monopoly -to paraphrase the well-known Weberian definition- on legitimate domination and potential conflict. It decides political issues with finality.

It is quite interesting that all of a sudden, especially during the second half of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, the word governance becomes fashionable once again. And once again, it is used to describe a shift in reality and a corresponding need for a shift in terminology. This time, interestingly enough, its use enters public law from the private domain. Within national jurisdictions, the term "governance" is used to depict regulatory structures, such as the American independent agencies, the British *quangos* or the French *authorités administratives indépendantes*.<sup>7</sup>

### ***2.3. Neutral Regulation and Political Control-A Page of Comparative Legal History***

"Upon this point a page of history is worth a volume of logic."

New York Trust Co. v. Eisner, 256 U.S. 345 (1921), per Oliver Wendell Holmes, J.

The terminological shift marks an ambivalent standpoint on the divide between public and private, an uncertainty regarding the role of the politics, and a consequently politically agnostic view of administration as either (i) an exercise in neutral expertise or (ii) as an independent and impartial aggregation and balancing of interests (or perhaps a mix of these two).

Ideologically and along a broader scope of analysis, the issue is related to different emphases on the proper role or purview of the state and the corresponding place of the market (regulatory function/regulatory state as different from the redistribution function/welfare state or stabilization function/Keynesian state or a combination of the latter two, the Keynesian

welfare state). A regulatory state is one whose intervention in the economic domain is legitimized in a limited fashion, in terms of market failure.

Policy-wise and institutionally, the problem is related to the in-built credibility and time consistency downfalls of majoritarian decision-making. A political scientist and an economist, Juan Linz and Giandomenico Majone, can be credited for giving two of the clearest renditions of the argument. Governance through politically independent regulatory bodies is an attempt to de-politicize certain social and economic domains, and thus to solve problems of long-term coordinated political action by delegating policy-making regulatory discretion, under statute (or, in the case of the EC/EU, under treaty) to politically neutral bodies.<sup>8</sup> This kind of delegation outside the scope and reach of electoral politics is thought to also serve, incidentally, the main purpose behind the theory of separation of powers/checks and balances, by deflecting or circumventing the peculiarly modern trend towards a constant aggrandizement of the executive branch by legislative delegations.<sup>9</sup> Yet, this latter function of independent agencies is only an epiphenomenal and secondary consequence. The main reason and justification for insulating institutions from the ordinary course of majoritarian politics rests on the belief that the tasks they perform, for considerations of impartiality/independence of judgment, expertise, or both, need to be placed in the realm of rational decision-making and taken out of the 'irrationality' of day-to-day prudential political choices or aleatory aggregations of votes.

The European Union was designed as a supra-national agency delegated a certain regulatory discretion by the principals, the member states, as a form of governance across, among, perhaps above governments. The European Community/European Union served, therefore, at the European level, the same functions that are served within a national jurisdiction by a politically independent agency, such as an independent national bank or, arguably, even a court. It was meant to neutralize specific domains of state action, and take certain decisions out of the political process, thus solving by a type of quasi-constitutional self-binding, the time inconsistency and credibility problems posed by the ordinary political process. The reasons for neutralizing these institutions are, once again, expertise, professional discretion, policy consistency and fairness or independence of judgment.

As a helpful reminder, the question which has often been posed is why a European constitution was needed at all. Why, in other words, would the European project need to seek this transition from a neutral instrument of supra-national European governance to a form of political government? The logically subsequent questions are of course what this transition would require and whether it is possible at all. My limited thesis at this point is that this transition was from the onset inevitably inscribed in the project, since most regulatory issues are inherently political, in the classical sense of the word.

I will exemplify my claim with an elaboration on several recent changes of legal and judicial paradigm in American administrative policy and law. American regulatory policy and administrative law are particularly important for purposes of analogy, for two reasons. Firstly, the idea of economic regulation through independent bodies is, so to speak, an American patent. Secondly and related, American influence on the EC/EU is well known. In the field of economic regulation, for instance, the anti-cartel mechanism of the European Coal and Steel Community Treaty (ECSC) –considered by Jean Monnet as the first European antitrust provisions, had been crucially influenced by American legislation (Sherman Act, the Clayton Act, and the Federal Trade Commission Act). Partly because of American effort, the Treaty of Paris establishing the ECSC in 1951 rejected the option of internationalizing the means of production in coal, iron, and steel, opting instead in favor of a common market. American models of social and economic regulation remained important for European regulators even in the 1960s and 70s (e.g., environmental and consumer protection regulations).<sup>10</sup>

Moreover, American independent agencies are the paradigmatic example of governance within government. A 1935 US Supreme Court decision, *Humphrey's Executor v. United States*<sup>11</sup> 'constitutionalized' their politically neutral, 'fourth branch of government status.' In that case, the incumbent President, Franklin Delano Roosevelt, had fired Humphrey, the Chairman of the Federal Trade Commission, in spite of statutory provisions protecting the office of Federal Trade Commissioner, by specifying limited removal grounds. The constitutional issue in contention was whether the President could remove at will a Federal Trade Commissioner, contrary statutory provisions notwithstanding, by virtue of the Art. II constitutional provision vesting the entire Executive Power in the President. The Supreme Court held the removal unconstitutional, partly on grounds related to the neutrality that was allegedly ensured by

the expertise of the commission. That is to say, since the Commission was performing an expert, non-political function, the commissioners could and properly should have been insulated from *direct* political control.

The ideological belief parallel to and underlying these legal-constitutional developments was that, as expert regulation legitimizes itself through the intrinsic impartiality of an outcome, there is no discretion problem, and thus there is no need for politics to intervene in the regulatory-administrative process. In the words of an eminent American scholar of administrative law: "For in that case the discretion that the administrator enjoys is more apparent than real. The policy to be set is simply a function of the goal to be achieved and the state of the world. There may be a trial and error process in finding the best means of achieving the posited goal, but persons subject to the administrator's control are no more liable to his arbitrary will than are patients remitted to the care of a skilled physician."<sup>12</sup> Indeed, to give an example preceding by half a century the *Humphrey's Executor* decision, the first federal regulatory commission, the Interstate Commerce Commission, established in 1887, had been given two functions, locomotive inspection and train safety standards and maximum rate regulation. The two attributions were perceived as similar in nature. After a while, nonetheless, the assumptions that had validated the expertise model would become untenable. For example, safety standards, which in the 19<sup>th</sup> century paradigm were regarded, like all engineering, as a realm of science, embodying scientific objectivity, would be perceived as "standardized responses to risk based on professional conventions based on cost risk trade-offs"<sup>13</sup> At the beginning of economic regulation, even the administrative setting of "reasonable" railroad rates by independent state and federal commissions had been seen as an instantiation of exact science. Perceived as the computation of the fair rate of return on the market through economic science and the application, by the accountant, of that formula to the exact facts at hand (particular railroad, particular commodity), the result enforced by the administrator was of necessity, to paraphrase another sedulous student of American regulation, Martin Shapiro, as "beyond human manipulation...as the astronomer charted Venus's sidereal movement."<sup>14</sup>

Nonetheless, that mental template corresponded to the classical economical view and the classical legal attitude, according to which the economy was considered self-correcting and –respectively- property was considered a relation between a man and a thing. To wit, within the Lockean conceptual framework, the classical philosophical articulation

of the practices of classical constitutionalism, the state cannot legitimately interfere with my property by definition, since the state is my creation for limited and specified purposes, based on consent. We all (theoretically and counterfactually or pre-politically speaking) only gave it limited powers, for reasons of convenience and uniformity, as our common agent, to interpret the laws of nature, solve undisputedly disputes as to their meaning, and punish transgressions. The same logic can be found in the arch-authority on the Anglo-Saxon common law, Blackstone's *Commentaries*, where the right of property is presented as "that sole and despotic dominion which one man claims and exercises over the external things of the world, in total exclusion of the right of any other individual in the universe."<sup>15</sup> This concrete (physical) and personal notion of property had come under various attacks already by the end of the 19<sup>th</sup> and beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup>. To give just one example, in a criticism of railroad commissions regulatory practice, Gerald Henderson observed that the Supreme Court's announcement, in review of rates cases, of the rule that rate reasonableness would be a factor of the railroad property's fair market value was in fact circular, since market value was, conversely, a function of the rates established: "If we reduce your rates, your value goes down. If we increase them, it goes up. Obviously, we cannot measure rates by value if value is itself a function of rates."<sup>16</sup> Property had conceptually become, in the new logic expounded and exemplified by Henderson's argument, a legal abstraction, an expectation of gain on the market, protected by state coercion, rather than a tangible thing protected from the state by the constitutional limitations.

Belief in the capacity of experts to solve objectively, i.e., un-politically, economic and social problems persisted for a few decades after the collapse of the nineteenth-century faith in 'natural,' principled, limits between the individual and the state. For a while, the idealization of expertise actually bloomed and became sort of a progressive cult in the new welfare state. This increased reliance on the power of science and bureaucratic expertise to correctly tabulate and offer solutions to the various social and economic problems of the new era was fueled by the experience of massive display of planning and allocation of resources by state bureaucracies during the Great War, the Depression, and WWII. On the ideological level, the various strands of meliorism which marked the long course twentieth century would shatter the reliance on "order of things" justifications and benchmarks and would popularize belief in



social and economic evolution by means of efficiency-rationalization and social engineering.<sup>17</sup>

Nonetheless, it did not take long for congratulation to turn into unease and then vociferous complaint, as it grew more and more evident that bureaucracies, when they are not politically responsible, tend to distort their initial mandate, develop organizational pathologies and then run astray in a number of ways. Firstly, any bureaucracy has a tendency to develop “tunnel effect”, that is, to translate its enabling law mandate into policy imperatives. An independent highway agency, for instance, will see the world as a highway and build as many highways as possible, even if, when, and where unneeded. A rulemaking agency will over-regulate. Budgetary considerations and the logic of organizational self-interest add a number of obvious complications to this deleterious tendency. Also, when insulated from political control, independent administrative agencies tend to either ‘ossify’ (fall into bureaucratic torpor) or become hijacked by the regulated constituency (this is referred to as “agency capture”).<sup>18</sup>

The next step was to legitimate the political independence of the administration through procedure. That is to say, the new argument for insulating regulatory administration from politics would not be that the administrator’s task is non-discretionary and thus politically neutral as an exercise of scientific rigor. Conversely, the neutrality-objectivity would derive from the fact that, when adopting a policy, the administrator could best pool and aggregate knowledge by balancing through the policymaking procedure all the possible interests and positions held by all possible stakeholders in the given matter (e.g., standard-setting, environmental regulation, licensing, etc.). Thus, in his 1975 classic, “The Reformation of American Administrative Law,”<sup>19</sup> Richard Stewart described the contemporaneous province of American administrative law through the conceptual placeholder of the “interest balancing model.” That is, the tendencies he then observed revealed a strong emphasis on taming the administrative process through the widest possible interest representation<sup>20</sup> The provision of the broadest possible participation in administrative processes was so pronounced that the administration as such had, according to Stewart, begun to resemble an aggregation of mini-legislatures providing a form of “surrogate representative process.” Both his description and diagnosis are well summated by this following passage, which needs to be cited at some length:

“[T]he problem of administrative procedure is to provide representation for all affected interests; the problem of substantive policy is to reach equitable accommodations among these interests in varying circumstances; and the problem of judicial review is to ensure that agencies provide fair procedures for representation and reach fair accommodations. These difficulties are ultimately attributable to the disintegration of any fixed and simple boundary between private ordering and collective authority. The extension of governmental administration into so many areas formerly left to private determination has outstripped the capacities of the traditional political and judicial machinery to control and legitimate its exercise. In the absence of authoritative directives from the legislature, decisional processes have become decentralized and agency policy has become in large degree a function of bargaining and exchange with and among the competing private interests whom the agency is supposed to rule.”<sup>21</sup> The problem with the interest representation model is its incapacity to generate limits and standards; without an external yardstick, it is impossible to tell what weigh should be given to the various competing interests. Besides, in the abstract, the epistemological burden placed on the administrator (and consequently on the court which supervises the administrative process) is impossible to meet, as it tends towards ‘synopticism.’<sup>22</sup> This common problem with procedural ‘solutions’ is beautifully shorthanded by Jeremy Bentham’s characterization of procedure as mere “adjective law”: in any field of human decision-making, an increased level of procedure cannot as such provide an answer to the problem at hand. The level of due process is, conversely, a direct function of the importance of the issue to be decided.<sup>23</sup>

Thus, in spite of the New Deal faith in expertise and belief that expert regulation legitimizes itself through the intrinsic impartiality of an outcome or later arguments regarding legitimacy through interest balancing, if anything, the more recent conclusion or trend seems to be that the primary legitimation mechanism of independent agencies is the governing statute of an agency and political (Presidential) supervision.

Belief in the self-legitimizing capacity of expertise and interest balancing has been constantly under attack and was more recently curtailed by decisions like *Chevron USA, Inc. v. Natural Resources Defence Council, Inc.*,<sup>24</sup> holding that deference is due to reasonable agency interpretation of the scope of its statutory authority, provided Congress has not precisely spoken to the question forming the object of litigation, and *Lujan v. Defenders of Wildlife*,<sup>25</sup> holding that pure regulatory

injury is not a sufficient standing requirement. The controlling part of both decisions is not faith in the administrators' in-built *a-political* objectiveness, predicated upon independence and neutrality attained as a function of expertise or –respectively- interest balancing and aggregation but rather, contrariwise, the argument in both cases rests upon *political control* by the elected Executive, control which ensures both public accountability and, just as importantly, democratic legitimacy. These decisions mark a constitutional recognition of the Office of the President as the central legitimating mechanism in the administrative sphere. A number of executive orders, for instance Executive Order 12.866 (1994) provided also for streamlining and increased presidential control through the Office of Management and Budget (Office of Information and Regulatory Affairs).

#### ***2.4. Constitution, Constitutionalism, Governance and Government Revisited-the Reasons for and the Impossibility of a Failed Attempt at Metamorphosis***

“It is clear that the Union has the potential, at least, for a new form of governance, where the political element of government is replaced with alternative forms of interest-group politics that develop within the elaboration of policies.”

András Sajó, “Constitution without the Constitutional Moment: A View from the New Member States,” 3 (2-3) *International Journal of Constitutional Law* (2005)

Similar considerations as those which we have observed while reviewing the the American developments, *mutatis mutandis* of course, led to the constitutionalizing rhetoric implied in the passing references in ECJ decisions to a European constitutionalism and finally to the European Convention and its ill-fated progeny, the *Draft Treaty Establishing a Constitution for Europe*. The European Union grew in size and competencies self-referentially and in a very elitist manner. First of all, it developed by regulation breeding more regulation –an extreme though somewhat amusing example of overregulation is Commission Regulation 2257/94 laying down with fastidious minutiae quality standards for bananas that are fit for marketing in the Community.<sup>26</sup> Secondly, the Union grew in legal competence by means of aggressive activist adjudication spawning judicial law-making. Indeed, all the essential

elements which are usually referred to as EU constitutionalism have been developed by judicial doctrine, so that, to paraphrase Alec Stone Sweet, we could deem the Union to be a classic case of “governing with judges.”<sup>27</sup> Problem is, nonetheless, that, although both judicialization of politics/politicization of justice and over-bureaucratization of governmental processes are problems that plague all modern polities, the EU is not (at least not yet) even a polity. Hence, the democracy and legitimacy deficits are its level compounded. As the growth of the project had reached a point when the aloofness from the public began to pose the question of legitimacy in imperative and undelayable terms, the answer which the European political and bureaucratic establishment sought to provide was the artifice of a treaty called a constitution.

A constitution is of course a mechanism for dividing and concentrating power, a “genealogy of power written at its birth”<sup>28</sup> determining (put it in blunt vernacular) “who gets what, when, and how.” A constitution also constitutes power, meaning, according to the Latin roots of the word, it causes things to come together and stand up.<sup>29</sup> The proposed European constitution and the sheer existence of the European Union serve very well the negative function of constitutionalism, in the sense of avoidance of concentration-aggregation of power in one single institution or branch of power and incidental avoidance of the tyranny of the majority.<sup>30</sup> Perhaps the European Union would even be able, in time, to acquire a *sui-generis* legitimacy, based on a non-majoritarian (or majoritarian but non-substantive, purely procedural), Habermasian deliberative democratic model (presumably suitable in equal measure to faculty meetings, roundtable talks, and modern, pluralist, complex societies).

Nonetheless, besides the neutral-negative element, a constitution, as it is also commonly understood, must of necessity rest on a positive, political component. That is, a constitution needs to be underpinned by a legitimation mechanism. At this level, the question is and will likely remain unanswered in the near future. The argument, expounded in its clearest form by Dieter Grimm,<sup>31</sup> is straightforward and as yet unanswerable. Namely, given the fact that there are neither a European people (substantive democracy) nor the minimal preconditions for a public sphere, such as pan-European parties, a common language, pan-European television networks, etc. (formal democracy), there is no true legitimating mechanism, thus no political element and therefore there can be as yet no European government.

In retrospect, one could safely argue that, in spite of the high-flown rhetoric (analogies of the European Convention with Philadelphia were the cliché du jour at the time) and vigorous declamatory attempts at a constitutional 'bootstrapping' by Valéry Giscard d'Estaing, the President of the Convention on the Future of Europe,<sup>32</sup> the legitimacy-democracy deficit and sovereignty aspects seem to have been acutely apparent in the process of the adoption of this injudicious venture. The rejection of the enterprise in the Dutch and French referenda will probably quell this sort of design, if only for a while.

### **3. Romanian Constitutionalism between Post-Communist Pre-Modernity and Overnight Post-Modernization-A Few Remarks on Possible Future Tensions**

All implications of the meandering EU quests in search of legitimacy and political form are most visible in the confusing signals (i.e., standards proposed, measures promoted, institutions advocated or supported) under the political conditionality accession requirements.

In this vein, a Bulgarian researcher with the Sofia Centre for Liberal Strategies, Daniel Smilov, noted, in an insightful comparative article focused on EU-related judiciary reform in his country, that the requirements of the Commission have an opaque, perhaps even quasi-mythical quality.<sup>33</sup> As the same institution, legislative measure or constitutional arrangement is, across accession states, here simply noted without ado in the respective Country Report, there praised and elsewhere chastised harshly, one has to strain imagination and reason in order to divine a unifying model, a yardstick, behind the criticism and praise. Perhaps the analysis-assessment made by the Commission follows a complicated and contextualized chart which includes all relevant systemic differences, so that the above-mentioned disparities of treatment could be integrated in a broader encompassing framework. Yet, as Smilov pointed out, neither a specific and itemized laundry list of criteria, nor a complex combinatory model of analysis, context- and system-savvy, are to be found. A model is not provided since a model does not exist, be it only due to the fact the disparities of constitutional system design among the Member States are significant and all range within the bounds of reasonable difference. Admitting that it does not know precisely what it wants would, nonetheless, weaken the bargaining position of the Commission.

Therefore, the negotiations and follow-up assessments via country reports proceed erratically, by dint of ad-hoc choices, acceptance and 'appropriation' by the Commission of the given proposals for reform advanced by the local partners in the process (the case of the Romanian National Integrity Agency will certainly spring to mind), perhaps the politically correct conformities embraced by Brussels in line with whatever happen to be the ideologically orthodox preferences of the day. For if one does not have guidance by means of standards or clear guiding principles, such are the courses of actions one would be compelled to follow.

In the following, I will elaborate on two detrimental and perhaps even dysfunctional effects of the accession, regarding the structural constitution (legislative process and separation of powers) and rights protection.

### ***3.1. The Matter of Processes-Structural Constitutionalism and the Antinomies of Accession***

The technical and unconditional nature of implementing the *acquis* and (upon accession) the very structure of decision-making in the Union have already contributed (and will very likely continue to do so) to the further demise of public debate. This danger is aggravated by the neutralization of political decision-making, which may at any rate result in the impoverishment of the public sphere (it is, after all, in the nature of bureaucratization to hinder, restrict or undermine the possibility of "meaningful social action").<sup>34</sup> In Romania, this situation might add to a preexisting sense of irrelevance regarding political participation.<sup>35</sup>

As a perverse long-term effect, the process may also contribute to the reinforcement of the executive at the expense of the national legislature, and perhaps breed precisely the sort of nationalistic-emotionalist identity politics which the political conditionality measures seek to correct and anticipate in the new Candidate States. In this respect, the accession process worsened a local systemic flaw. It is ironical that the nature and process of EU accession aggravates a phenomenon which is regarded as very problematic and harshly criticized by every single European Commission Country Report on Romania, the use of emergency ordinances to by-pass the legislative process.<sup>36</sup>

Art. 114 (now 115) emergency ordinances, although in principle an exceptional law-making procedure, set the practical norm of Romanian post-communist legislative practice. The regulation of virtually everything

by means of emergency ordinances<sup>37</sup> has been a constant reality, flying in the face of the provision in Art. 58 (now 61) (1) that "Parliament is...the sole legislative authority of the country."<sup>38</sup> In 2003, the Constitution was amended and the changes made to Art. 115 –"Legislative Delegation" sought to remedy certain of the particularly problematic aspects of the previous constitutional regulation of the matter. The limits on the adoption of 'emergency' (or 'constitutional' ordinances) are both substantive and procedural. Substantively, emergency ordinances cannot encroach on "the field of constitutional laws, or affect the status of fundamental institutions of the State, the rights, freedoms and duties stipulated in the Constitution, the electoral rights, and cannot establish steps for transferring assets to public property forcibly."<sup>39</sup> Procedurally, under the amended Constitution, emergency ordinances enter into force only after having been laid before Parliament for adoption and after having been published in the Official Journal. If Parliament is not in session, it is convened within 5 days. An ordinance on which a House fails to pronounce within 30 days is considered adopted and is automatically forwarded to the other House, which takes a decision under emergency legislative procedure.

While the new form of the delegation provision was seen as an improvement on the original 1991 constitutional treatment of delegation,<sup>40</sup> the prediction can be safely made that emergency ordinances will continue to dominate governmental practice, just as before. This is essentially due to the fact that the main vantage point of the government (and the unfortunate choice of the Constitutional Committee) is this normalization and routinization -as a matter of governmental practice- of the emergency. It is inevitable that the Executive would prefer to choose a less cumbersome and more expeditious procedure under a pretense of necessity. Moreover, while the executive is now under the obligation of motivating the emergency situation in the text of the 'constitutional ordinance,' in practice, controlling the constitutionality of the essential element (the existence or non-existence of an 'exceptional' or 'urgent' situation) is, for obvious practical and epistemological reasons, very difficult.

The un-negotiable manner in which the adoption of the *acquis* proceeded has aggravated the practice of executive legislation. The emergency ordinance OUG 31/2002<sup>41</sup> regarding the prohibition of organizations and symbols with a fascist, racist and xenophobic character

and forbidding the promotion of the cult of persons guilty of crimes against peace and humanity offers a very good example.

This is not a part of a technical bulk of regulation (e.g., in the field of competition policy) regarding which, perhaps, an expedited procedure would be cautioned or at least could be justified. As it deals with restrictions on rights and promotion of values, the ordinance is precisely the sort of legislation that should have been subject to public debate in parliament. Whether one approves, based on liberal-constitutionalist arguments, of such limitations on speech is a different issue (though an important one, as different jurisdictions, among established EU Member State democracies, take different positions in this respect, along reasonable divergences of outlook regarding the place and limits of speech in a Rule of Law state).

Perhaps in Romania this particular EU-related requirement could yet have been justified on principled local justifications, as it could be regarded from the standpoint of 'militant democracy' requirements,<sup>42</sup> especially given the legacy of Romanian interbellum fascism. Nonetheless, Holocaust denial and bans on fascist-xenophobic propaganda were in Romania not an issue of confronting past but yet another piece of governmental 'Euro-legislation.' Criminalization proceeded hastily through an Emergency Governmental Ordinance of 2002, hence with no prior parliamentary or public debate.

The purpose of civility in social debates will not be attained by such means. The effect may actually be an obverse one. In such ways one does not even create *Zwangsdemokraten* but rather helps perpetuate the tongue-in-cheek preexisting instrumental attitude towards the rule of law. Forced through the backdoor of 'motorized' governmental legislation, justified cavalierly on instrumental consideration, such measures are usually regarded by the public, at best, as an alien imposition which does not concern them. It is emblematic in this respect (lack of commitment to constitutionalism and the rule of law) that the Constitutional Court itself, when called to decide on the emergency constitutional requirement (which triggers recourse to an emergency ordinance), during a decision on an exception of unconstitutionality raised by a party convicted under the fascist propaganda provision, pointed out primarily the needs of EU integration. The ordinance was declared in conformity with the Constitution in a brief Solomonic judgment, out of which a passage is worth quoting at the closing of this section, to illuminate the problems which are posed when poor constitutional drafting



is coupled with poor constitutional reasoning and instrumental treatment of rights and legality:

“The Court appreciates that, in the absence of a constitutional definition of ‘exceptional situation,’ as was decided by Dec. nr. 65 from the 20<sup>th</sup> of June 1995, published in the Official Journal, Part. I, nr. 129 of 29<sup>th</sup> of June 1995, this needs to be related to ‘the necessity and urgency of regulating a situation which, due to its exceptional circumstances, requires the adoption of an immediate solution, in view of avoiding a grave detriment to public interest.’ Thus, in the present case, the existence of an exceptional situation was determined by the urgency of stricter regulation of the domain, due to the necessity of promoting the principles of the rule of law state, democratic and social, where the dignity of men, justice, political pluralism, equality of mankind represent supreme values. Whereas, the prohibition of extremist manifestations of the fascist, racist, or xenophobic type constituted and constitutes a constant preoccupation of the international community, at the level of the European and international organisms as well as at the level of national legislation. The prevention and combating of incitement to national, racial, and religious hatred correspond to the requirements of the European Union in the field, constituting, at the same time, a positive signal given by the Romanian state in the field of combating racism, anti-Semitism, and xenophobia. The efficiency of this signal depends in no small measure on the urgency with which the Romanian state adopts the necessary legislative measures to sanction this sort of acts.”<sup>43</sup>

To be sure, cutting through the verbal niceties, and summing the logic up in more pedestrian language, the Court is in essence making the argument that we have to suffer EU proclivities in order to gain access to long-awaited EU status and largesse. This is an instrumentally savvy rationalization for an institutional rubber-stamp. It is neither a very principled advice nor a constitutionally valid consideration.

### ***3.2. The Problem of Conflicting Values-Imposed Conformities vs. Classical Constitutionalism***

Indeed, agreement on the exact configuration of rights and the weight to be given them within a given polity is not a self-evident or even easy venture, as the French revolutions were among the first to discover, during debates on the Declaration of the Rights of Man and of the Citizen.<sup>44</sup> This is why the catalogue of rights identified by classical constitutionalism is short and precise, comprising strictly what are today called, perhaps

by a partial misnomer, “negative” rights (civil and political rights and liberties). The qualifications “natural,” “human,” and “unalienable” are of little epistemological help in and of themselves. This is not to aver the Benthamite quip regarding legal rights vs. “nonsense upon stilts” or to mount an ultraconservative attack on the idea of natural rights but only to modestly observe that we can all be sure to agree willingly on noble wording pitched at a high enough level of idealistic abstraction. The problems arise once we descend to the contentious and pragmatic specifics.

For these reasons, it is crucial that matters of rights are settled within each polity, through open and public debate, by legislative rules, enforceable in courts of law. I will in the following provide one very edifying example of how and why ideological fads and fashions implemented under the political *acquis* may in the future have rather importunate consequences on the culture of rights and the rule of law in the country. This example is edifying with respect to the way in which institutions and legislation which do not necessarily correspond to a proper understanding of liberal democracy have happened upon a hapless public, with the mantra of democracy and rule of law conditionality serving as an-all purpose justification. Such a situation is the result of various governments in power having sought to export issues of justification and legitimacy by presenting to the electorate the accolades from Brussels, while at the same time downplaying or deferring to take into account the actual effects of the changes. As communism and transition have used both politicians and the public to consider law a realm about and within which negotiation is always possible and end-results are fairly open-ended throughout the process, the changes were undoubtedly regarded as inevitable superfluities one has to put up with in order to become ‘European.’

One of the enduring legacies left by former Prime-Minister Adrian Năstase is the National Council for Combating Discrimination (CNCD).<sup>45</sup> It was established as an autonomous government institution by a 2001 Government Decision based on a 2000 Government Ordinance. The creation of the Council passed rather unobserved, except for the cursory and standard justification of its establishment as a necessary legal step on the political conditionality road to EU accession.<sup>46</sup>

The Council drifted for a long while in the comfortable torpor provided by lack of either public and political support or political responsibility. It awakened with a jolt and rose to meteoric national awareness a few

years later, once it became afflicted with tunnel vision. This was to be expected, as the controlling provisions of its enabling legislation are framed in terms so generous that it is possible for the enforcement agency to see the world at large as a playground for malicious discrimination or downright hateful discriminatory incitement. In 2005, CNCD reprimanded, on age-based discrimination grounds, Mircea Mihăieș, a noted local columnist and public intellectual. In an article entitled *Metuselah Voting*, the latter had derided the statistical propensity of the elderly electorate to vote *en masse* for the left-wing Social Democratic Party. Mihăieș was initially fined 40.000.000 ROL<sup>47</sup> but afterwards, on administrative appeal, following an open letter in his support signed by a sizeable number of public figures, the fine was reduced to 5.000.000.

The Council seems to be fated by design to vacillate in this manner, rather pathologically, sometimes between irreconcilable standpoints. To wit, during the ‘caricature crisis,’ it issued a press release making an appeal to the Romanian press, to the effect that the caricatures ought not to have been published, as freedom of speech, a “fundamental freedom on whose existence all democratic societies depend,” should be exercised “responsibly” and without discriminations based on various criteria, religion included. More recently, the Council changed course and expressed concern regarding Article 13 in the Draft Religion Law pending (in committee stage) before the Chamber of Deputies. This ill-omened provision reads as follows: “In Romania, all forms, means, acts or actions of religious defamation and enmity, as well as publicly offending religious symbols are forbidden.” The Council recommended that it be dropped from the final text yet, always timorous and unsettled, it opined that perhaps the provision could just be modified, so that it would not be interpreted “as restrictive of the rights to free speech, opinion, and information.”<sup>48</sup> One is hard-pressed to imagine how such a conformant modification could be termed.

A problematic recent action of the Council, which bears on the issue of religious speech, is a 2005 decision to fine an Orthodox priest for discrimination based on sexual orientation.<sup>49</sup> The priest, having found the mobile phone number of the church cantor listed in the classifieds section of a local newspaper, in an advertisement posted by someone looking for gay sex partners, had expressed the opinion that the cantor be fired, as homosexuality was a sin the Church could not abide. The priest was promptly fined 10.000.000 ROL.

This anomaly is not idiosyncratic. Romanian legislation reproduces *tale quale* trends that are becoming quite common in recent times.<sup>50</sup> To wit, other things being equal,<sup>51</sup> the CNCD decision is the domestic counterpart of a recent Swedish case, in which a Pentecostal pastor, Åke Green, was convicted, based on Swedish hate law, of the crime of agitation against a group, and sentenced to one month imprisonment. He had delivered a sermon, subsequently printed in a local newspaper (“Is Homosexuality Genetic or An Evil Force that Plays Mind Games with People”), in which, based on a collection of Bible quotes, he qualified homosexuality as a sinful “sickness” which, like all “abnormalities,” constituted no less than “a deep cancerous tumor in the entire society.”<sup>52</sup> Chapter 16, Section 8 of the Swedish Criminal Code incriminates “making a statement or otherwise spreading a message that threatens or expresses contempt for an ethnic group or any other group of people with reference to their race, skin colour, nationality or ethnic origin, religious belief or sexual orientation.” The *travaux préparatoires* of the 2003 amendment which included sexual orientation in the list expressed the desire of the Government (the initiator of the Bill) not to incriminate “objective and responsible debate.” Rather, the expressed intention was to legislatively foster such discussions in which it would be “possible for homosexuals and others to reply to and correct erroneous positions in free and open discourse, and thus counteract prejudices that otherwise might well be preserved and continued in secret.” To be sure, the secular rationalistic cast of mind presupposed by these statements clashes quite obviously with the claims of ultimate truth entailed by notions such as ‘sin’, ‘redemption’, and ‘damnation’ or with an interpretation of sacred texts based on received authority. A secularized sensitivity is ‘by nature’ predisposed to read religious beliefs through anachronistic lenses or regard religion itself as a prejudice (that is, unless its frightful existential claims were to be transposed and transformed into a harmless decorative display of diversity). Leaving aside the problematic moral condemnations derived by the Swedish pastor from his reading of the Bible, one can easily notice the deleterious consequences (for both speech and religion) that emerge when his opinion (and our assessment of it) are moved from the level of social judgment unto the ground of legal sanction. Result-wise, the problems were postponed through a judicial dilatory compromise, rather than addressed. On appeal, the Supreme Court vacated the lower court conviction, in a rather strange decision. Namely, the Swedish Supreme Court did away with the domestic legal provisions under which the

incriminated conduct clearly fell, and acquitted Green based on their own understanding of what the European Convention of Human Rights required and, consequently, on an unseemly prediction of what the European Court would have done, given the particular context, had the case reached it.<sup>53</sup>

What the conflicting trends in recent Romanian legal and social developments bring to the table of observation is an environment where the 'warring gods' of tradition, modernity and post-modernity confront each other in a perhaps distorted (but for that very reason more instructive) battleground. As the contradictions are starker, the problems to come are more easily discernable. Legislative initiatives which shelter collective sensitivities and susceptibilities from public discourse<sup>54</sup> are bound to violently wrench the paradigm on which our type of civilization is built. In the latter case (blasphemy laws and group defamation), the proponents of such laws argue that they seek to protect individuals from violence. Such arguments are misleading, as individuals are secured always legal protection in libel and slander criminal law, as well civil redress by way of tort liability. More often, the argument is made that civil dialogue and public peace are thus safeguarded. Nonetheless, it ought to be remembered that the modern state arose as a distinctive form of the political which constitutively presupposes some form of normative delineation between the public domain and religion, as a basic rule of the game. Its evasion makes out of 'dialogue' an embarrassing compromise and secures only the public peace that follows, usually for a short while, any act of cowardice. In the changing context, holding fast to old principles would perhaps be the wiser course of action. Resisting this manner of innovations is what and nothing less than constitutionalism requires.

## NOTES

- <sup>1</sup> See Miriam Aziz, "Constitutional Tolerance and EU Enlargement: The Politics of Dissent?" in W. Sadurski, A. Czarnota & M. Krygier (Eds.), *Spreading Democracy and the Rule of Law: The Impact of EU Enlargement on the Rule of Law, Democracy, and Constitutionalism in Post-communist Legal Orders* 237 (2006).
- <sup>2</sup> See, for a comparative analysis, an excellent study and unalloyed defense of the positive effects of "political conditionality" by Wojciech Sadurski, "Accession's Democracy Divident: The Impact of the EU Enlargement upon Democracy in the New Member States of Central and Eastern Europe" 10 (4) *European Law Journal* 371 (2004).
- <sup>3</sup> John Gillingham, *European Integration, 1950-2003: Superstate or New Market Economy?* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2003), -Preface, at xvi.
- <sup>4</sup> The original idea for this project and the basic groundwork for research were first explored in a presentation on "Governance, Government, and the Nature of the European Constitution" for the Roundtable 'Canada between the US and the EU,' "Role of Government" Session, organized by the Delegation of the European Commission in Canada and the Institute for European Studies (McGill Faculty of Law, February 2003). I wish to thank the participants and the organizer, Professor Armand de Mestral of McGill University, for questions and comments related to the argument.
- <sup>5</sup> See, e.g., an exception to the muddled use and related conceptual confusion regarding the two terms and their respective phenomenal referents in Martin Shapiro, "Administrative Law Unbounded: Reflections on Government and Governance," 8 *Ind. J. of Global Legal Stud.* 369 (2000-2001).
- <sup>6</sup> It refers (to use the Oxford English Dictionary definition) to "the action of ruling; continuous exercise of authority over the action of subjects or inferiors; authoritative direction or regulation; control, rule."
- <sup>7</sup> See, generally, Cushman, Robert E., *The Independent Regulatory Commissions* (New York: Pentagon Books, 1972 (c1941)) and Claude-Albert Colliard and Gérard Timsit, Eds., *Les autorités administratives indépendantes* (Paris: Presses Universitaires de France, 1988). Also see, for an interesting history of regulation through independent agencies, in the American context, Thomas K. McCraw, *Prophets of Regulation* (Cambridge, Mass, and London, England: Belknap-Harvard University Press, c1984).
- <sup>8</sup> Juan J. Linz, "Democracy's Time Constraints," 19 (1) *International Political Science Review* 19 (1998), Giandomenico Majone, *Regulating Europe* (London and New York: Routledge, 1996); "Temporal Consistency and Policy Credibility- Why Democracies Need Non-Majoritarian Institutions," Working Paper, EUI Working Papers of Robert Schuman Centre 96/57 (Florence: European University Institute, 1996).

- <sup>9</sup> See Giandomenico Majone, "Delegation of Regulatory Powers in a Mixed Polity," 8 (3) *European Law Journal* 319 (2002). Also see, for similar remarks in this respect, András Sajó, "Constitution without the Constitutional Moment: A View from the New Member States," 3 (2-3) *International Journal of Constitutional Law* 243 (2005).
- <sup>10</sup> See Majone, *Regulating Europe*, supra note 5.
- <sup>11</sup> 295 U.S. 602 (1935).
- <sup>12</sup> Richard B. Stewart, "The Reformation of American Administrative Law," 88 *Harv. L. Rev.* 1667 (1974-1975), at 1678.
- <sup>13</sup> Both locomotive inspection and rate setting were perceived as one and the same issue essentially, i.e., "objective, scientific assessments based on exact, nondiscretionary standards." Martin Shapiro, The Frontiers of Science Doctrine: American Experiences with the Judicial Control of Science-Based Decision-Making, EUI Working Papers, European University Institute RSC No. 96/11 (1996).
- <sup>14</sup> Martin Shapiro, supra note 9. As the locomotive safety standards were set scientifically (since the cost-risk trade-offs incorporated in the standard and based on professional conventions were then unapparent), so too was maximum rate-setting an objective application of science (economics and accounting) to facts (market value): "Economics would determine what a fair rate of return was on investment. That rate was a phenomenon as 'natural', that is, beyond human manipulation, as the transit of Venus. The economist would observe the free market as the astronomer did the heavens, and measure fair rate of return, that is the return that any investment in the market would yield, as the astronomer charted Venus's sidereal movement. The accountant would then determine the amount of the railroad's costs to be properly attributed to the hauling of a particular commodity over a particular track, add the appropriate fair return figure provided him by the economist and arrive at the correct rate. In this realm of accounting, all was quantified and accurately measurable. Nothing was uncertain. Rate regulation was a matter of science rather than discretion."
- <sup>15</sup> *Blackstone's Commentaries*, supra 2 (Ch. 1-Of Property, in General). Of course, in both Locke and Blackstone, the final assumption is natural law, i.e., Divine ordinance. In Blackstone the distinction and relation between actual practices (positive law) and their foundation in natural law or, as he puts it, law as rational science is made very explicit. While "[i]t is well if the mass of mankind will obey the laws when made, without scrutinizing the reasons of making them," if we go to the roots of things, we see that the final authority is Divine command, so that the foundation of property is, positively speaking, Genesis 1:28: "In the beginning of the world, we are informed by holy writ, the all-bountiful creator gave to man 'dominion over all the earth.' This is the only true and solid foundation of man's dominion over external things, whatever airy metaphysical notions may have been started by fanciful writers upon this subject."

- <sup>16</sup> "If we reduce your rates, your value goes down. If we increase them, it goes up. Obviously, we cannot measure rates by value if value is itself a function of rates." Cited by Morton J. Horwitz, *The Transformation of American Law 1870-1960 -The Crisis of Legal Orthodoxy* (New York, London: Oxford University Press, c1992), at p. 163.
- <sup>17</sup> See Herbert Hovenkamp, "Evolutionary Models in Jurisprudence," 64 *Tex. L. Rev.* 645 (December, 1985). Also see by the same author "The Mind and Heart of Progressive Legal Thought" (Presidential Lecture given at the University of Iowa), available for download at <http://sdrclib.uiowa.edu/preslectures/hovenkamp95/>, last visited September 12, 2006). Hovenkamp relates legal Progressivism to the transposition to social sciences of Darwin's evolutionary theories. According to him, *The Descent of Man*, published in 1871, which linked humans to Darwin's general theory of evolution, produced both a right- (Herbert Spencer is here the epitomic example) and a left-wing or Reform Social Darwinism. The Progressives, as Reform Darwinists, believed that the specific difference of the human species is that it can understand and thus control or 'manage' scientifically its evolutionary process.
- <sup>18</sup> Marver H. Bernstein, *Regulating Business by Independent Commission* (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1955). Also see the clear elaboration of these themes in Martin Shapiro, *Who Guards the Guardians-Judicial Control of Administration* (Athens and London: Georgia University Press, c1988).
- <sup>19</sup> *Supra* note 12.
- <sup>20</sup> It is nonetheless still true that American administrative law, as its specific difference, emphasizes participation, thus differing from the European tendency or model of administrative law, which stresses judicial protection of rights. See, for instance, in this respect, Susan Rose-Ackerman, "American Administrative Law under Siege: Is Germany a Model?," 107 *Harv. L. Rev.* 1279 (1993-1994), arguing that German (and European) administrative law could *not* be a model, due to its de-emphasis on participation. Proposals have been made to the contrary effect, namely, arguing for an importation of the American participatory processes, most notably, notice-and-comment rulemaking, into European (domestic or E.U.) administrative law. Whether and how that could be achieved, given the distinct nature of the legislative process and democratic will formation in Europe is a more problematic matter. See Theodora Ziamou, *Rulemaking, Participation and the Limits of Public Law in the USA and Europe* (Aldershot, England: Ashgate, c2001) and Francesca Bignami, *Accountability and Interest Group Participation in Comitology: Lessons from American Rulemaking*, European University Institute Working Paper, Robert Schuman Centre No. 99/3 (1999).
- <sup>21</sup> Stewart, *supra* note 12, at pp. 1759-1760.



- 22 Martin Shapiro, *Who Guards the Guardians-Judicial Control of Administration* (Athens and London: Georgia University Press, c1988).
- 23 To stress the parallelism between the development of American and EU regulatory policy and administrative law, various proposals to adapt 'staple' American "interest balancing" mechanisms of notice and comment rulemaking to EU regulatory practices have been put forward. See, in this respect, the titles cited in note 20, supra, and Francesca Bignami, "The Democratic Deficit in European Community Rulemaking," 40 (2) *Harv. Int'l. L. J.* 451 (Spring 1999). The proponents hope that the notoriously opaque EU regulatory processes would thus be made more accessible and responsive to the public. The disillusionments of American rulemaking practices should, nonetheless, also be heeded. See, thus, on a more cautionary note, Peter L. Lindseth, "'Weak' Constitutionalism? Reflections on Comitology and Transnational Governance in the European Union" 21 (1) *Oxford Journal of Legal Studies* 145 (2001).
- 24 467 U.S. 837 (1984).
- 25 504 U.S. 555 (1992).
- 26 Consolidated text available online, [http://europa.eu.int/eur-lex/en/consleg/pdf/1994/en\\_1994R2257\\_do\\_001.pdf](http://europa.eu.int/eur-lex/en/consleg/pdf/1994/en_1994R2257_do_001.pdf).
- 27 Alec Stone Sweet, *Governing with Judges-Constitutional Politics in Europe* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2000), The classical account of these transformations is provided by Joseph Weiler's article, "The Transformation of Europe," 100 *Yale L. J.* 2403 (1990-1991).
- 28 András Sajó *Limiting Government: An Introduction to Constitutionalism* (Budapest: CEU Press, 1999 (2003)).
- 29 Laurence Tribe, *American Constitutional Law*, 2<sup>nd</sup> ed. (Mineola, New York: The Foundation Press, 1988)
- 30 "[I]t is clear that the Union has at least the potential of a new form of governance where the political element of government is replaced with alternative forms of interest-group policies that are developed within policies." András Sajó, *Becoming "Europeans": The Impact of EU 'Constitutionalism' on Post-Communist Pre-Modernity*, in W. Sadurski, A. Czarnota & M. Krygier (Eds.), *Spreading Democracy and the Rule of Law: The Impact of EU Enlargement on the Rule of Law, Democracy, and Constitutionalism in Post-communist Legal Orders* 175 (2006).
- 31 See Dieter Grimm, "Does Europe Need a Constitution?" 1(3) *European Law Journal* 282 (1995) and Jürgen Habermas, "Remarks on Dieter Grimm's 'Does Europe need a Constitution?'" 1(3) *European Law Journal* 303 (1995) and "Why Europe Needs a Constitution," 11 *New Left Review* 5 (2001).
- 32 See the articles and interviews in "Symposium on the proposed European Constitution," in 3 (2-3) *International Journal of Constitutional Law* (June 2005).

- 33 See, for an insightful discussion of the ‘mythical’ character of the Commission’s ‘political conditionality’ requirements, in the context of the Bulgarian judicial independence reforms, D. Smilov, *EU Enlargement and the Constitutional Principle of Judicial Independence*, in Sadurski et al. (Eds.), *supra* note 24, at 313.
- 34 Max Weber, *Economy and Society*, Guenther Roth and Claus Wittich eds. (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1978).
- 35 It is interesting, in this respect, to compare the 2004 Eurobarometer polls measuring the popular perception of EU accession (still regarded by a high percentage of the Romanian public as a net public good) with the polls showing a very low electoral turn-out during the referendum on the 2003 ‘Euro-amendments’ to the Constitution. After some protracting and last-ditch government efforts, participation in the referendum satisfied the validation requirement by an extremely narrow margin, just slightly over the constitutionally requisite 50%.
- 36 [http://www.infoeuropa.ro/ieweb/imgupload/RR\\_RO\\_2004\\_EN\\_00001.pdf](http://www.infoeuropa.ro/ieweb/imgupload/RR_RO_2004_EN_00001.pdf). See pp. 15-16. I reiterate here some arguments which were developed in my doctoral dissertation, “Legislative Delegation—A Comparative Analysis” (copy on file with the Central European University Library).
- 37 Sometimes more than a hundred ‘emergencies’ per year were found the respective government in power to exist.
- 38 *Formally*, the principle is respected, to the extent that ‘ordinary’ ordinances are adopted pursuant to an enabling act, whereas ‘emergency’ (or ‘constitutional’) ordinances are authorized directly by the constitution. The literature on the topic is abundant. See, for instance, Ioan Muraru and Mihai Constantinescu, *Ordonanța guvernamentală-doctrină și jurisprudență* (*The Governmental Ordinance-Doctrine and Jurisprudence*) (București: Lumina Lex, 2000) and Antonie Iorgovan, *Tratat de drept administrativ* (București: All Beck, 2001).
- 39 Art. 115 (6). The pre-2003 uncertainty regarding whether the Government could adopt emergency ordinances within the field of organic laws (laws are materially classified in the Romanian Constitution as ordinary, organic, and constitutional) was solved by forbidding a parliamentary (ordinary) delegation under enabling acts within the constitutionally-reserved field of organic law.
- 40 For instance, the new provisions specify the exact entry into force of ordinances, a matter which had been previously left unclear. On the other hand, given the parliamentary nature of the political system, the new (expedited) procedure and the short deadline might turn into additional possibilities for the majority in government of circumventing the rights of the parliamentary opposition.
- 41 Ordonanță de urgență nr. 31 din 13 martie 2002 privind interzicerea organizațiilor și simbolurilor cu caracter fascist, rasist sau xenofob și a promovării cultului persoanelor vinovate de săvârșirea unor infracțiuni contra păcii și omenirii, textul actului publicat în Monitorul Oficial Nr. 214 din 28

martie 2002, available online at [http://www.cdep.ro/pls/legis/legis\\_pck.htp\\_act\\_text?id=34086](http://www.cdep.ro/pls/legis/legis_pck.htp_act_text?id=34086)) (Emergency Governmental Ordinance No. 31 of March 13, 2002, regarding the ban on fascist, xenophobic, and racist organizations and symbols, and the prohibition of promoting the cult of persons guilty of war crimes and crimes against humanity, published in the Official Journal No. 214 of March 28, 2002).

42 Karl Lowenstein, "Militant Democracy and Fundamental Rights," I and II; *American Political Science Review* 31 (June 1937) and (August 1937).

43 Decizia Curții Constituționale Nr. 67 din 3 februarie 2005, publicată în Monitorul Oficial Nr. 146 din 18 februarie 2005 (Decision of the Constitutional Court, No. 67 of February 3, 2005, published in the Official Journal No. 146 of February 18, 2005).

44 See András Sajó, "Constitutional Sentiments," <http://www.law.berkeley.edu/institutes/cs/s/Sajo%20paper.pdf>.

45 The following section has been submitted in similar form for publication as part of an article which is forthcoming in the contributions volume of the 14<sup>th</sup> Annual Conference "The Individual vs. the State"- "Free Speech and Religion: the Eternal Conflict in the Age of Selective Modernization", held at the Central European University, Budapest, May 12-13.

46 In the Romanian context, it is revealing to note, as an interesting and pertinent antinomy of the accession, that, while virtually every single Country Report criticizes, under the 'Democracy and Rule of Law' chapter, the practice of by-passing the Parliament through ordinary and emergency ordinances (delegated legislation), the non-negotiable and top-down nature of the adoption of the *acquis* renders the use of this type of 'motorized legislation' endemic.

47 Approximately 1100 EUR.

48 Hotărâre din 18.01.2005, Available online at <http://www.cncd.org.ro/>.

49 [http://www.cncd.org.ro/CNCD\\_Culegere\\_de\\_Jurisprudenta\\_a\\_Colegiului\\_Director\\_2005.pdf](http://www.cncd.org.ro/CNCD_Culegere_de_Jurisprudenta_a_Colegiului_Director_2005.pdf).

50 See, for a comparative review of recent developments and criticism of Canadian practice, H. C. Clausen, Note: *The 'Privilege of Speech' in a 'Pleasantly Authoritarian Country': How Canada's Judiciary Allowed Laws Proscribing Discourse Critical of Homosexuality to Trump Free Speech and Religious Liberty*, 38 *Vanderbilt Journal of Transnational Law* 443 (2005).

51 Unlike the Swedish situation, where criminal law sanctioned an expression of general opinions directed at an identifiable group, in the Romanian case an administrative tribunal imposed an administrative fine for a misdemeanor directed against an individual. Nonetheless, considering the way in which the Romanian administrative decision is motivated and the attributions of the Council, an analogy is possible.

52 An English translation of the sermon is available online at: <http://www.cbn.com/CBNNews/News/040907aa.aspx>.

- <sup>53</sup> The authorized English translation of the judgment is available online, on the website of the Supreme Court of Sweden, at:  
<http://www.hogstodomstolen.se/2005/Dom%20pa%20engelska%20B%201050-05.pdf>.
- <sup>54</sup> One could perhaps make amends in this context for the criminalization of Holocaust denial, as in this case it is a matter of fact and not susceptibility and due to the need of taking into account the legacy of the past (Romanian interbellum fascism).

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# BETWEEN THE GOSPEL AND THE NATION AN INTRODUCTION TO DUMITRU STĂNILOAE'S ETHNO-THEOLOGY

## **Cultural Wars in Great Romania**

It was in 1918 when the great powers acknowledged first, by the Treaty of Versailles, the legitimacy of the monarchist state of Great Romania. This international recognition put an end to the transitional period of struggle for union between Transylvania, and the other two Romanian provinces (i.e., Walachia and Moldavia). At last, Romania felt part of the great family of European countries. Its towns and cities, but above all the capital, were called to a radical modernisation, by emulating one of the many Western models available. It was perhaps also the time to do so.<sup>1</sup> At the dusk of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, to many English people, for example, Romania seemed more like a Chinese puzzle. Indeed, very few high-browed intellectuals had a first-hand knowledge of the Romanian realities.

*“No further back than four years before the Russo-Turkish war [1877-1878], in which the Rumanian army took a distinguished part, we find the English consul in Bucharest complaining that letters sent to that city sometimes went to India in search of Bokhara; and he even tells of a summons from London addressed, ‘Bucharest, in the kingdom of Egypt.’”<sup>2</sup>*

In the inter-war period, the Romanian authorities did all they could to do away with this embarrassing stereotype, which placed a South-European country on the intellectual map of Orientalism.

In the wake of the First World War, Romania became finally independent of any direct influence or pressure coming from Russia or the Ottoman Turkey. Its economic and social policies moved clearly towards the West. However, this shift was exempted from a wide range

of cultural ambiguities. While satisfied with their integration into the European project, the Romanian intelligentsia was left stranded between roughly two different options.<sup>3</sup> The first group of liberal intellectuals emerged in counter-reaction to the traditionalist movement, which seemed to be both Romantic and conservative, backward looking, and happy to celebrate the religious dimension of every sober human enterprise.<sup>4</sup> Among the advocates of Western secularism one counts the cosmopolitan sociologist and historian of ideas Mihai Ralea (1896 – 1964), the literary critic Eugen Lovinescu (1881-1943), and the social philosopher Ștefan Zeletin (1882-1934). They all criticised Orthodoxy for its alleged contribution to civic fatalism and economic backwardness among the rural population, calling for a complete break from the Slavic influence upon the national ethos.<sup>5</sup>

In response, an ethnocentric group of intellectuals claimed to have at the grassroots level more legitimacy than the camp of the Westernisers. It stemmed from a previous movement represented by the so-called “Sămănătoriștii,”<sup>6</sup> advocating the return to the pristine soil, the untainted roots, and the sublime countryside. “*Semănătorismul*” was the Romanian equivalent of the Russian *pochvennichestvo*. The biblical metaphor of the seed (*sămânța*) and the sower (*semănătorul*) carried with it a vast array of religious and poetic meanings. Among the members of this new elite, one should mention the monumental polygraph Nicolae Iorga (1871-1940), the geographer Simion Mehedinți, the poet and political activist Octavian Goga (1881-1938), the philosopher Constantin Rădulescu-Motru (1868-1957), or the more original thinker Lucian Blaga (1895-1961). None of these luminaries was inclined to shelter his nationalist discourse under the roof of the Orthodox theology, nor were they committed to leave Romania outside the political borders of Europe. Each one in his way favoured the preservation of the local brands, pleading for a better management of the cultural values of traditional Romania in accord with the Western standards. “Synthesis” seemed to have been the watchword of their ideology.

### **Religious Nationalism: Three Authors and an Argument**

A more dramatic form of metaphysical nationalism appears in the writings of Nichifor Crainic (1889-1972) and Dumitru Stăniloae (1903-1993). Crainic, in particular, churned out his ideas under the

influence of Oswald Spengler (1880-1936).<sup>7</sup> The epoch-making book entitled "The Decline of the West" (1918) encouraged him to promote the idea of political authoritarianism. His readers went into rapture over the classical contrast between culture and civilisation, derived from Ferdinand Tönnies' distinction between *Gesellschaft* and *Gemeinschaft*, and coined for the first time in 1887. Crainic overlapped these terms with the notions of rural existence and urban life-style. His literary prose and poetry teemed with lyrical solemnities about the purity of the peasantry. At times, Crainic's journalism would indulge in offensive comments about the ethnic minorities from Romania. Thoroughly nostalgic and regressively utopian, he also believed in the future of an ethnocratic state.<sup>8</sup> Crainic illustrated at best the messianic trope of the orthodoxist group surrounding the "*Gândirea*" journal, easily comparable with the Russian Slavophiles, such as Aleksey Khomiakov (1804-1860) and Ivan Kyreevsky (1806-1856).<sup>9</sup> As it is well known, the latter group liked to draw emphatic parallels between the Church vocation to redeem the souls and the call of their particular nation (e.g., Russia) to illumine the world. Lay Christians and ecclesiastical officials were inclined to produce self-centred tracts of defence in favour of Orthodoxy. According to the Slavophile manifesto, which clearly influenced Crainic, a faithful Christian had to be rather weary of secular institutions and shy of technological progress. The genealogy of the Western values was univocally linked to the "heresies" of the Roman-Catholic and Protestant churches. Scholarship was distrusted as mere tool of intellectual scepticism. Anti-Semitism was not un-common.<sup>10</sup> The attacks of cosmopolitanism commended singing the heroic past of the nation.

Against this background, many theologians felt free to endorse the exceptional character of the Romanian case. An easy appeal to theological arguments, such as hope in the "resurrection of the nations"<sup>11</sup>, helped the Church officials in their construal of the nation as a metaphysical entity. For Dumitru Stăniloae, for instance, 'nation' appeared to be that 'spiritual reality' working under the divine guidance of the Providence, capable to offer each person *a priori* schemes of understanding the fallen history and, above all, the meaning of the divine revelation.<sup>12</sup> Stăniloae regarded the ethnic determination of the individual as something literally *inalienable*. Against this background, it is not at all surprising that the understanding of the local traditions often took dualistic undertones. Often, the perception was polarised between two antithetic categories: the local identity ("good"), and the foreign (usually Western) influence ("bad").

This agonistic economy of symbols and images characterised both the political debates and the historiographic reconstruction of the Romanian past. According to the national vulgate, which remains valid until today, the emancipation of the Romanian people from its crude oppressors was paralleled by the implacable Christianisation of the nation itself. The unity of the nation was the "basis for the Church unity."<sup>13</sup> Following this providential logic of history, the enemies of the Romanian people could be seen as the Church's adversaries, and vice versa. Orthodoxy gradually becomes thus a political commodity. It ceases to speak with equal power to the ethnic groups of Hungarians, Germans or Gypsies. The Gospel was divested from its original universality.

Less enthralled by the myths of the Romanian peasantry and more adapted to the flexible directions of the inter-war *Realpolitik* was Nae Ionescu (1890-1940).<sup>14</sup> Educated in Germany at the dawn of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, influenced by Carl Schmitt in his ideas<sup>15</sup>, Nae Ionescu became in the early 1930s an intellectually sophisticated spokesman for the right-wing party, "Iron Guard."<sup>16</sup> He had numerous disciples in the academic circles, and beyond. Not all did always share his fondness for Orthodoxy and political radicalism.<sup>17</sup> But most of them deplored the limitations of positivism in philosophy (as with Constantin Noica), and sympathised with the antidemocratic movements of the youth (as with Emil Cioran). For the exceptionally gifted polymath M. Vulcănescu (1904-1952), Orthodoxy was an intrinsic determination of the Romanian character, as he pointed out in an influential essay.<sup>18</sup> Mircea Vulcănescu, whose contribution to a Romanian philosophy of nationhood deserves in itself a separate study, can be placed in the context of yet another intellectual movement comprising young intellectuals holding very diverse ideological convictions, namely "Criterion."<sup>19</sup> This latter group spoke against the narrow tenets of the "Gândirea Movement," promoting a sober form of cultural ecumenism. Left-wing sympathisers met with right-wing intellectuals, in search for a real dialogue on issues of common interest. Some iconoclastic members of this "sect" condemned all attempts "to indigenise universals such as space, time, and being."<sup>20</sup> As in the works of Mircea Eliade, a shift towards the more universalistic dimension of religion or spirituality could be noted. The exclusivist logic of "either/or" was never dominant among the "Criterion" circles. This very feature explains its quick dissolution.

At the grassroots level, the message of, respectively, Nichifor Crainic, Dumitru Stăniloae and Nae Ionescu had greater impact than the

intellectual sophistication of the “Criterion” group, or the all too straightforward pro-Western agenda of the intellectuals surrounding Lovinescu. As Christian theologians, Crainic, Stăniloae and Ionescu illustrate a dramatic paradox in the European history of modern ideas. Traditionally, a teacher of Christianity would be expected to stand up for a universalistic faith, called to embrace and harmonise the multicultural texture of many traditional societies.<sup>21</sup> Despite this fundamental vow to catholicity, some Orthodox theologians used a rhetoric, which did legitimise not only patriotism as such, based on civic values, but even radical forms of nationalism. Often, this was done along with the official Church discourse, at the expense of softening the universalistic criteria of the traditional Christian identity. Ethnic loyalty outstripped religious affiliation. This very fact proves that, at least in the case of some Eastern-European countries, secular nationalism (especially, its 19<sup>th</sup> century version) did not easily replace religious discourse. It is necessary, therefore, to ask here several questions regarding this cultural dialectics.

What was the main driving force behind the theological arguments, which could currently justify the nationalist proclivities of the mainstream Romanian Orthodoxy? Which was the self-understanding of the Eastern Orthodox Church at the dawn of the national states’ foundation, on the basis of which a particular reading of history (more aptly called, “historiosophy”) could emerge? What was the context, which favoured the outward show of nationalism in protochronist garments? Which were the possible theological rationales behind the nationalist themes, which still persist in the Church official discourse until today? Where was the borderline between blind nationalism and serene patriotism trespassed? In order to answer at least some of these questions, the works of the late Dumitru Stăniloae (1903-1993) provide us with one of the best possible case studies. For the Western reader, this may sound as a paradox. Outside the borders of his native country, Stăniloae is virtually known only for his universalistic message, which encouraged some even to call him “the greatest Orthodox theologian of the 20<sup>th</sup> century” (Olivier Clément).

Indeed, Stăniloae was one of the most prolific and inspired scholars of Eastern Orthodoxy during the 20<sup>th</sup> century. He penned a great many books on Christian doctrine, liturgy and spirituality, together with translations and exegetical works on the early Church Fathers. Recently, these volumes started to receive a considerable attention among Western theologians.<sup>22</sup> It remains nonetheless important to understand the contributions of Fr Dumitru Stăniloae towards the elaboration of an “ethno-theology”, together

with its *sui-generis* character. More than Crainic and Ionescu, Stăniloae's understanding of the rapport between the Church and the nation has been accepted as almost normative in the official circles of the lay theologians and hierarchs. It is therefore paramount that a research of Stăniloae's contribution to the 20<sup>th</sup> century Orthodox "ethno-theology" will preface any general assessment of the Romanian, and indeed Eastern European case. A biographical sketch can serve as the best introduction to a more detailed discussion of Stăniloae's ideas.

### **An Unsettled Youth**

Dumitru Stăniloae was born on 16<sup>th</sup> November 1903 in Braşov county, the youngest child of simple and devout peasants.<sup>23</sup> He had a basic education in Braşov founded on strict German principles. The young Dumitru started his theological studies in 1922 at the University of Cernăuţi (the cultural centre of the former Romanian province Bucovina, now part of Ukraine). Disappointed by the Scholastic methods of teaching theology in Cernăuţi, Stăniloae enrolled at the University of Bucharest, where he read Classics and Literature. At the recommendation of Nicolae Bălan, then the Metropolitan of Transylvania, Stăniloae completed his theological studies, despite the rather dull and compromising environment, which affected this subject. In 1927, he graduated with a somewhat short dissertation on "Infant Baptism in the Early Church tradition." Shortly afterwards, Stăniloae received a series of scholarships for post-graduate research in Athens (1927), Munich (1928, where he followed the courses of the famous scholar in Byzantine studies August Heisenberg), Berlin and Paris (1929) and, in the event, Istanbul (1930). These trips were often interrupted by short visits to Romania, where his contribution to the improvement of the theological education was expected to make a difference. Thus, in 1928, Stăniloae received his doctorate after submitting a thesis on "The Life and the Works of Patriarch Dositheos of Jerusalem."<sup>24</sup>

During his postdoctoral stages of work in Europe, Stăniloae improved greatly his knowledge of German and Byzantine Greek, being also able to peruse to the growing literature on patristics, Church history and systematic theology. It was in the West first where Stăniloae read extensively Protestant authors such as Karl Barth (1886-1968) or Emil Brunner (1889-1966). In Paris and Istanbul, Stăniloae did his first research on the works of the late Byzantine theologian, St Gregory Palamas

(1296-1359). Moved by anti-Catholic sentiments, the young Stăniloae first presented the life and the work of Gregory Palamas in his influential monograph published in 1938. Together with Nichifor Crainic, Stăniloae was among the first Romanian professors of theology to substantially redirect the interest of his students towards the rich sources of the mystical tradition of the Orthodox Church. Throughout his approach, which emphasised more the richness of the Oriental Christianity, Stăniloae remained nonetheless fond of the opposition “East *versus* West,”<sup>25</sup> to which he added a distinctive „antirömischen Affekt” (to use here the famous phrase coined by Hans Urs von Balthasar).<sup>26</sup> An article published in 1930 put it thus:

“The Roman-Catholic tradition is rationalist and empirical, while Eastern Orthodoxy is mystical and transcendent.”

and,

“For the Roman-Catholics, the Church is a social body opposed to, and fighting other social bodies in search for supremacy within the same life experience, and not the divine-and-human body, which penetrates the other social bodies from above.”<sup>27</sup>

Notwithstanding these polemical exaggerations, Dumitru Stăniloae displayed much more than just an abrasive non-ecumenical ethos, as one recent commentator suggested.<sup>28</sup> His theological position was rooted in the radical eschatological insights professed by great thinkers and mystics of the Byzantine tradition. In his harsh criticism of the Western passion for juridical discipline and rational clarity, Stăniloae echoes again the position of St Gregory Palamas. The latter rejected the claims of Barlaam of Calabria, according to which “profane knowledge” (such as mathematics or natural philosophy) converges necessarily with the “spiritual knowledge” inspired by God. The exercise of dialectics, for example, is not needful for the achievement of salvation, whereas the understanding provided by the divine Scriptures remains fundamental, having saving effects for every single Christian soul. The Western tradition, Stăniloae suggests, has forgotten this crucial truth of the patristic tradition, reappraised later by the Byzantine monastics of the fourteenth century. The limits of scholarship and discursive thought are dramatic, since they cannot pay off the lack of personal communion with the Holy Spirit.

There is first the “human wisdom” pertaining to the created realm of being, and then the “wisdom from above,” which is the effect of God’s revelation in man’s heart.<sup>29</sup> In other words, one should never confuse the uncreated grace of God (which illiterate people, such as some among the apostles, are perfectly capable to receive) with the natural gifts of human intelligence, which can still be associated with a perverted heart. Discursive thought, moreover, is divisive, while spiritual knowledge unites the human self in the light of God’s united being. This is why, in the light of the Christian tradition, the apostles were greater than the greatest philosophers of the Hellenistic age. On the other hand, this does not mean that, before the advent of Christ, grains of truth could not have been found there where the pursuit of goodness was selfless and genuine.<sup>30</sup> It remains nonetheless important that Christians from all walks of life do not ignore this right epistemological order and adequate hierarchy of gifts. Attributing more value to the scholarly endeavour than to prayer and meditation can have harmful effects for one’s personal salvation, and for the ecclesial life by enlarge. By stating this theological truth, Stăniloae remained indebted to the stark positions adopted by St Mark of Ephesus (†1444) during the “unionist” council of Ferrara-Florence (1438-45). In other words, Stăniloae claimed that the Byzantine tradition was the true heir of the Patristic wisdom, expressed both in the splendours of its mystical theology. Unlike the West, where theologians lapsed into unnecessary speculations on the nature of God, the Orthodox Church focused on the transfiguration of human person through prayerful contemplation of the divine light. It was this theological difference, perceived often in the specific terms of the monastic spirituality, which set limits to the dialogue between East and West, and not mainly a cultural idiosyncrasy.

### **“Political” versus “Mystical” Theology**

Married in 1930 to Maria, his life-long wife and companion, Dumitru Stăniloae was ordained priest in Sibiu, just one year later. Before and during the World War II, Stăniloae exerted his influence for more than a decade in the field of theological and historical studies, despite not having a mentor in whose footsteps he could walk. Gradually, he became a public intellectual, very keen on making the voice of Orthodoxy being heard among the more secular members of the political elite. This exercise



was rather novel among the Romanian advocates of the Orthodox Church, which for centuries remained silent, adorned only in its liturgical garments.<sup>31</sup> During the 19<sup>th</sup> century, in comparison to Russia, for instance, Walachia and Moldova benefited from much less theological debates regarding the rapport between tradition and modernity, or the transfer of concepts from the private to the public sphere. In such an impoverished context, Stăniloae's theoretical indecisions strike the reader as normal. At times he seemed in favour of Crainic's apology for an ethnocratic state, while in other cases the same Stăniloae rejected any form of political fascism, xenophobia or cultural exclusiveness.

In 1934, Stăniloae could brand communism as anti-Christian, while ten years later he identified the roots of social equalitarian in the Gospel. It is more than obvious that Stăniloae's indulged himself in sweeping generalities about the history of the nation, and the role that Christianity had played in the invisible formation of the Romanian ethos. He simply did not use any elements of social and economic expertise, which could have illuminated more the past of his own nation. Equally, an inadequate training in political theory pushed him to make risky statements, often tainted with utopian elements. Some of his theological inquiries were nonetheless groundbreaking, given the rudimentary level of religious instruction at that time. He was a person that could read with genuine interest not only the writings of the Church Fathers, but also the books of Sherlock Holmes<sup>32</sup>, or even the essays of an ultimate nihilist figure, such as Emil (E.M.) Cioran.<sup>33</sup> His literary input was extraordinary.

Stăniloae published hundreds of articles, some of which tried to show the compatibility between political nationalism and the distinctive theological tenets of the Church. There must be a specific way of being Romanian, not only in social terms, but also in a religious sense. Stăniloae overlapped the modern category of "nation" with the more ancient concept of "ethnicity" (the "civic nationalism" being branded as "insufficient").<sup>34</sup> The Greek word *ethnos* is widely used in the classical and biblical literature, being commonly translated either as "people" (Romanian: *neam*), "tribe" (Romanian: *seminție*) or, somewhat misleadingly, with the more modern equivalent of "nation" (Romanian: *națiune*).<sup>35</sup> Particularly in the New Testament corpus, the meaning of *ethnos* (often taken as identical with *laos*) covers a historical reality that can hardly match the modern configuration of the European national identities, in the wake of World War I. For example, in St Paul's speech recorded by Luke the Evangelist in the book of the Acts of the Apostles

(13, 16-41), there is a reference to the “seven nations (*ethne hepta*)” from Canaan, which perished at the will of God so that the Israelites could finally seize the Promised Land. The nations taken here into consideration could not have possibly represented the socio-political units, which flourished during the modern period in Europe and elsewhere. The Israelites and their foes alike (with the exception of the Egyptians, perhaps) could be at best described in a contemporary language as “tribes” in search for geographic expansion and economic sovereignty. Stăniloae did not, or could not appreciate the historical transformation of the notion of “nation” and “nationality”, which instead of the previously ethnic connotations (“the blood”) acquired a strong political significance.

On the other hand, it has to be said that Stăniloae’s ethnic sensitivities had no totalitarian connotations.<sup>36</sup> Albeit rejecting pacifisms as such, and while critiquing the weaknesses of modern democracy, Stăniloae called for the implementation of the virtue of moderation in the every sort of political endeavour. Under this warrant, he condemned the acts of violence perpetrated by the members of the “Legionary Movement” in their exercise of power. Critical of communist internationalism, and sceptical of papal universalism, Stăniloae tried to explain how only the Orthodox Church is capable to welcome and blend the character of every nations by performing a particular theological synthesis that resembles, to some extent, the Platonic paradigm of the “One-among-many.” Stăniloae thought this was the vocation of a strong participatory theology, that sees in the event of the Incarnation the very paradigm for the union between the human and the divine.

Stăniloae’s interest in the “prophetic”, that is to say public dimension of the Church life had its pair in the purely theological concerns that he developed from an early age. He penned several apologetic books, among which the most notable is his first essay in Christology.<sup>37</sup> A close knowledge of the Patristic authors (St Maximus the Confessor, in particular), and the fruitful dialogue with the modern Russian tradition (Metropolitan Anthony Khrapovitsky and Serghei Bulgakov, in particular), along with the interaction with some major Western philosophers (Martin Heidegger, Maurice Blondel, Louis Laval, Ludwig Binswanger), placed the early Stăniloae in the frontline of Orthodox thinking. In his book on “Jesus Christ and the Restoration of Man,” Stăniloae showed himself to be one of the most notable Orthodox theologians of the 20<sup>th</sup> century ready to defend the doctrine of deification (*theosis*), in the footsteps of the Church Fathers. His growing interest for the monastic spirituality of

Eastern Christianity determined Stăniloae to start his monumental translation of *The Philokalia*.<sup>38</sup> The first volume appeared in 1946, and the last in 1991. This famous compilation of texts on prayer and contemplation, comprising the wisdom of the ascetic Church Fathers from the fourth up to the fourteenth century, was issued in Romanian in not less than twelve volumes. In contrast, the English edition, following the initial design of St Nikodemos the Athonite and St Makarios of Corinth, has only five volumes (the latter to be published soon). Regarded by Stăniloae himself as the best achievement of his theological career, the Romanian edition of *The Philokalia* had and perhaps still has a significant impact on the development of monastic life in Romania, shortly after the Soviet occupation<sup>39</sup>, and following the political revolution of 1989. To this day, *The Philokalia* is a best seller on the religious book market.

### **The Imprisonment**

Starting with the summer of 1940, the “The Burning Bush Conferences” started being organised at the most important ecclesiastical centre of Bucharest, namely the Antim Monastery.<sup>40</sup> However, Stăniloae’s involvement in this movement was short-lived and not comparable with the strong commitment of even more influential figures, such as the hieromonk Ioan Kulighin, Rev. Benedict Ghiuș or Rev. Sofian Boghiu, the poet Sandu Tudor (the future Fr Daniil) and Dr. Vasile Voiculescu. Stăniloae’s arrest and imprisonment eighteen years later was not so much a result of his connection with the “Burning Bush Movement” from Antim. Indeed, under pressure during the criminal investigations, he claimed that his link with the monastic and literary circle of Antim was casual. The explanation, then, must be found elsewhere. It would seem that it was his public defence of the “hidden treasure” kept by the great theological tradition of Orthodoxy, which precipitated the arrest of *doctor philocalicus*.<sup>41</sup> Between 1947 and 1955, Stăniloae was severely marginalised, and his courses at the Faculty of Theology in Sibiu were totally suppressed. In 1947, he had to move to Bucharest. It was more than ten years later, in 1958, when Stăniloae was allowed to author a book (in cooperation with other colleagues from the Faculty of Orthodox Theology in Bucharest) on Church dogmatics.<sup>42</sup>

From 1955 to 1958, Stăniloae attended some private seminars, arranged by his former friends of the “Burning Bush” movement. They read and

commented on books on early Christian spirituality. Under surveillance by the secret police, the members of the “Burning Bush” were arrested again on the night of 13/14 June 1958.<sup>43</sup> Stăniloae was arrested on 3<sup>rd</sup> September 1958, when his friends had already been sent to prison. On 8<sup>th</sup> November 1958, Stăniloae was sentenced to five years imprisonment, considered as an “obscurantist propagandist” of the *ancien régime*.<sup>44</sup> On 15th January 1963, he was released from prison and allowed to enrol as a teacher at the Institute for Orthodox Theology in Bucharest. In 1964, all the political and religious prisoners of Communist Romania had to be liberated, given the increasing pressures exerted by international bodies. Stăniloae spent most of his time in the dreadful prison of Aiud.<sup>45</sup> Later on, he used to say that this harsh period of deprivation and humiliations helped him to practise the unceasing prayer of the heart (“Lord, Jesus Christ, Son of God, have mercy upon me”). Over the centuries, this prayer has been much cherished by the hesychast monks of Eastern Christendom, being regarded as the corner stone of the Christian path to deification.

### **After Liberation**

In 1963, Stăniloae was released from prison, and was asked, in return, to write some articles with positive appreciation of the Communist regime. However, the maltreatment continued until 1969, when the communist Department for Religion set out to project a better image of Romania in the West.<sup>46</sup> Thus, Stăniloae and other theologians were allowed to travel abroad. In 1970, he went to Oxford, hosted by the Convent of the Incarnation (“Sisters of the Love of God”). There he met his life-long friend, Canon A. M. Allchin, and other Anglican friends. He also received innumerable international awards, among which one could mention “The Cross of St Augustine of Canterbury” offered by the Bishopric of London. In 1976, the second series of *Philokalia* (from volume five onwards) started being published in Romanian, though in a very small number of copies, badly circulated. In the same year, the State University of Thessalonica offered Dumitru Stăniloae the title of *doctor honoris causa*.

In was in the same period that, quite embarrassingly, Stăniloae endorsed his former views on the Uniate Church. Seeing the Orthodox Church as a constitutive element of the Romanian national identity, Stăniloae approved in 1948 of the artificial “union” between the Uniates and Orthodox congregations.<sup>47</sup> Like most of the other Orthodox leaders at

that time, Stăniloae overlooked the forceful character of this “union”, accomplished under the diktat of the Communist government. Stăniloae’s take could have only pleased the Communist officials, who aimed at the total suppression of the last remnants of the Greek-Catholic Church, called the “Church from the underground.” Unlike the Orthodox, the Greek-Catholic theologians and historians had no rights to worship<sup>48</sup>, to gather publicly, let alone to defend themselves in journals or newspapers.<sup>49</sup> Quite surprisingly, the polemical perspective embraced by the young Stăniloae survived also his personal experience in the Communist prisons, where he must have met and shared the friendship of many people with different Christian backgrounds. In 1973, Stăniloae published a collection of essays under the provocative title: “The Uniate Church in Transylvania: an Attempt to Tear Apart the Romanian Nation.”<sup>50</sup> Here, Stăniloae reinforced his views on the Uniate Church, seen as a mere expression of the Roman-Catholic proselytising action within the traditionally Orthodox frontiers. The immediate consequence of this theological decision had a political character: namely, that of dividing along religious lines the Romanians from Transylvania, from their brothers and sisters living the Orthodox faith beyond the Carpathians. Stăniloae’s reading of history was inevitably biased, since it ignores the voluntary commitment of a great number of Uniate intellectuals to the national cause, in a time when the Romanian Orthodox faithful from Transylvania were still under the jurisdiction of the Serbian ecclesiastical see from Karlowitz (*Sremski Karlovci*). With the dim exception of Inochentie Micu,<sup>51</sup> whose patriotic deeds Stăniloae does praise, the activity of most other Uniate characters who were responsible for the political emancipation of the Romanians in Transylvania seem not to count. Stăniloae evokes instead the exceptional, but almost solitary personality of the Orthodox Metropolitan Andrei Țaguna (1809-1873), who indeed played fought as few others for the setting free of the Romanian Orthodox Christians from Transylvania.<sup>52</sup>

It is noteworthy that Stăniloae constantly balanced his polemical moves in the field of theological and intellectual debate, with a prominent dedication for the common spiritual roots of the Christian Church: namely, the patristic tradition. In the late 1970s, though aged and fragile, Stăniloae had the great stamina and inspiration to write his monumental work of systematic theology, issued in three volumes. His commentaries on the works of the spiritual masters of the East (from St John Climacus to St Isaac the Syrian and St Symeon the New Theologian) drew the attention

of many Romanian intellectuals and monastics.<sup>53</sup> Among them, one should mention Fr Ilie Cleopa<sup>54</sup> (1912-1998) from Sihăstria and Fr Paisie Olaru (1897-1990) from Sihla, who both had words of praise for the work of Reverend Stăniloae.<sup>55</sup> Moldavians by birth, these towering figures of Romanian monasticism are remembered nowadays as two unmistakable candidates for canonisation, along with other Romanian hermits and confessors who died during the 20<sup>th</sup> century. Stăniloae's publication of *The Philokalia* was a direct appraisal of this radical Christian culture, which put obedience, poverty and chastity at its hear. A clear indication of Stăniloae's recognition among the monastic circles is also offered in the writings of Archimandrite Ioanichie Bălan.<sup>56</sup>

### **Struggle and Triumph**

Gradually, the depths of Stăniloae's theological thinking and his well-balanced ecumenical openings received the just appreciation among Western theologians. Jürgen Moltmann<sup>57</sup> and John Meyendorff saluted the freshness of Stăniloae's approach to historical theology. The way he dealt with the sources was rejuvenating and inspiring for many young theologians, less acquainted with the patristic tradition. According to his daughter Lidia, in the early 1980s, Stăniloae travelled to Chicago, where he met the celebrated Romanian historian of religions, Mircea Eliade. Allegedly, Stăniloae had a prayerful conversation with Eliade in private.<sup>58</sup> Returning back home, Stăniloae plunged into his studies with an indefatigable energy, writing even more theological books, with a particular emphasis on the meaning of Christian worship.<sup>59</sup> This theological orientation is no surprise, since the Communist authorities emphasised that the Orthodox Church, like any other Christian communities, should not manifest herself outside the liturgical borders. Religious education, work for the charities and public mission were all forbidden. Limited by this environment, Stăniloae continued his translations of the theological works written by great theologians, such as Sts Athanasius, Cyril of Alexandria or Maximus the Confessor. Not all of his translations have been published during Stăniloae's lifetime, given the strict regulations that governed the publishing houses in Romania at that time.<sup>60</sup>

By the end of the 1980s, Romania was probably the most badly damaged country by Communism in Eastern Europe.<sup>61</sup> Many intellectuals

learnt how to forget their captivity into the social misery of Communism by taking refuge into a mild sort of Platonism. Utopias of any sort, from the mystical journey into that self which is “interior intimo meo”<sup>62</sup>, to the most whimsical forms of artistic, literary and philosophical escapism, proved to be little short of a personal redemption.<sup>63</sup> In those days, theology lost its access to prophecy, while philosophy was embarrassed to face the naked truth of the historical reality. For those cared for his mental sanity, the world of culture seemed to be the last resort. In the words of Andrei Pleșu, “the only reason to concern oneself with culture, to do culture within a totalitarian system, is that it must be done, regardless of audience, circumstances, outcome.”<sup>64</sup> In one or another way, this attitude required a certain belief either in the secular judgement of history, or the theological aftermath of eschatology. After years of deprivation and harassment, Dumitru Stăniloae was prepared to regard history, like the great philosopher Constantin Noica did, as if it were a matter of sheer meteorology.<sup>65</sup> In the late 1970s and early 1980s, the time for a confrontational approach had long passed. Noica and Stăniloae, who both supported in their youth the idea of political action, were favouring now, each one in his different way, a solitary form of asceticism put in the service of a great tradition: either the philosophical, or the theological one.

The somewhat open character of the collaboration between the State authorities and the Church, and the incapacity of most of the Orthodox theologians to resist to the ideological pressures exerted by the dictatorial regime of Nicolae Ceaușescu (1918-1989), damaged the image of Romanian Orthodoxy.<sup>66</sup> The “national Church” seemed to have failed the test of real patriotism, which would have meant for her leaders a more active resistance against the horrific acts of social engineering perpetrated by the Communists. The recovery from this slump of unpopularity among the local intelligentsia was rather slow. After 1989, Romania trapped in political and economic corruption. Rampant poverty, especially among the elderly people, and loss of hope for the youth, made the ruthless plague of the post-communist transition. In this rather gloomy atmosphere, dominated by corruption on all levels of the social structures, the Orthodox Church was more often silent than vocal. Only rarely one could hear the traditionally Christian plea for truth, justice and reconciliation in a society haunted by the traumas of the past.

## The Later Years

Encouraged by the freedom gained after December 1989, Stăniloae voiced his criticism, calling the Church to act with greater responsibility in the social sphere. He complained for the lack of sobriety and prophetic spirit among the ecclesial milieu, defending also the promotion of Christian values in the public realm.<sup>67</sup> Not unlike other Orthodox theologians, such as Metropolitan John Zizioulas, Fr. Stăniloae joined some circles of the civil society in his criticism of the non-ecological policies of the state. As a citizen of the world, he was anxious for the future of humankind, sharing with Heidegger an ongoing concern for the global spread of destructive technology (expressed by the German philosopher through the concept: *das Gestell*).<sup>68</sup> On the other hand, Stăniloae did not trouble himself for the lack of political emancipation and for the economic backwardness, which was responsible for so many social disorders and educational shortcomings in the rural area. Until his later years, Stăniloae did not show much confidence in the historical agents of modernisation: free market, political institutions, and a civil society regulated by critical reasoning. He remained a pessimist, prone to hold onto unilateral solutions.

On the other hand, Fr Stăniloae stayed in touch with many personalities of the Romanian Diaspora, among whom one counts Eugène Ionesco, former member of the French Academy. In 1991, Stăniloae was welcomed in the Romanian Academy, being also awarded the *doctor honoris causa* of the Universities of Athens (1991), and Bucharest (1992). Only in these last years of life, Stăniloae published his more serene *Reflections on the Spirituality of the Romanian People*, in which he envisages, not without utopian moments of thinning, a societal model for the new Europe emerging from behind the Iron Guard. Stăniloae pleaded for the rediscovery of the Christian principle of personhood after so many years of Communist dictatorship, and against the nihilistic drive of Western individualism.<sup>69</sup> In this sense, Stăniloae's ideas were in accord with the theology of other contemporary theologians, such as John Zizioulas or Christos Yannaras. They all thought that only the retrieval of the dialogical, Eucharistic and self-giving attributes of Christ could open new ways of experiencing communion among people.

Throughout his life, Dumitru Stăniloae had an ascetic conduct. Even when 90 years old, he would still wake up at three or four o'clock in the morning, saying his prayers and writing unabatedly, while in the afternoon and during the evenings he was ready to welcome visitors. He was known



and remembered as a cheerful, and yet conservative character, as an affectionate father and gentle professor, immune to depression, always compassionate, and jovial. A man of prayer and a pastor, Stăniloae showed much consideration for the people forming the body of the Church, trusting their “spiritual instincts.”<sup>70</sup> On the 4<sup>th</sup> October 1993, Reverend Dumitru Stăniloae passed away, leaving behind an impressive theological legacy.

### **Bucolic Nostalgia**

Before we scrutinise at the institutional aspects of Stăniloae’s spicy attachment to religious nationalism, one should grasp his subjective perceptions, as filtered through various articles, essays, interviews and testimonials left in the religious press of his time. It is probably apt to look especially at the literary style used by Stăniloae in order to celebrate the marriage between the Gospel and the nation. A certain romantic rhetoric betrays the inebriation with the idea that the peasants are the only true heirs of Christian spirituality. Notwithstanding, Stăniloae was one of the many Romanian hierarchs and theologians who claimed during the interwar period that the rural life was the matrix of pristine religiosity, and the only source for the spiritual renewal of the nation. He shared the values of the Slavophile intelligentsia, being himself born into a family of peasants who lived their Christian faith in strict accordance with the traditional norms of Eastern Orthodoxy. For many personal reasons, and less perhaps from a scientific perspective, Stăniloae saw the life of the peasants before the industrial revolution “filled with many blessings.”<sup>71</sup>

This puritan dream for the Romanian village never completely lost its stamina, remaining particularly attractive for those members of the urban intelligentsia who have been brought up and educated in strongly secular centres of Europe. This phenomenon represents a specific pathology of modernity, which encourages a somewhat essentialist bovarism of a poetic kind. Often, an almost complete lack of instruction in social and economic history contributes to the literary idealisation of the “perennial village.” There, against the odds of modern history, the “archaic ontology” of the Romanian peasant unfolded its pre-modern (though not anti-modern) story.

It is true that the church, in the Romanian territories and elsewhere, was at the heart of the traditional Christian village.<sup>72</sup> Like an *axis mundi*, the temple structured the symbolic geography of ordinary people. Time and space were shaped by an innate sense of awe towards the sacred.

The Psalter was widely known among the more committed believers. Crucifixes and shrines would mark the crossroads and the entries into every village. Pilgrimages to monasteries were omnipresent during the great festivals of the Church. Often, a turreted belfry would inform the peasants living at a distance about the time for daily prayer, or the time for mourning for those departed. Normally, Orthodox Christians had their work and food sanctified in prayer by the sign of the cross.<sup>73</sup> The presence of God was felt in the most ordinary circumstances of life.

Stăniloae's attachment to bucolic nostalgia has, therefore, a profoundly sentimental touch. Later, in the 1980s, Stăniloae recalled during his conversations with Costa de Beauregard, the cardinal virtues of the peasant family life: modesty, discreetness, and kind-heartedness. Such human qualities were the essential ingredients of "the joys," as opposed (in Augustinian fashion) to the mundane "pleasures" of life.<sup>74</sup> Ideally, Stăniloae thought, the community life of the peasant Christians would be shaped by the oblatory ethos of Orthodoxy. Ascetic endurance and humility were the virtues that fed their natural admiration for the diversity and order of creation. The young Stăniloae strongly believed that the Gospel had nourished the substance of the Romanian folk traditions. Different rites of passages celebrated anticipated patterns of the "cosmic liturgy." He would have subscribed to the words of Mircea Eliade, in whose eyes "the Romanians have preserved, deepened and valued the Christian vision on cosmos, as it was expressed in the first centuries of Christianity. Thus, the conservatism and archaic character of Romanian folklore protected a heritage that belonged to Christianity, but which historical processes of various sort wanted to destroy."<sup>75</sup>

Looking at the ancient culture of the Romanian peasants, Stăniloae did not put on the critical eyeglass of the cultural anthropologist. He never took the trouble to identify the pagan reminiscences in the fables, stories, and legends that perhaps even nowadays, in folk music and dances, capture the imagination of the last Romanian peasants. In his youth, he went so far that he conceded a certain theological orthodoxy to the uncanny experiences of "illumination" and "prophecy" ascribed to the Wallachian peasant Petrace Lupu, nicknamed "Moșul" ("The Elder").<sup>76</sup> This elder from Maglavit (Dolj County) claimed that God bestowed on him the miraculous gifts of healing, clairvoyance and prophesying. Though not a monk and without sticking to a specific churchmanship, Petrace Lupu was revered by thousands of people, who in the 1930s visited him in great numbers. Some other Orthodox theologians, such as the layman

Mihai Urzică, resisted the claims made by Petrache Lupu and his adepts, putting them under a serious doubt.<sup>77</sup> On the other hand, the learned Stăniloae felt the need to give a patristic explanation of that phenomenon by comparing the hesychastic tradition of the Byzantine mystics with this dogma-free manifestation of folk religiosity. Never did he express an explicit embarrassment with regards to this episode, which suggests that his personal belief (never officially validated by the Church) did not change.

Stăniloae's strong attachment to the rural values of Christianity was not exceptional in the interwar period.<sup>78</sup> On behalf of Stăniloae himself and other Church officials, this attitude betrays only the hesitant acceptance of the inevitable changes that the modernisation of Romania brought about. For those acquainted with the history of early Christianity, this seems to be a real paradox. In the New Testament texts, rural culture hardly enjoys a privileged status.<sup>79</sup> On the contrary, nearly all the Pauline letters were sent to important city centres from the Roman Empire, and the later success of the Byzantine project cannot be explained without reference to the urban network, which eased the proximity of the religious and the political decisions.

### **Trauma of Secularisation**

Albeit the urban ethos of early Christianity, the shift from the rural to the urban setting in modern times had traumatizing effects for any religious individual or community, particularly in the case of those who received no historical instruction.<sup>80</sup> For a better understanding of the roots of this modern and still persistent perception, one has to look at the phenomenon of secularisation connected (though not exclusively) to the Westernisation of various religious habits and practices. In Europe, particularly, secularisation was seen as an integrative, if not dissolving factor, which allowed the dialogue between different cultures to emerge. Among all the other Romanian principalities, Transylvania was the first to have experienced the explosion of different strategies of secularisation, regarded as necessary steps in the process of modernisation. Transylvania was the space where the Roman-Catholic Christians encountered the Evangelicals, and where the Uniate Christians met with the Eastern Orthodox. They all agreed and had disputes on many points, only to notice later that the new Christian confessions (such as the Baptist or the Adventist churches)

emerged and prospered among their former coreligionists. Different churches had different attitudes towards food-rites and their symbolism, allowing a greater or smaller degree of flexibility in terms of cuisine innovation. The neo-Protestant churches, in particular, seemed prone to forget the deep symbolism of the religious meal ceremonies, which represented the backbone of traditional Orthodoxy. The idea that “bread” was intrinsically sacred was inconceivable for those who refuted the argument of the tradition, for the benefit of biblical literalism. Notwithstanding these tensions, all Christian bodies came across the secularisation vector, especially during the second half of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, and the early 20<sup>th</sup> century (when a mass migration of workers boosted the hybridisation phenomenon). Between 1848 (a time of political and cultural revolution) and 1948 (when the cross-fertilisation culture disappears under the “red horizons”), Transylvania staged ambivalent actions, which pertain to different interpretations. Dumitru Stăniloae preferred to see secularisation as the by-product of Western theology, and thus as having exclusively negative effects.

Priestly sermons, local magazines, journal chronicles, travellers’ diaries, some pieces of private correspondence – all these documents reflect at times the radical transformation of the traditional understanding of fundamental practices, such as the religious feasting and fasting. Different *vestigia* record the loosening up of certain dietary rules ascribed for different periods of the liturgical year.<sup>81</sup> They were, indeed, paralleled by the appearance of new codes of dressing (e.g., priests shaven, wearing no cassock in public), challenging beliefs, demythologised attitudes towards courtship and love. The rhythms of nature had been ignored for the benefit of labour efficiency and economic profit. Time and space started being shaped according to non-hierarchical categories, while the old narrative practices (such as the reading of the Psalter in connection to the Great Lent period) disappeared.

Thus, the church ceased to be the very *axis mundi* of the symbolic geography of ordinary people. Crucifixes stopped marking the crossroads of the new towns and cities, the religious festivals becoming the object of mockery for many sceptics. Food was not anymore sanctified in prayer by the sign of the cross. The unity between the micro- and the macro-cosmos became blurred, with the special status ascribed to the matter (regarded as apt to become an incarnational vehicle) disappearing almost completely. The natural ecology insured by the theological economy of the basic elements (air, fire, earth, water) seemed endangered.

The bread was not anymore capable to carry out an universal symbolism, or to display metonymically a theological significance (*pars pro toto*: the Eucharist being the crucified and resurrected image of the world, taken as gift). Where it was still practiced, fasting lost its connection to the all-encompassing narrative of *ekklesia*. The acts of piety became dramatically individualised. The connection between the body and the word was simply defected. New tastes appear to surface, but also old recipes are lost. Soaked in the new liberal ethos, the notion of rite itself is put under question. In fact, the very idea of religious identity cannot hold as it used to, in the past. The urban majority does not hail anymore the seasonal ceremonies of the religious communities. The “natural symbols” (Mary Douglas) embedded on the traditional system of food prohibitions lose their force and integrity.<sup>82</sup> “Pure” and “impure” are not anymore categories as clear as they used to be. Less and less ambiguities (or taboos) confront the experience of eating. The immediate connection between the acts of, respectively, refraining and repenting, looks almost nonsensical. Readings ascribed to specific parts of the liturgical year are simply lost. The complementarity of virtues (such as fasting and almsgiving, or supplication) seems not obvious. Thus, what is threatened is the very notion of celebration (with “frugality” or “abstinence” as its correspondent term).

The sense of belonging to a “cosmic Christianity” faded away, with the entrance into the complex space of modernity. The implementation of the functionalist approach to food, the invention of new medical notions of hygiene, the oblique attachment to scepticism among the intellectuals and the new bourgeoisie, the loss of authority of the traditional fortress of Christian piety (exemplified by the opposition established by Metropolitan Andrei Șaguna between the schools, seen as necessary, and the monasteries, seen as futile<sup>83</sup>), the industrialisation process, the constant changes of the urban calendar and time perception, the erosion of the Byzantine memory among the traditional Orthodox, along with the appearance of an informal ecumenical practices at the grassroots level (triggered, in part, by mixed marriages) – all these events contributed to the transformation of all rites of passages.<sup>84</sup>

It is because of all these losses that the young Stăniloae did not disguise his liking for the “humble character” of the Romanian ethos. Stăniloae sided with those religious leaders, rural conservatives and the supporters of old folk traditions who expressed their strong opposition towards the secular homogenisation. On the other side, there were the partisans of

social rejuvenation, who defended the need to adapt the traditional *rites de passages* to the new conditions of life, marked by economic transactions across different symbolic borders.

### **The National Ideal and the Orthodox Ecclesiology**

Along this partly legitimised nostalgia for the mythological realities of the peasant life, Stăniloae defended the dignity of the concept of “nation-State” as somebody who, in his childhood, experienced the political union of Great Romania. At the age of 15, Dumitru Stăniloae witnessed this thrilling, which was publicly celebrated in Alba-Iulia on 1<sup>st</sup> December 1918 in the presence of a great number of Church officials, as well.

Stăniloae was an offspring of an ordinary Transylvanian family, religiously engaged and remarkable only for its unmistakable sober ethos. Pundits in psychohistory may help with some arguments, which could explain the difference between the Transylvanians and their Romanian fellows living in the already constituted Kingdom (proclaimed by 1881, under the rule of King Carol I). Modest and honest, so the story went, the Romanians from Transylvania knew better than anybody how to work for their survival under foreign occupation.<sup>85</sup> Toiling always with a long-term plan in his mind, the ordinary Transylvanians adopted very quickly the administrative and economic skills developed first by the Austrians, the Germans and the Hungarians.<sup>86</sup> This can explain the better response to modernisation that is to be found in Transylvania after 1918.

The Wallachians, on the other hand, managed to appropriate the more stagnant ethos of the Balkans, which could not make great economic progress, or contribute to political freedom. Seen as less talkative than the Wallachians and perhaps less creative than the Moldavians, the ideal Transylvanian citizen understood better the historical mission surrounding the “national ideal.” Resentment and frustration must have almost inevitably fuelled the rhetoric of young Transylvanians, such as Dumitru Stăniloae, at the sight of the “compromising deals” between the government from Bucharest and the Vatican administration. The Orthodox Transylvanians defended their patriotic rights against “the foreign” and “heretic” influence in counter-reaction to Vatican’s attempts from 1927 to establish a concordat with the Romanian state.<sup>87</sup> More than anybody else, the Orthodox from Transylvania remembered the acts of injustice

perpetrated during the Austro-Hungarian occupation (1867–1918) and, beforehand, under the rule of the Habsburgs (1526–1867).<sup>88</sup> The role of the recent memory, unhealed by historical distance and participatory hermeneutics, was thus crucial for the later developments of Stăniloae’s polemical stance.<sup>89</sup>

To these considerations one should add Stăniloae’s strong convictions about the Orthodox ecclesiology, contrasted by the Roman-Catholic dogma of universal jurisdiction. Instead of the papal authority, Stăniloae saw the bishop as the one who

“[o]verses the keeping of the faith in his diocese, having the charge to keep it the same as the other dioceses of the whole Church. This is why he is ordained by two or three other bishops, as they ask him to confess his faith as precondition, and that it be the same as that of the bishops who ordain him. The bishop is thus also the structure of the link of his diocese with other dioceses and with the universal Church in matters of faith. This is why he must be in uninterrupted communion with other bishops.”<sup>90</sup>

Stăniloae was suspicious of the potentially totalitarian tendencies hidden by the office of St Peter’s vicar, under the appearance of a missionary umbrella.

“Both the principle of communion and the transcendent origin of sanctifying action in the Church are concentrated in Episcopal synodality. Synodality shows that sanctification and perfection do not exist outside communion. But sanctification as power of raising up to higher communion is distinct from general communion, because it comes from above. Since nothing higher than Episcopal synodality exists, the sanctification of transcendent origin in the Episcopal order can only come through the highest sanctifying organ, which is Episcopal communion or synodality itself.”<sup>91</sup>

Not only does the Roman-Catholic Church give more power to the pope than to his collegial bishops, but she also tends to water down the natural differences between the nations of the globe. The true ethnic plurality and cultural diversity, Stăniloae thought, was celebrated in Orthodoxy as a divine gift.<sup>92</sup> He opposed what he took to be the canonical Roman-Catholic view (which has radically changed since Vatican II) with an organicist understanding of the “nation” and a conciliary vision about the Church. One nation, claimed Stăniloae, cannot be reduced to

a simple gathering of people sharing the same language, history and culture. Despite the transitory character of the ethnical entities, Stăniloae could not regard the nations as being "like chaff driven by the desert wind," or put "on fire" (Isaiah 47, 14).

In other words, the Orthodox ecclesiology does not see the notion of Christian identity as free-floating, being defined by some rather exact forms of territorial belonging.<sup>93</sup> Ideally, the bishop is master over not an abstract flock, but the close friend of those gathered together to worship in one given place, which makes the body of the local church. It was this theological sense of being able to justify the local and the particular in the light of the traditional Christian teaching that allowed Stăniloae to make harsh statements about the allegedly power-driven structures of Roman-Catholic universalism. On the ideal map of Orthodox ecclesiology, the individual call of each nation seemed to fit together, better than anywhere else. While making these claims, Stăniloae overlooked the complex interaction, if not conflicts between modern nationalist rhetoric, and the pastoral mission of the Orthodox churches in their diasporas. More than once, the Christian communities living outside the traditional Orthodox borders perceived with great pain the lack of unity in the actions pursued by different ecclesiastical centres (from Moscow and Constantinople, to Bucharest and Belgrade). In other words, Stăniloae did not challenge the shortcomings of Orthodox ecclesiology revealed by the very dynamics of modern life, when the traditional notion of territorial identity and the imperial authorisation of ecumenical debates do not have the same weight.

### **Narcissism in Historiography**

Along with the bucolic nostalgia intensified by the trauma of secularisation, and his Transylvanian sensitivity, together with his deep theological convictions about the truth of Orthodox ecclesiology, Dumitru Stăniloae embraced the nationalist agenda for reasons that have to do with historical scholarship. While attacking the Uniates, Stăniloae tried to legitimise the Orthodox contribution to the formation of the Romanian nation. One of his articles bore the eloquent title: "The Contribution of Orthodoxy to the Formation and the Maintenance of Romanian People and National Unity,"<sup>94</sup> where the common vulgate of nationalist historiography was directly implemented. According to Stăniloae,



Orthodoxy was the original form of Christianity, which landed on the proto-Romanian territories. Following the conquest of Dacia by the Romans (II-III century), a Romanian nation was born, *tout court*, Christian. The natural conclusion of this logic, which loses sight of all the historical discontinuities recorded by the archaeologists, suggests that birth of the Romanian people emerges as a providential miracle in history.<sup>95</sup> A betrayal of the Orthodox faith is, thus, an act of treason with regards to the Romanian identity as well.

It mattered very little for Dumitru Stăniloae that the factual history of early Christianity in the territories of *Romania antiqua* was rather poorly documented, lending itself only to mere conjectures. What to a foreign historian it looked like an unconvincing picture, to a Romanian traditionalist was absolutely obvious: “the Romanians were born Christians.”<sup>96</sup> That the birth of the nation coincided with the birth of Christianity on the Romanian land was an undisputed matter among the Orthodox hierarchs, this claim being also reflected in the Constitution from 1923 (which called the Orthodox Church the “national Church”). The triumphal emancipation of the Romanian nation from the crude oppressors, says the Church official vulgate, is paralleled by the equally brave story of Christianisation – in Orthodox terms, only – of this young nation. To quote one epitomising myth that troubles this ethno-theological discourse of the Church official – embraced, at least in part, by Stăniloae too – is that related to the story of St Andrew, the brother of apostle Peter. This first-called among the apostles is regarded as the seal of the Orthodox tradition, which was planted from the very beginning in the soil of the Romanian nation. All the other missionary actions taken on the territories of *Romania antique* are to be seen in the glowing shadow of St Andrew, whose feast in the Orthodox calendar (30 November) has been recently equated with the eve of the National Day (1 December).

But what do the historians say about this narcissistic narrative about divine election, continuity and triumph? To begin with, in his *Church History* (iii. 1) Eusebius of Caesarea describes Andrew as the “apostle of Scythia.” This geographic appellation used to denote in the past the region lying north of the Caspian and of the Black Sea. This explains why the Russians claimed later to have St Andrew as their patron saint. The majority of scholars are inclined to think that Eusebius refers to Scythia Minor (today Dobruja, which extends from the western banks of the lower Danube to the eastern shores of Black Sea). In 46 AD Scythia Minor was incorporated to the Roman Empire as part of the Moesia Inferior region,

becoming later a Byzantine province. Hereby, the Greek emissaries sent from Constantinople gradually Christianised Dobruja. Most of the historical records, which demonstrate a Christian presence in Scythia Minor, date from the fourth century. Around 300 AD, the persecution of the Church initiated by Diocletian reached the territories of Dobruja, and countless of Christians saw their death in places such as Niviodunum (today Isaccea) Axiopolis (today Cernavodă), or Tomis (today Constanța). Starting with the fourth century, the ecclesiastical structure of Dobruja began to be fortified. Mark, a bishop of Tomis, attended the gatherings of the first ecumenical council from Nicaea 325. The same Dobruja can boast with famous monk John the Cassian<sup>97</sup>, bishop Teotim I (a defender of Origen, and a friend of St John Chryostom), and Dionysius Exiguus (“the Small One”) who calculated first the date of birth of Christ, were originally from the same Dobruja. On the map, Dobruja represents, however, only a small fraction of the contemporary Romania.

The successful conversion of this Pontic region to orthodox Christianity, coming to pass first under the influence of the Roman colonists and later under direct supervision from Constantinople, cannot account for the Church history in Transylvania, Moldavia and Walachia.<sup>98</sup> These provinces, which make almost complete the present borders of the country, eschewed the Byzantine influence. Significant archaeological evidence (consisting of religious objects, inscriptions on stones, and remnants of churches) proves the existence of early Christian communities, going back to the early fourth century. For centuries, the proto-Romanians must have experienced a semi-nomadic life in the hilly regions on all sides of the Carpathians, where they could be out of sight for the invaders (e.g., Goths, Huns, Slavs). They lacked the opportunities available to all those Christian communities living in the proximity of the urban centres of the Mediterranean. This inevitably resulted into lack of literary culture, which makes almost impossible today the identification of the very source of Christianisation in Walachia, Moldova and Transylvania. In Walachia and Moldova, which for two century largely formed “the free Dacia” (a buffering zone between the Roman Empire and the *terra incognita* of the barbarians), the rather slow and discontinuous process of religious conversion took place from the second century AD (following the invasion of Dacia by Emperor Trajan, between 101-106) up to the early fourteen-century. At that point, the sense of religious belonging to the Byzantine commonwealth is well testified among the Romanian princes. Transylvania represents a special case. It is probably safe to say that, to

the extant it embraced Christianity, the Latin-speaking population of Transylvania maintained its allegiance to the creed and the liturgical languages (Greek and Slavonic) of the Eastern Orthodox Church until very late, towards the dawn of the 18<sup>th</sup> century.<sup>99</sup>

Historians find it very difficult to prove the necessary connection between the appearance of Christianity in the ancient Romanian territories and the birth of the Romanian nation in the first millennium. The early Christian communities of *Romania antiqua* were extremely diverse: they included Orthodox and Arian, as well as Greek-speaking and Latin-speaking churches. Before the sixth century, it is very likely that religious syncretism was characteristic for the inland territories of ancient Romania (Dobruja being probably the only exception). As many pieces of Romanian folklore show, the process of Christianisation of the rural population continued until very late. Magic, superstition and pagan rites were never completely uprooted from the cultural soil of the Romanian peasantry, despite the great efforts paid by the Church.<sup>100</sup> The official historiography, however, found it very difficult to come to terms with this aching truth.

## Conclusions

“Theology and nationalism” remains a topic of paramount importance for the intellectual history of modern Romania, and of the Balkans in general.<sup>101</sup> Many historians of modern Romania have studied the cultural and political trajectory of the “national idea” up until 1918. Very few scholars failed to underline the instrumental role played by the Eastern Orthodoxy during the agonising birth of the Romanian self-consciousness, especially during the 19<sup>th</sup> century.<sup>102</sup>

The political rapport between the Orthodox Church and the national state of Romania is rather well documented, while the study of the “dangerous liaisons” between secular nationalist discourse and the works of different Christian theologians still need pioneering research. This study aims to be an introduction to Dumitru Stăniloae’s ethno-theology. A systematic examination of the nationalistic themes present in the writings of the greatest Romanian theologian, Fr Dumitru Stăniloae (1903-1993) has not as yet been carried out, despite the fact that his views still capture the imagination of many leaders of Romanian Orthodoxy. The great influence exercised by his reflections on the nation and the Church

explains why the enquiry into the roots of Stăniloae's ethno-theology cannot be postponed for too long.

This present study, written in the form of an introduction, aimed at presenting the theological tensions at work in the writings of Dumitru Stăniloae. There, one finds a passionate involvement in history, seen as the domain of the "many", which is paralleled by the vertical contemplation of the ineffable "One," that is beyond any fragmentation. In literary terms, one could call the first type of discourse, as the "prophetic" trope, while the latter, and the most important one, would be "the sapiential." I have identified four major causes, which hold Stăniloae responsible for his defence of a *sui-generis* ethno-theology: a) the genuine bucolic nostalgia, rooted in his personal memoirs; b) the severe trauma of secularisation, which was perceived with intensity by the Transylvanians; c) the sincere belief in the rightfulness of the Orthodox ecclesiology (based on the notion of local authority, exercised by the bishop, and territorial identity, protected by the parish), against the Roman-Catholic claims to universal jurisdiction made by the papal office; d) the gullible captivity in the narcissist discourse of a neo-Romantic historiography, adopted by the Orthodox Church officials during the 20<sup>th</sup> century (both in Romania, and elsewhere in Eastern Europe).

However, in the pan-Orthodox circles, the lasting memory of Stăniloae's life-long activities stems not from his nationalistic agenda, but from a truly inspired and creative reading of the Scriptures and the Church Fathers. For more than fifty years and under the most austere circumstances, the Romanian theologian worked indefatigably for the construction of a "neo-Patristic synthesis." In his case, the attempt to refresh the theological thinking of the Orthodox Church, caught up in a long cultural and religious captivity under Ottoman Rule, and the unilateral impact of the Western *Aufklärung*, was rather successful. Stăniloae, along with other Orthodox theologians, such as Vladimir Lossky or Fr Justin Popovitsch, tried to answer the challenges of modern culture and to surpass the barren "theology of repetition," in which even the greater minds of the post-Byzantine tradition were hopelessly stuck. This return to the biblical and patristic sources of Christian theology, in which he saw the only possible bedrock for the ecumenical dialogue among the Christian communities, was paralleled by a genuine interest in the Continental philosophy of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. Between Stăniloae's struggle for the Gospel and his early nationalist temptations, the universality of his theological commitments prevailed.

## NOTES

- 1 On the social conditions of Romania before WW II, see Kenneth Jowitt (ed.), *Social change in Romania, 1860-1940: A debate on Development in a European Nation* (Berkeley: Institute of International Studies, 1978).
- 2 M. Beza, "English Travellers in Romania," *The English Historical Review*, vol. 32 (April 1917) no. 126, p. 277. On this false but widespread etymology of Bucharest, see the hackneyed article of M. Timuș, "De unde ne vin uzbekii?," *Revista 22*, XIV (30 august-5 septembrie 2005).
- 3 Irina Livezeanu, *Cultural Politics in Greater Romania: Regionalism, Nation Building, and Ethnic Struggle, 1918-1930* (Ithaca and London: Cornell University Press, 1995), and the reviews of C. Carmichael in *Europe-Asia Studies*, vol. 48 (1996) no. 5, p. 861-2; Mary Ellen Fischer in *The American Historical Review*, vol. 101 (October 1996) no. 4, p. 1244; and John W. Cole in *Contemporary Sociology*, vol. 25 (November 1996) no. 6, p. 740-1.
- 4 Even the former sceptic Titu Maiorescu, in his later years, succumbed into explicit exhortations of religion. See the account of Raymund Netzhammer, *Episcop în România: într-o epocă a conflictelor naționale și religioase*, vol. I & II, edited by Nikolaus Netzhammer in cooperation with Krista Zach, Romanian translation by George Guțu (Bucharest: Editura Academiei Române, 2005), p. 449. Maiorescu reportedly said: „în curând, ar trebui ca lumea să fie răzbătută de o mișcare religioasă, altfel s-ar prăpădi toată civilizația și ar veni alte popoare care cred!” For the German edition, see Archbishop Raymund Netzhammer, *Bischof in Rumänien. Im Spannungsfeld zwischen Staat und Vatikan*, edited by Nikolaus Netzhammer and Krista Zach, vol. 1 & 2 (Munich: SOKW-Verlag, 1995, 1996).
- 5 See also Adrian Marino, "Luminile românești și descoperirea Europei," *Pentru Europa* (Jassy: Polirom Publishers, 1995), p. 157-190.
- 6 Zigu Ornea, *Sămănătorismul* (Bucharest: Editura Fundației Culturale Române, 1998).
- 7 For an English biography of this leader of the traditionalist journal *Cândirea*, see Christine M. Hall, "*Jesus in my Country*". *The Theology of Nichifor Crainic with Special Reference to the Cultural and Historical Background* (PhD thesis, King's College London, 1986). In Romanian, see Nichifor Crainic, *Ortodoxie și Etnocrație* (Bucharest: Albatros Publishers, 1997), and the heavily biased study of D. Micu, "*Cândirea*" și *gândirismul* (Bucharest: Minerva Publishers, 1975). The latter was harshly reviewed (and rightly so) by V. Ierunca, *Dimpotrivă* (Bucharest: Humanitas Publishers, 1994), p. 60-72.
- 8 In 1938, D. Stăniloae endorsed Crainic's views on ethnocracy, as it appears from his articles included in *Națiune și creștinism*, edited and prefaced by C. Schifirneț (Bucharest: Elion Press, 2003), p. 62. Stăniloae also mounted a critique (op. cit., 33-35) of the "Sămănătorism Movement" (labelled as "cheaply Romantic"), paralleled by an appraisal of "Cândirea Movement."

- <sup>9</sup> The standard monograph on this subject remains that of Andrzej Walicki, *The Slavophile Controversy. History of a Conservative Utopia in Nineteenth-Century Russian Thought* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1975).
- <sup>10</sup> A. Oişteanu, *Imaginea Evreului în cultura română* (Bucharest: Humanitas Publishers, 2004<sup>2</sup>). I did not have access to William O. Oldson, *Providential Anti-Semitism: Nationalism and Polity in Nineteenth-Century Romania* (American Philosophical Society, 1991), reviewed by R. V. Burks, *American Historical Review*, vol. 97 (April 1992) no. 2, p. 579, and discussed in detail by D. Deletant, "The Holocaust in Romania: Murderous or Providential Anti-Semitism," *East European Politics & Societies*, vol. 15 (Spring 2001), no. 1, p. 190.
- <sup>11</sup> There is always a hint to be found to the scriptural verse from the book of Revelation 21, 24. See D. Stăniloae, *Naşione şi creştinism*, p. 119. *Ibidem*, p. 9.
- <sup>13</sup> See Metropolitan Nestor Vornicescu, *Desăvârşirea unităţii noastre naţionale – fundament al unităţii Bisericii străbune* (Craiova: Mitropolia Olteniei Press, 1988). In order to refute this parasitic view on national history, Lucian Boia authored the best-seller *History and Myth in Romanian Consciousness*, ET by James Christian Brown (Budapest: Central European University Press, 2001). Boia should be, however, read only in the light of the sound criticism provided by Sorin Antohi and Ioan-Aurel Pop, the latter being also critically reviewed by Ovidiu Pecican.
- <sup>14</sup> Nae Ionescu should not be confused with Eugen Ionescu (later Eugène Ionesco), who particular inter-war position is analysed in Jeanine Teodorescu, "Nu, Nu, and Nu. Ionesco's 'No!' to Romanian politics and culture," *Journal Of European Studies*, vol. 34 (2004), no. 3, p. 267-287.
- <sup>15</sup> See the convoluted testimony of M. Eliade, *Jurnalul portughez şi alte scrieri*, vol. 1, preface and critical edition by Sorin Alexandrescu, introduction by Sorin Alexandrescu, Florin Ţurcanu and Mihai Zamfir (Bucharest: Humanitas Publishers, 2006), p. 133.
- <sup>16</sup> On the Iron Guard, one of the best available monograph belongs to Armin Heinen, *Die Legion 'Erzengel Michael' in Rumänien: soziale Bewegung und politische Organisation* (Munich, 1986).
- <sup>17</sup> The most relevant articles on this topic have been gathered in Nae Ionescu, *Teologia. Integrala publicisticii religioase* (Sibiu: Deisis Press, 2003); an alternative journal to Crainic's populist magazine *Gândirea* was the short-lived *Predania* (editor-in-chief: Gh. Racoveanu), reprinted in 2001 with a preface by Ioan I. Ică Jr. (Sibiu: Deisis Press, 2001); the best biography of Nae Ionescu is available only in Romanian: D. Mezdrea, *Nae Ionescu. Biografie*, vol. I-IV (Bucharest: Universul Dalsi Publishers, 2002-2005); for the nationalist proclivities of yet another influential disciple of Nae Ionescu, see Mac Linscott Ricketts, *Mircea Eliade: the Romanian Roots 1907-1945* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1988). For a recent study of yet

- another disciple of Nae Ionescu, see Alexandru Popescu, *Petre Țuțea between Sacrifice and Suicide* (Aldershot: Ashgate Publishers, 2004).
- 18 M. Vulcănescu, *Dimensiunea românească a existenței* (Bucharest: Fundația Culturală Română, 1943<sup>1</sup>, 1991<sup>2</sup>).
- 19 From a subjective perspective, see the account provided by M. Vulcănescu, "Revista 'Criterion' – oglindă a realității culturale și sociale," *Opere*, vol. I., "Către ființa spiritualității românești," edited, with notes and introduction by M. Diaconu (Bucharest: Univers Enciclopedic & Editura Fundației Naționale pentru Știință și Artă, 2005), p. 746-749. For an excellent presentation of all the intricacies of this cultural grouping, see Florin Țurcanu, *Mircea Eliade, Le prisonnier de l'histoire*, preface by Jacques Julliard (Paris: Editions La Découverte, 2003), chapter IX (in Romanian translation, Bucharest: Humanitas Publishers, 2003, p. 223-263). See also Matei Călinescu, "The 1927 Generation in Romania," *East European Politics and Societies*, vol. 15 (Fall 2001), no. 3, p. 649-477.
- 20 For an excellent genealogy of the Romanian ethnic ontologies, see S. Antohi, "Romania and the Balkans: From geocultural bovarism to ethnic ontology," *Tr@nsit-Virtuelles Forum*, vol. 21 (2002).
- 21 On this topic, see M. Neamțu, "Re-Visiting Orthodoxy and Nationalism," *Pro Ecclesia*, vol. 15 (2006) no. 2, p. 153-160.
- 22 Ioan Ică Jr. and Gheorghe F. Anghelescu have collected the best bibliography of Dumitru Stăniloae in the posthumous *Festschrift* entitled *Persoană și comuniune* (Sibiu: Diecezana Press, 1993), p. 16-67. The English reader could find the following volumes available in translation: *Theology and the Church*, foreword by John Meyendorff (Crestwood, N.Y.: St. Vladimir's Seminary Press, 1980); *The Experience of God*, vol. I, 1<sup>st</sup> part, foreword by Kallistos Ware (Holy Cross Orthodox Press, 1994); *The World, Creation and Deification*, vol. I, 2<sup>nd</sup> part (Holy Cross Orthodox Press, 2000); *Orthodox Spirituality* (St Tikhon's Seminary Press, 2002). The Community of Sisters of the Love of God (Fairacres, Oxford) published three pamphlets on *Eternity and Time*; *The Victory of the Cross* and on *Prayer and Holiness (The Icon of Man Renewed in God)*. For an excellent introductory study into Stăniloae's dogmatic theology, see A. Louth, "The Orthodox Dogmatic Theology of Dumitru Stăniloae," *Modern Theology*, vol. 13 (1997) no. 2, p. 253-267, with the hackneyed remark at page 259: "it was only with Calvin's *Institutes* that the notion of Christ's threefold office assumed the structural significance with which he invests it." A detailed study of Stăniloae's ecclesiology is available in Ronald C. Robertson, *Contemporary Romanian Orthodox Ecclesiology. The Contribution of Dumitru Stăniloae and Younger Colleagues* (Rome: Pontificia Universitas Gregoriana, 1988), along with Stefan Lupu, *La sinodalità e/o conciliarità espressione dell'unità della catholicità della Chiesa in Dumitru Staniloae (1903-1993)* (Rome: Pontificia Universitas Gregoriana, 1999); and Lucian Turcescu (ed.), *Dumitru Stăniloae: Tradition and Modernity in Theology* (Jassy: Center for Romanian Studies, 2002). For



Stăniloae's theological metaphysics, see Daniel Neeser, "The World: Gift of God and Scene of Humanity's Response: Aspects of the Thought of Father Dumitru Stăniloae," *The Ecclesiastical Review*, vol. 33 (1982), p. 272-282; Maciej Bielawski (OSB), *The Philocalical Vision of the World in the Theology of Dumitru Stăniloae* (Bydgoszy, 1997, translated into Romanian by Ioan Ică Jr: *Părintele Dumitru Stăniloae: o viziune filocalică despre lume*, Sibiu: Deisis Press, 1998); Emil Bartos, *Deification in Eastern Orthodox Theology. An Evaluation and Critique of the Theology of Dumitru Stăniloae* (Carlisle: Paternoster Press, 2000); S. Rogobete, *O ontologie a iubirii. Subiect și realitate personală supremă în gândirea lui Dumitru Stăniloae* (Jassy: Polirom Publishers, 2000); C. Miller, *The Gift of the World: An Introduction to the Theology of Dumitru Stăniloae* (Edinburgh: T&T Clark, 2001), amply reviewed by D. Mănăstireanu in *International Journal for Systematic Theology*, vol. 3 (November 2001) no. 3, pp. 333-340; Jürgen Henkel, *Eros und Ethos. Mensch, gottesdienstliche Gemeinschaft und Nation als Adressaten theologischer Ethik bei Dumitru Stăniloae* (Münster-Hamburg-London: Lit Verlag, 2003). In French, see D. Stăniloae, *Dieu est amour* (Genève: Labor et Fides, 1980); and the fine volume of conversations with Fr Costa de Beauregard, *Ose comprendre que je t'aime* (Paris: Cerf, 1983); and *Le génie de l'Orthodoxie* (Paris: Desclée de Brouwer, 1985); in Italian, one has the short volume D. Stăniloae, *La preghiera di Gesù e lo Spirito Santo. Meditazioni teologiche* (Rome: Editrice Citta Nuova, 1990). In German, see Stăniloae's three-fold systematic work, *Orthodoxe Dogmatik*, transl. by H. Pitters, foreword by J. Moltmann (1984, 1990, 1995). I discussed and extrapolated Stăniloae's views on tradition, Scripture, and the theological language of Orthodoxy in M. Neamțu, "Confesiunea apostolică," *Gramatica Ortodoxiei* (Jassy: Polirom, 2006), ch. 2.

23

For the biography of the Romanian theologian, I rely on M. Păcurariu, *Dicționarul teologilor români* (Bucharest: Editura Enciclopedică, 2002), 455 ff. The English reader can consult the article written by Ioan Ică Jr, "Stăniloae, Dumitru (1903-1993)," in Trevor A. Hart (ed.), *The Dictionary of Historical Theology* (Grand Rapids, Michigan: Pater Noster Press – William B. Eerdmans, 2000), p. 527-531. For a more subjective account, see Lidia Stăniloae, „*Lumina faptei din lumina cuvântului*”: *împreună cu tatăl meu, Dumitru Stăniloae* (Bucharest: Humanitas Publishers, 2000). For the late Stăniloae, see also S. Dumitrescu, *Șapte dimineți cu Părintele Stăniloae* (Bucharest: Anastasia Publishers, 1992<sup>1</sup>, 2003<sup>2</sup>). Insightful but short portraits are available in the following books: Petre Pandrea, *Amintirile mandarinului valah* (Bucharest: Albatros Publishers, 2001), *passim*; Al. Paleologu, *Despre lucrurile cu adevărat importante* (Jassy: Polirom Publishers, 1998<sup>2</sup>), p. 102 ff. M. Lovinescu, *Jurnal 1981-1984* (Bucharest: Humanitas Publishers, 2003), p. 23 (the entry: 10 octombrie 1981); Sanda Stolojan, *Nori peste balcoane* (Bucharest: Humanitas Publishers, 1996), p. 41 ff, and p. 111.



- 24 D. Stăniloae, "Viața și activitatea patriarhului Dositei al Ierusalimului și  
legăturile lui cu țările românești," *Candela*, vol. 40 (1929), p. 208-276.
- 25 With his sensational genius and awareness of historical details, Henry  
Chadwick has described the theological ironies comprised by this historically  
cemented opposition. See H. Chadwick, *East and West: The Making of a Rift  
in the Church. From Apostolic Times until the Council of Florence* (Oxford:  
Oxford University Press, 2003).
- 26 For a philosophical defence of *this* Roman (and Catholic) identity, see R.  
Brague, *Eccentric Culture: a Theory of Western Civilisation*, ET by Samuel  
Lester (South Bend Indiana: St Augustine's Press, 2002).
- 27 D. Stăniloae, "Ortodoxie și catolicism," *Națiune și creștinism* (ed. C. Schifirneț),  
p. 19, and p. 20.
- 28 C. Badilita, "Dumitru Stăniloae, ses affinités et ses idiosyncrasies patristiques,"  
in C. Badilita & Ch. Kannengiesser, *Les Pères de l'Église dans le Monde  
d'aujourd'hui* (Paris-Bucharest: Beauchesne- Curtea Veche Publishers,  
2006), p. 281-310.
- 29 D. Stăniloae, *Viața și învățăturile Sfântului Grigorie Palama* (Bucharest: Scripta  
Publishers, 1993), p. 27 sq.
- 30 Ibidem, p. 30.
- 31 S. Runciman, *The Great Church in Captivity* (Cambridge: Cambridge  
University Press, 1968).
- 32 M. Constantinescu, *Doctori la oameni de seamă. Amintiri, evocări,  
comemorări* (Bucharest: Anastasia, 2000), p. 14. For references to Cioran,  
see D. Stăniloae, *Chipul nemuritor al lui Dumnezeu* (Craiova: Editura  
Mitropoliei, 1988), *passim*.
- 33 E. M. Cioran (1911-1995) was born the son of a priest and went to elementary  
school in Sibiu. Then, as a young student in philosophy, he became  
infatuated with the personality of Nae Ionescu and supported publicly the  
political ideas of the extreme right-wing movement. Exiled to France after  
WWII, he became one of the most important essayists of the 20<sup>th</sup> century.  
Following is a list of his works translated into English: *The Temptation to  
Exist*, ET by Richard Howard (Chicago: Quadrangle Books, 1968); *The New  
Gods*, ET by Richard Howard (Chicago: Quadrangle Books, 1974); *The Fall  
into Time*, ET by Richard Howard (Chicago: Quadrangle Books, 1974); *The  
Trouble With Being Born*, ET by Richard Howard (New York: Viking Press,  
1976); *A Short History of Decay*, ET by Richard Howard (New York: Viking  
Press, 1976); *Drawn and Quartered*, ET by Richard Howard (New York:  
Seaver Books, 1983); *Anathemas and Admirations*, ET by Richard Howard  
(New York: Arcade Publishers, 1991); *On the Heights of Despair*, ET by  
Ilinca Zarifopol-Johnston (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1996); *Tears  
and Saints*, ET by Ilinca Zarifopol-Johnston (Chicago: University of Chicago  
Press, 1996); *History and Utopia*, ET by Richard Howard (Chicago: University  
of Chicago Press, 1998).

- 34 D. Stăniloae, *Națiune și creștinism*, p. 68.
- 35 For this history of this notion in the Romanian literature, see Dionisie Petcu, *Conceptul de etnic* (Bucharest: Editura Științifică și Enciclopedică, 1980); and Adolf Armbruster, *Romanitatea românilor. Istoria unei idei* (Bucharest: Editura Enciclopedică, 1993).
- 36 This is also the argument of Costion Nicolescu, *Teologul în cetate: Părintele Stăniloae și aria politicii* (Bucharest: Editura Christiana, 2003).
- 37 D. Stăniloae, *Iisus Hristos și restaurarea omului* (Sibiu: Diecezana Press, 1943). In 1993, a second edition of this books was reprinted at Craiova (Omniscop Publishers). Unfortunately, this volume is littered with spelling mistakes in Greek and German.
- 38 Summing up more than five thousand pages, Stăniloae's edition of *The Philokalia* includes many more patristic writings than the first Greek edition. Here are the *supplementa* coined by Stăniloae. Vol. I (1946<sup>1</sup>): Evagrius, *On prayer*; Mark the Ascetic, *On Baptism*; Vol. II (1947): Maximus the Confessor, *On the ascetic life*; the *scolia* to *Chapters on love*; *Quaestiones et dubia*; Vol. III (1948): *Quaestiones Ad Thalassium*, instead of *Various chapters*; Vol. IV-V are identical with the Greek version; Vol. VI (1977): *Ethical discourses* 1 and 5 by St Symeon the New Theologian; plus *On paradise* by St Nikitas Stithatos; Vol. VII (1977): Gregory Palamas, *The Triads* II. 2-3; *On the godly and deifying participation*; Vol. VIII (1979): A study by D. Stăniloae on the history of Romanian hesychasm, and some texts on prayer written by various Romanian saints (Vasile from Poiana Mărului, Calinic from Cernica, and Iosif from Văratec, from the 19<sup>th</sup> century); Vol. IX (1980): *The Ladder* of St John Climacus, Abba Dorotheos, *Instructions* i-xiv; *Letters* 1-2; Vol. X (1981): St Isaac the Syrian, *The Ascetic Writings* (Greek version); Vol. XI (1990): The writings of Abba Barsanuphius and John; Vol. XII (1991): *The Writings of Abba Isaiah the Solitary*. In a letter dating from 22 June 1985, Emil Cioran commented on Stăniloae's greatest achievements: „V-am spus la Paris, însă țin să repet că *Filocalia* este un monument capital în istoria limbii noastre. În același timp, ce lecție de profunzime pentru un neam nefericit și ușurelnic! Din toate punctele de vedere, o astfel de operă este chemată să joace un rol considerabil. Sunt nespuse de mândru că vă cunosc de mai mult de o jumătate de veac.” See E. Cioran, *România Liberă*, vol. 49 (25-26 mai, 1991), no. 406, p. 5.
- 39 See André Scrima, “L'avénement philocalique dans l'orthodoxie roumaine,” *Istina*, vol. V (1958), p. 295-328; p. 443-374.
- 40 For some insights into the yet not fully documented, but tragic episode of the history of the Romanian Orthodox Church, see André Scrima, *Timpul Rugului Aprins. Maestrul spiritual în tradiția răsăriteană*, foreword by A. Pleșu (Bucharest: Hu-manitas Publishers, 1996), in Italian translation: André Scrima, *Padre spirituale* (Bose: Edizioni Qiqajon, 2001); Antonie Plămădeală, *Rugul Aprins* (Sibiu: Editura Mitropoliei Ardealului, 2002); M. Rădulescu, *Rugul*

- Aprins. Arestare. Condamnare. Achitare* (Bucharest: Agapis Publishers, 2003), with caution.
- 41 Cf. M. Bielawski, "Dumitru Stăniloae and his *Philokalia*," in L. Turcescu (ed.), *Tradition and modernity*, p. 52. A moving testimony about the outstanding behaviour of Fr Dumitru Stănilae during his prison years can be found in the exquisite literary portraits drawn by Petre Pandrea, *Reeducarea de la Aiud* (Bucharest: Vremea Publishers, 2004), p. 140-146.
- 42 N. Chițescu, I. Todoran, I. Petreuța, D. Stăniloae (eds.), *Teologia Dogmatică și Simbolică*, 2 vol. (Bucharest: Editura Institutului Biblic, 1958).
- 43 I follow here the data provided by D. Enache, "Arestarea și condamnarea lui Dumitru Stăniloae," *Rost. Manifest românesc* (2003), no. 9.
- 44 A thorough exposition of the cultural and historical shock brought about by the early communist occupation is provided by Dennis Deletant, *Communist Terror in Romania: Gheorghe Gheorghiu-Dej and the Police State (1948-1965)* (New York: St Martin's Press, 1999). I did not have access to A. Johansens, *Theological Study in the Rumanian Orthodox Church under Communist Rule* (London, 1961).
- 45 For an insight into penitentiary life in Aiud (Romania) during the hard times of the Soviet occupation, and following, see Alexandru Popescu, *Petre Țuțea. Between Suicide and Sacrifice* (Aldershot, Hampshire: Ashgate Publishing House, 2004), p. 61-90.
- 46 On this interesting shift, see K. Verdery, *National Ideology under Socialism: Identity and Cultural Politics in Ceaușescu's Romania* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1991). A clear depiction of the Ceaușescu's tyrannical regime is offered by D. Deletant, *Ceaușescu and the Securitate: Coercion and Dissent in Romania 1965-1989* (Portland, Or.: Book News, Inc., 1994), along with Vladimir Tismăneanu, *Stalinism for All Seasons: A Political History of Romanian Communism* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2003), who emphasises how Ceaușescu's era cannot be understood except if we take into consideration the Stalinist imprint of the first version of Romanian Communism. See also the review of Robert Levy, *East European Politics and Societies*, vol. 18 (2004) no. 4, p. 697-701.
- 47 D. Stăniloae, "Întoarcerea fraților," *Glasul Bisericii*, vol. VII (1948) no. 10, p. 64-68; "Restaurarea unității Bisericii străbune," *Glasul Bisericii*, vol. VIII (1949), no. 5-6, p. 15-26; "Reîntregirea Bisericii strămoșești," *Glasul Bisericii*, vol. IX (1950) no. 6, p. 27-33. After he left the prison, Stăniloae wrote the highly polemical tract on "Uniatismul: opera unei întreite silnicii," *Biserica Ortodoxă Română*, vol. 87 (1969), p. 355-390. It should be noted here the insistent reference to "the Church of our ancestors" (or "the Church of our forefathers"), instead of, simply, the more adequate theological designation in use ("The Orthodox Patriarchate of Church"). Like in the Communist Russia or China, "the popular Church" was a phrase coined by the party officials, who could easily dictated the rules of speech for the Christian

Orthodox hierarchs. Until nowadays, the confusion between the Church, the Army and the State, seen as legitimate means to rule a Christian nation, persists. See the study of Ana Daniela Budică, "Imaginea despre sine a Bisericii Ortodoxe Române și revista Biserica Ortodoxă Română," in Mirela L. Murgescu and Simeon Călția (ed.), *Exerciții întru cunoaștere. Societate și mentalități în noi abordări istoriografice* (Jassy: Do Minor Publishers, 2003), p. 231-264. For an official example of ethno-theological discourse, see the sermons of Patriarch Teoctist: "Cuvântări rostite de PFPF Teoctist marcând evenimente importante din viața noastră bisericească," *Biserica Ortodoxă Română*, no. 1-6 (1997), p. 70. For an excellent overview of contemporary Church discourse, see Iuliana Conovici, "L'Orthodoxie roumaine et la modernité. Le discours officiel de l'Eglise Orthodoxe Roumaine après 1989," *Studia politica*, vol. IV (2004) no. 2, p. 389-420.

48 In 1948, the official number of Greek-Catholic Christians in Romania was around 1, 560 000 souls.

49 The circulation of Orthodox ecclesiastical newspapers in Communist Romania reached the astonishing total of 60,000 copies. cf. G.A. Maloney, *A History of Orthodox Theology since 1453* (Belmond Mass.: Nordland, 1976), p. 288.

50 D. Stăniloae, *Uniatismul din Transilvania: încercare de dezmembrare a poporului român* (Bucharest : Editura Institutului Biblic, 1973). Some of the articles mentioned above were included in this book. Delia Despina Dumitrica, 'Uniate vs. Orthodox: What Lays behind the Conflict? A Conflict Analysis,' *Journal for the Study of Religions and Ideologies*, vol. 3 (Winter 2002), p. 99-114.

51 On this important figure of the 18<sup>th</sup> century Romanian intelligentsia, D. Stăniloae wrote with respect and resignation in his study "Lupta și drama lui Inochentie Micu Clain," *Biserica Ortodoxă Română* 86 (1968), p. 1137-1185. The best monograph on Șaguna remains K. Hitchins, *Orthodoxy and Nationalism: Andrei Șaguna and the Rumanians of Transylvania, 1856-1873* (Cambridge Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1977).

53 Nicolas Stebbing, *Bearers of the Spirit: Spiritual Fatherhood in Romanian Orthodoxy* (Kalamazoo, Cistercian Publications, 2003). Archimandrite Teofil Părăianu (b. 1928) once said that Fr Stăniloae had told him that he considered the publication of "The Philokalia" to be his greatest achievement (oral report).

54 Elder Cleopa of Romania, *The Truth of Our Faith: A Discourse from Holy Scripture on the Teachings of True Christianity* (Greece: Uncut Mountain Press, 2000); for a hagiographical piece on Fr Cleopa, see Ioanichie Bălan, *Shepherd of Souls, Elder Cleopa the New Hesychast of Romania* (Platina, Alaska: St Herman Brotherhood Press, 2000).

55 For an impressionistic description of Fr Paisie's personality, see H.-R. Patapievic, *Flying against the Arrow: an Intellectual in Ceausescu's Romania*, ET by M. Adăscăliței (Budapest: Central European University, 2003), p. 106-118.

- <sup>56</sup> Ioanichie Bălan, *Convorbiri duhovnicești*, vol. 2 (Roman: Editura Episcopiei Romanului, 1988).
- <sup>57</sup> J. Moltmann, "Gleitwort," in D. Stăniloae, *Orthodoxe Dogmatik* (Zurich, Einsiedeln, Köln: Benzinger Verlag; Gütersloh: Güthersloher Verlagshaus Gerd Mohn, 1985), p. 10: "Der Verfasser ist im Westen noch within unbekannt, er ist aber der einflussreichste und kreativste orthodoxe Theologe der Gegenwart."
- <sup>58</sup> Lidia Stăniloae, *op. cit.*, passim.
- <sup>59</sup> D. Stăniloae, *Spiritualitate și comuniune în Liturgia Ortodoxă* (Craiova: Editura Mitropoliei, 1986).
- <sup>60</sup> See the interviews carried out by Lidia Vianu, *Censorship in Romania* (Budapest: Central European University Press, 1998).
- <sup>61</sup> There are some important books, which, on a personal note, reflect the religious persecution perpetrated by the Communist authorities in Romania. See, for example, Nicolae Steinhardt, *Journal de la félicité*, French translation by Marily Le Nir, preface by Olivier Clement (Paris: Arcanters, 1999); for the Italian version, see N. Steinhardt, *Diario della felicità*, Italian translation by Gabriella Bertini Carageani (Bologna: EDB, 1996). Of great importance remains also the witness of R. Wurmbrand, *In God's Underground* (Living Sacrifice Book Co.: 1993); *Tortured for Christ* (Living Sacrifice Book Co.: 1998); *Alone With God: God and Suffering: New Sermons from Solitary Confinement* (Living Sacrifice Book Co.: 1999). For the Church (in particular, Catholic) resistance in Eastern Europe, see George Weigel, *The Final Revolution: The Resistance Church and the Collapse of Communism* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1992). See also the vibrant recollections of the archimandrite Roman Braga, *Trepte duhovnicești* (Alba-Iulia: Editura Arhiepiscopiei, 1998).
- <sup>62</sup> St. Augustine, *Confessions* 3.6.11 ("more inward than my most inward").
- <sup>63</sup> This history of the intellectual life in Romania during the 1980s still needs to be written. Glimpses of it can be found in the large number of diaries, interviews, essays or chronicles, which emerged in the wake of the "Revolution" (December 1989). Notwithstanding, these personal testimonies would deserve a systematic exposition and subsequent interpretation.
- <sup>64</sup> Andrei Pleșu, "Intellectual Life under Dictatorship," *Representations*, vol. 49 (Winter 1995), p. 61-71, here p. 69.
- <sup>65</sup> Cf. S. Antohi, "Commuting to Castalia: Noica's 'School', Culture and Power in Communist Romania," in G. Liiceanu, *The Paltinis Diary: A Paideic Model in Humanist Culture*, ET by James Christian Brown, (Budapest: Central European University, 2002), p. xix.
- <sup>66</sup> Paul Caravia, *Biserica întemnițată: România, 1944-1989* (Bucharest: Institutul National pentru Studiul Totalitarismului, 1998).
- <sup>67</sup> On the intrinsic theological ambiguities that pertain to this issue, as it is made clear in Aristotle Papanikolaou, "Byzantium, Orthodoxy, and

Democracy," *Journal of the American Academy of Religion*, vol. 71 (March 2003), no. 1, pp. 75-98, where the opposed positions of Vigen Guroian and Stanley Harakas are discussed. See also Stanley Harakas, "Orthodox Church-State Theory and American Democracy," *Greek Orthodox Theological Review*, vol. 21 (1976), p. 399-421; and Vigen Guroian, *Ethics after Christendom: Toward and Ecclesial Christian Ethic* (Grand Rapids: Wm. B. Eerdmans, 1994). A more substantial historical dossier is to be found in Pedro Ramet (ed.), *Eastern Christianity in Politics in the Twentieth Century* (Durham: Duke University Press, 1987).

68 M. Heidegger, *The Question concerning Technology and other essays*, ET by W. Lovitt (New York: Harper and Row, 1977).

69 cf. D. Stăniloae, *Reflecții despre spiritualitatea poporului român* [1992<sup>1</sup>] (Bucharest: Editura Elion, 2001), 31-32.

70 Cf. S. Dumitrescu, *op. cit.*, 34.

71 For time in the archaic ontology of the Romanian peasant, see M. Eliade, *Zalmoxis: The Vanishing God: Comparative Studies in the Religions and Folklore of Dacia and Eastern Europe* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1972); on how these stable rhythms of life have been disturbed by the aberrant economical policies of communism, see P. Ronnas, "Turning the Romanian Peasant into a New Socialist Man: An Assessment of the Rural Development Policy in Romania," *Soviet Studies*, vol. 41 (1989), no. 4, p. 543-559. Horia Bernea (1938-2001), painter and curator, has offered in the galleries of of the famous "Museum of the Romanian Peasant" from Bucharest ([www.mtr.ro](http://www.mtr.ro)). This is an impressive reconstruction of the symbolic world of the traditional Romanians taken directly from the countryside.

72 B. Ștefănescu, "Dimensiunea rituală a structurării comunitare în lumea rurală transilvăneană la începutul epocii moderne," in Nicolae Bocșan, Ovidiu Ghitta, Doru Radosav (eds.), *Tentația istoriei. În memoria profesorului Pompiliu Eliade* (Cluj-Napoca: Presa Universitară Clujeană, 2003), p. 83-118.

73 This practice would go back to the practices of the early monks of the Egyptian desert, who used the sign of the Cross in order to chase out the evil spirits. See Athanasius the Great, *Vita Antonii* 74-75; and in the *Apophthegmata Patrum* (collectio alphabetica), see Abba Ammonas 8, Abba Poemen 8, etc.

74 Stăniloae's description of the life of the Christian peasant in an Orthodox country could be paralleled with a similar testimony given by St Silouan the Athonite (†1938). See, Archimandrite Sophrony, *Saint Silouan* (Essex: Stavropegic Monastery of Saint John the Baptist, 1991), p. 12.

75 M. Eliade, "Destinul culturii românești" (1953), *Împotriva deznădejdiei* (Bucharest: Humanitas Publishers, 1992), p. 173. A former monk, the Romanian poet T. Arghezi was of a wholly different opinion, when he claimed that "not a single fairy tale or a chant has ever had contacts with the Orthodox ethos," *Kalende*, vol. I (2 December 1928), no. 2, p. 27-28 (*apud*. Zigu Ornea, *Anii treizeci*, p. 105).

- 76 D. Stăniloae, *Ortodoxie și Româanism* (Sibiu: Diecezana Publishers, 1938), p. 179-235.
- 77 In his startling essay *Minuni și false minuni* [1940] (Bucharest: Anastasia Publishers, 1993<sup>2</sup>), p. 177-229, M. Urzică provided a sharp theological critique of the “Petrache Lupu Movement.” Along the lines of this early critique, one should read the cautious remarks of Archimandrite Ilie Cleopa, *Despre vise și vedenii* [1962<sup>1</sup>] (Bacău: Bunavestire Publishers, 1994<sup>2</sup>). See also the historical account of F. Müller, “Maglavit – proiecții social-politice,” in Nicolae Bocșan, Ovidiu Ghitta, Doru Radosav (eds.), *Tentația istoriei. În memoria profesorului Pompiliu Eliade* (Cluj-Napoca: Presa Universitară Clujeană, 2003), p. 287-304.
- 78 See also Ion Agârbiceanu, *Preotul și familia preotească. Rostul lor etnic în satul românesc*, Ed. Subsecției Eugenice și Biopolitice a Astei și a Institutului de Igienă și Biopolitică al Universității Cluj-Sibiu, Sibiu, 1942.
- 79 Christopher R. Seitz, *Word Without End* (Grand Rapids, Mich.: Eerdmans, 1998).
- 80 Fred Davis, *Yearning for Yesterday: a Sociology of Nostalgia* (New York: Free Press, 1979).
- 81 D. Radosav, *Sentimentul religios la români. O perspectivă istorică* (sec. XVII-XX) (Cluj-Napoca: Editura Dacia, 1997), *passim*.
- 82 M. Douglas, *Natural Symbols* (London, 1970).
- 83 A. Șaguna, *Corespondență*, vol. I (Cluj-Napoca: Presa Universitară Clujeană, 2005).
- 84 José Casanova, *Public Religion in the Modern World* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1994), with an analysis of the North-American transformation of secularism and public religion; Friedrich W. Graf, *Die Wiederkehr der Götter. Religion in der modernen Kultur* (Munich, 2004).
- 85 For an anthropological study of the Transylvanian ethos in the 19<sup>th</sup> century, see Sorin Mitu, *National Identity of Romanians from Transylvania* (Budapest: Central European University Press, 2001).
- 86 For a better understanding of this point, see the well-balanced considerations of the Romanian historian Sorin Mitu, *Transilvania mea* (Jassy: Polirom Publishers, 2006).
- 87 Ștefan Lemny, *Originea și cristalizarea ideii de patrie în cultura română* (Bucharest: Minerva, 1986).
- 88 The actions carried out against the contemplative monasteries (both Orthodox and Roman-Catholic) by General Bukow are an almost constant reference in Stăniloae’s polemical prose (which forgets to mention he sufferings to which the Roman-Catholic faithful had been subjected during the long periods of tyranny).
- 89 The voice of another Transylvanian was particularly acute in the 1930s. See Emil Cioran, *Schimbarea la față a României* (Bucharest: Humanitas Publishers, 1990), *passim*.



- 90 Dumitru Stăniloae, "Autoritatea Bisericii," p. 207, quoted by Robertson, *op. cit.*, p. 26. I use here Robertson's translation.
- 91 Dumitru Stăniloae, "Temeiurile teologice ale ierarhiei," p. 171, *apud* Robertson, *op. cit.*, p. 29.
- 92 Stăniloae, *Ortodoxie și Românism*, p. 13.
- 93 Grégoire Papathomas, "La relation d'opposition entre Église établie localement et diaspora ecclésiale," *Contacts* (Paris), vol. 57, no. 2 (2005), p. 96-132.
- 94 D. Stăniloae, "Rolul Ortodoxiei în formarea și păstrarea ființei poporului român și a unității naționale," *Ortodoxia*, vol. XXX (1978) no. 4, p. 584-603.
- 95 In this, Stăniloae follows the rhetoric legitimised by professional historians, such as G. I. Brătianu, *O enigmă și un miracol: poporul român* [1942<sup>1</sup>] (Bucharest: Editura Enciclopedică, 1988). The phrase in the title belongs to Ferdinand Lot ('une énigme et un miracle historique'). Andrei Brezianu once noticed that the Romanian historiography lacks a contribution similar to F. Braudel's monograph on *L'identité de la France*. See A. Brezianu, "Ieri și azi. Schiță de tablou moral pentru o societate în tranziție," *Ideii în dialog* vol. 10 (iulie 2005), p. 13.
- 96 This blunt statement belongs to Fr Ioan Ioan from the "Monastery of the Nativity of the Mother of God" (Recea, Târgu Mureș), interviewed by Victoria Clark, *Why the Angels Fall. A Portrait of Orthodox Europe from Byzantium to Kosovo?* (Oxford: MacMillan, 2000), p. 211: "we are Christians grown, like grass which has never been cut." This was the view shared by the members of *Gândirea* movement, and it is currently still endorsed by the Church historian Mircea Păcurariu in his first volume of the *Istoria Bisericii Ortodoxe Române* (București: Editura Institutului Biblic, 1980-1981), 3 vols.
- 97 H.-I. Marrou, "La patrie de Jean Cassien," *Orientalia Christiana Periodica*, vol. XIII (1947), pp 588-96.
- 98 This is a huge topic, but I refer the reader to A. Madgearu, *Rolul creștinismului în formarea poporului român* (Bucharest: All, 2001); for an English equivalent, see Alexandru Madgearu, "The Spreading of the Christianity in the Rural Areas of Post-Roman Dacia (4th-7th centuries)," *Archaeus*, vol. VIII (2004), no. 1-4, pp. 41-59. On Christianity as 'folk religion,' see the challenging studies of N. Zugravu, *Geneza creștinismului popular al românilor* (Bucharest: 1997).
- 99 P.P. Panaitescu, "'Perioada slavonă' la români și ruperea de cultura apusului [1944]," *Interpretări românești. Studii de istorie economică și socială*, 2<sup>nd</sup> edition by Ștefan S. Gorovei and Maria Magdalena Székely (Bucharest: Editura Enciclopedică, 1994).
- 100 For one famous example of Shamanic practices discovered by Christian missionaries in the Carpathian Mountains during the 17th century, see V. A. Ureche, *Codex Bandinus: Memoriu asupra scrierii lui Bandinus dela 1646* (Bucharest: Analele Academiei Române, 1895), p. 154, commented by Mircea Eliade, *Zalmoxis: The Vanishing God*, ET by W. R. Trask (Chicago:



The University of Chicago Press, 1972), p. 191-194, and Moshe Idel, *Ascensions on High in Jewish Mysticism. Pillars, Lines, Ladders* (Budapest, New York: Central European University Press, 2005), p. 148-150.

<sup>101</sup> On this wide-ranging issues, see the studies of Emanuel Turczynski, *Konfession und Nation: zur Frühgeschichte der serbischen und rumänischen Nationsbildung* (Düsseldorf: Pädagogischer Verlag Schwann, 1976); Krista Zach, *Orthodoxe Kirche und rumänisches Volksbewusstsein im 15. bis 18. Jahrhundert* (Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz Verlag, 1977); Janice Broun, *Conscience and Captivity: Religion in Eastern Europe* (Washington DC: Ethics and Public Policy Center, 1988); P. Kitromilides, "'Imagined Communities' and the Origins of the National Question in the Balkans," *European History Quarterly*, vol. 19 (1989) no. 2, p. 149-192; V. Makrides, "Aspects of Greek Orthodox Fundamentalism," *Orthodoxes Forum*, vol.5 (1991), p. 49-72; T. Lipowatz, "Orthodox Christianity and Nationalism: Two Aspects of Modern Greek Political Culture," *Greek Political Science Review* (1993), vol. 2, p. 31-47; Paschalis Kitromilides, *Enlightenment, Nationalism, Orthodoxy: Studies in the Culture and Political Thought of South-eastern Europe* (Aldershot, 1994); Peter F. Sugar, *East European Nationalism. Politics of Religion* (Ashgate Variorum, 1994); V. Georgiadou, "Greek Orthodoxy and the Politics of Nationalism," *International Journal of Politics, Culture and Society* vol. 9 (1995), no. 2, p. 295-316; John S. Micgiel, ed. *State and Nation Building in East Central Europe: Contemporary Perspectives* (New York: Institute on East Central Europe, Columbia University, 1996); Ina Merdjanova, *The Postcommunist Palimpsest: Religion, Nationalism, and Civil Society in Eastern Europe* (Edwin Mellen Press, 2001); and Vjekoslav Perica, *Balkan Idols. Religion and Nationalism in Yugoslav States* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2002), especially p. 2-16.

<sup>102</sup> Among the titles available in English, see especially the following works by Keith Hitchins, *The Rumanian National Movement in Transylvania 1780-1849* (Cambridge Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1969); *Studies on Romanian National Consciousness* (Pelham N.Y., etc.: Nagard Publishers, 1983); *A Nation Affirmed. The Romanian National Movement in Transylvania 1860-1914* (Bucharest: Enciclopedica Publishers, 1999); *Rumania, 1866-1947* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1994); *The Romanians, 1774-1866* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1996). For the earlier period, see Ovidiu Pecican, "Ethnicity and Faith in the Romanian-Slavic Literature of the 14th to the 15th Centuries," in Maria Crăciun and Ovidiu Ghitta (eds.), *Church and Society* (Cluj-Napoca: EFES, 1998). For an excellent synthesis for the period between the 17<sup>th</sup> and the 19<sup>th</sup> century, see Katherine Verdery, "Moments in the Rise of the Discourse on National Identity. I. Seventeenth through Nineteenth Centuries," in I. Agrigoroaiei, Gh. Buzatu, and V. Cristian (eds.), *Românii în istoria universală*, vol. III (Jassy: Universitatea "Al. I. Cuza" Press, 1988), p. 25-92.





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*A JEWISH STATE THEATER*  
IN THE PEOPLE'S REPUBLIC OF ROMANIA?  
NOTES ON A TRANSITIONAL BECOMING  
(1944-1953)

**Outline:** This article<sup>1</sup> argues against viewing the *Jewish State Theater* (TES) in Bucharest as a mere mouthpiece of the political regime ascending to power after 1944. In her book *Die jüdische Kultur im Schatten der Diktaturen: Israil Bercovici—Leben und Werk* (2002) Elvira Grözinger writes:

“Das Jüdische Staatstheater in Rumänien, als Schöpfung der Diktatur und von dieser unterhalten, mußte ebenfalls ihr Sprachrohr sein. [...] Die ehemaligen antifaschistisch engagierten jüdischen Künstler konnten hier an die Barascheum-Zeit anknüpfen und dem ‘volksdemokratischen’ Regime auf künstlerische Art und gemäß dem Geist der Zeit Schützenhilfe bieten. [...] Die künstlerischen oder ästhetischen Aspekte der Theaterarbeit wurden damals allesamt der Ideologie geopfert.”<sup>2</sup>

In his monograph *Evreii din România în perioada comunistă 1944-1965* (*The Jews in Romania during Communist Times 1944-1965*) (2004), Liviu Rotman states that “[...] the [Romanian] state took it upon itself to establish two Jewish theaters [...]”<sup>3</sup> and allows for the possibility that these institutions might have been more than mere propagandistic flag bearer only for the 1960s or 1970s.<sup>4</sup> I consider both these positions insufficiently nuanced.

Considered in the larger context of the development of Yiddish theater on Romanian soil, a post-Second World War existence is not surprising, as it was a continuation of Abraham Goldfaden’s endeavor to bring such a theater to life. The milestone of the 1940s was the gradual fusion of all Yiddish theaters into the *IKUF-Theater* by March 1948 rather than the

transformation of the *IKUF-Theater* into the *TES* by August of the same year. The latter was merely a bureaucratic formality, while the former marked a defining moment, on the one hand abusive—it dissolved private enterprises and tainted to some extent the artistic discourse—and on the other redemptive—it provided financial stability and afforded the perpetuation of Yiddish theatrical culture. Nonetheless, as my sources attest, members of the ensemble knew how to subvert the theater's official role from the beginning: actors remained true to an art of performing untouched by ideological demands and directors staged by and large classics of either Yiddish or world literature.

For my research, I consulted documents in the *Romanian National Archives (Arhivele Statului Român)* about the Jewish theater in Romania from 1940 until 1956, the meetings of the Cultural Commission of the *Jewish Democratic Committee (Comitetul Democrat Evreesc)* from 1945 until 1953, and various meetings of the Central Committee of the Communist Party<sup>5</sup> pertaining to either the "Jewish problem" or minority issues in general. I supplemented the information on Jewish theater with materials from the *Archives of the Center for the Study of the History of Jews in Romania (Arhiva Centrului pentru Studiarea Istoriei Evreilor din România)*. I examined press reviews in a variety of newspapers and conducted interviews with people who knew the theater at that time.

Structurally, my article consists of two parts: the first gives a brief overview of the historical context, paying attention to the life of the Jewish community; and the second details and critically analyzes the transition period between independent theater troupes in the aftermath of August 23, 1944, the nationalization of 1948, and the political changes of the early 1950s. In order to substantiate my claim, I explore four illustrative performances, one by the *IKUF-Theater* and the rest by the *TES*. Each of them mirrored the situation of the Yiddish theater and its self-understanding at the time when it was presented to the public.

Through the critical interrogation of the *TES'* creation I want to contribute to the larger discourse about Romania's need to undergo its own *Vergangenheitsbewältigung* (coming to terms with the past) with respect to both its nationalist and socialist past. Yet true and fruitful questioning of the past can only depart from a sincere *Vergangenheitsbewärtung* (evaluation of the past).<sup>6</sup> In the case of the Romanian-Jewish coexistence this requires an additional step, namely that of a *Vergangenheitsannahme* (acceptance of the past), which can

only come about through knowledge of that past. I regard the following commentary as part of my own learning process in the field.

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When Abraham Goldfaden created a Yiddish theater in 1876, it was an act of illumination in the tradition of the *Haskalah*, the Jewish Enlightenment. Performances were in Yiddish and they depicted realities of East-European Jewish life. Goldfaden being himself a *maskil*,<sup>7</sup> the subsequent confession in his autobiography should be taken as a credo: "Since I have come to have a stage, I want it to be a stage for you [i.e. Jewish audiences]. Come to me and look at the paintings I am making of you; look at them like you look into a mirror reflecting your good and bad habits. You will draw wisdom from them so as to straighten your own mistakes in your family life; you will learn how to behave towards each other and towards those next to which you have to live at all times."<sup>8</sup> Yiddish theater persisted in Romanian in this vein until 1940.

At that moment, aspirations to perform in Yiddish were countered by the determination of Romanian authorities to exclude both Yiddish artistic endeavors and Jewish performers from Romanian stages and the public sphere in general.<sup>9</sup> The state admitted the existence of *one* Romanian language Jewish theater, i.e. a theater where only Jews could perform and where the racial laws of 1940 decided who was Jewish.<sup>10</sup> Similar to the German *Nuremberg Laws* (September 15, 1935), *Decree-Law No. 2650* from August 8, 1940, claimed racial justification and used religious criteria as its basis.<sup>11</sup> Jewish artists responded to this constraint by establishing a theater that complied with all the demands of the Romanian authorities: *Barașeum Hall—Jewish Theater (Sala Barașeum—Teatru Evreesc)*. The enterprise was a means to survive and, with few exceptions, performed vaudevilles. The "tragedy" was that actors of Jewish descent, like Leny Caler, Alexandru Finți, Alexandru Ronea, N. Stroe,<sup>12</sup> who had no sensitivity for Yiddish theater even if it was performed in Romanian, yet had no choice but to comply with the new regulations if they wanted to perform at all.<sup>13</sup>

After August 23, 1944, several groups of actors wanted to bring back the tradition of authentic Yiddish theater along the lines of what they had known to be its acme: the *Vilna Troupe*. This return was the basis for post-Second World War Yiddish theater in Romania, which combined

the artistic drive of talented performers with the enthusiasm of eager audiences. As they progressed towards full domination of the Romanian public sphere in its political and cultural dimension, the Communists understood how to instrumentalize this phenomenon. The strategy was to favor the *Idisher Kultur Farband (IKUF)*—which itself came from the left and embraced certain values similar to those of the ascending ideologues<sup>14</sup>—over other existing Jewish cultural organizations. A statement by the *IKUF-Theater's* director, Iacob Mansdorf, in an interview from July 1945 signaled the major problem arising from this strategy: he had to go outside Bucharest and look for potential actors.<sup>15</sup> The stars of the pre-war Yiddish stages who were in Bucharest refused to be associated with this theater, as did all other centers of Jewish culture. This became apparent in another interview on January 5, 1946, where Mansdorf deplored the general reticence vis-à-vis the *IKUF-Theater*.<sup>16</sup> Yet, by March 1948 whoever wanted to perform Yiddish theater had to join the *IKUF-Theater*, which by then already received state subsidizes. Its transformation into a state institution became a matter of bureaucracy and cosmetics.

At this level, the *Jewish State Theater* was the result of an act of coercion, because it forced everyone interested in Yiddish theater under one roof. The enlisting of famous actors of the Yiddish stage—Sevilla Pastor, Dina König, Seidy Gluck, Iudith Kronenfeld, Moris Siegler, Marcu Glückman, Benno Popliker, Mauricius Sekler—gave it the necessary touch of glamour and allowed for its fall back on a pre-war tradition. A mixture of good old-timers and ideologized youngsters characterized the *TES* during the first phase of its existence. The dichotomy was visible in many reviews of the time: they praised the older generation for its skills but also criticized it for its formalism, and they critiqued the young for their lack of experience but foresaw bright futures for them as they were raised in the “healthy tradition” of social realism.

The establishment of the *TES* was also a continuation in the Enlightenment project initiated by Goldfaden. Although taken under the premises of an agenda, its creation fulfilled the major desideratum of the founding triumvirate of the Yiddish theater—Abraham Goldfaden, Iacob Gordin, and Iacob Sternberg—in that it provided Yiddish-language artists with a permanent stage and a venue to keep alive artistic practices with deep roots in Eastern Europe. While the claim cannot be generalized to include the *TES'* existence throughout the socialist era and even less so until the present day, for the time under scrutiny, the ideologizing and indoctrinating tendencies of the socialist regime or its apparently



minority-friendly policies cannot solely account for the *TES'* initial life. Yiddish and an interest in it did not *reappear* after 1944; it had never *disappeared* among those thinking, speaking, and feeling Yiddish. One cannot even claim that Yiddish made its way back into the public space under the tutelage of the Communists. As I show, the initiative to reopen Yiddish theaters after August 23, 1944, belonged to artists loyal to this form of art and not to political bodies. The Communists instrumentalized and appropriated an existing enthusiasm for and commitment to Yiddish theater.

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After the Shoah, Jewish life in Romania unfolded under the fear of a possible recurrence of the type of public discourse that had marked this community's life during the years of Ion Antonescu's regime. The population felt insecure and skeptical about its own position and future in Romania.<sup>17</sup> These fears, however, were paralleled by hopes, the years 1944-1947 being a period of transition during which the various ideological and political trends that had characterized the Jewish community before the war<sup>18</sup> were revived. Overall, upon establishing their new order Communists had first to annihilate the re-born bodies of a once fervent civil society. In the case of the Jewish community, defenders of civil rights were Wilhelm Fielderman from the assimilated *Union of Romanian Jews* (*Uniunea Evreilor Români*), Abraham Leib Zissu representing Zionist interests, and Chief Rabbi Alexandru Șafran.<sup>19</sup> The *Federation of the Unions of Jewish Communities* (*Federația Uniunilor de Comunități*) was reinstated in October 1944<sup>20</sup> and its membership mirrored the structure of the Romanian post-Antonescu government: Social Democrats, Communists, Liberals, National-Peasants, and members of typical Jewish organizations (*Union of Romanian Jews*, *Zionist Jewish Party*, and *Zionist Executive*).<sup>21</sup>

Between 1944 and 1948, a slow and partial reintegration of the Jewish population into the socio-economic and cultural discourse of the time took place.<sup>22</sup> Still, xenophobic allusions in the political discourse of the historical parties estranged the Jewish population from them and pushed even those members without left-leaning sympathies towards the Communists, which—at that time—were very careful with their slogans.<sup>23</sup> Moreover, the Communists understood how to profit from the political mistakes of their adversaries and made the most out of the latter's blunders, by pleading for unity in general and, specifically, within ethnic

communities.<sup>24</sup> Thus, the Communists, advocating a new form of assimilation, and the Zionists, with their drive for Palestine, represented the main trends within the Jewish community.

In order to implement their ideas, the Communists within the *Federation*, the so-called *jewsekim*, formed the *Jewish Democratic Committee* (*Comitetul Democrat Evreeesc/ CDE*) on June 7, 1945, at the directives of the Communist Party.<sup>25</sup> Until 1948, the *CDE* tried to attract members of other political bodies and succeeded in incorporating several left-wing organizations—*The Zionist Bloc of Working Palestine* (*Blocul Sionist al Palestinei Muncitoare*), *Ichud*, *Mishmar*, and *IKUF*. Other smaller Zionist groups were willing to negotiate with them; some members of the *Union of Romanian Jews* who rejected Wilhelm Fielderman's points of view as well as the Social Democrats also joined in.<sup>26</sup> In 1948 the *Federation's* name changed to *Romania's Federation of Jewish Communities* (*Federația Comunităților Evreiești din România*) and the representatives of the Communists, Max Hermann Maxy, Paul Iscovici, and Bernard Lebli, who had occupied the key positions already by October 1945, came to control it.<sup>27</sup> Within the new Federation, the *CDE* maintained its attributes of a political vanguard for the Jewish masses and, at a cultural level, its tasks included promoting Yiddish culture and Yiddish as a language over Hebrew, Yiddish being seen as a "progressive language."

In December 1949, Romania declared Zionism a fascist ideology<sup>28</sup> after it had forced all Zionist organizations in the country to self-dissolve.<sup>29</sup> At the same time all Jewish founded organizations in the country—the *Joint Distribution Committee* (*Joint*), the *World Union for the Protection of the Health of Jews* (*OSE*) and *Organization for Rehabilitation through Training* (*ORT*)—were banned, as all community schools, hospitals, and social institutions were being nationalized.<sup>30</sup> These measures targeted the dissolution of the autonomy of the Jewish community. Whether different by origins, religious practices, or political credos, Jews were all coerced into one body, the "New Community", which lacked both organizational and financial autonomy. Concomitantly, official propaganda became caustically anti-Israeli and anti-*aliyah*,<sup>31</sup> even during times when Romanian authorities encouraged and facilitated emigration such as between 1950 and 1951.<sup>32</sup> The discourse was the opposite in practice from theory, a fact admitted and deplored retroactively also by H. Leibovici-Șerban in his intervention at the meeting between members of the Communist Party and the *CDE* on March 16, 1953, when the *CDE* was officially dissolved.<sup>33</sup> It is thus fair to say that 1949 marked the

destruction of the plurality of voices within the Jewish community in Romania.

Even in this format, the community represented an alternative space to the socio-political reality of the time. As Rotman has indicated, people came together, discussed specific problems, exchanged rumors, debated, and told jokes poking fun at the political reality. Independent of the will of the vigilant community leaders and despite the permanent control by the state, an incipient civil society took shape. People stomped or coughed during speeches, and tore the anti-Israeli and anti-*aliyah* posters stuck to the walls of community centers or synagogues.<sup>34</sup>

As was the case with all other Eastern bloc countries, between 1952 and 1953, Romania looked towards Moscow for its strategies at all levels. With respect to the "Jewish problem" and anti-Semitism the tensions in Moscow during these years, notably the so-called *Jewish Doctors' Plot*, were mirrored in local "Jew hunts." During these trials, 150 people were arrested and prosecuted for their Zionist sympathies or convictions.<sup>35</sup> Rotman's claim that the trial against Ana Pauker should also be seen as a measure to thoroughly cleanse Jews from all important Party functions<sup>36</sup> is challenged by Vladimir Tismăneanu's in-depth analysis of Communists of Jewish descent who retained their positions during and after that time. I concur with Vladimir Tismaneanu: "[...] the elimination of the Pauker-Luca-Georgescu group was the result of a struggle for absolute power and not an ethnic 'purification' of the party."<sup>37</sup>

In this generally tense atmosphere, during a meeting on January 14, 1953, the Political Bureau of the Communist Party redefined the government's policies towards national minorities and decided that the national democratic committees of all minorities should cease to exist. The Party had "justly" solved the "national question," hence such committees were outdated and also an impediment in the process of educating the masses "in the spirit of proletarian internationalism and patriotism." During the discussions, the *CDE* was openly charged with isolation vis-à-vis the Party and its failure to neutralize supposed espionage activities among religious parts of the Jewish community.<sup>38</sup> The *CDE* was abrogated on March 23, 1953 under the following considerations: (1) that the Jewish working class was integrated in mass organizations, which determined their duties and solved any arising problems without reference to nationality; (2) that the committee would be an impediment preventing an ethnic minority from properly integrating into the Romanian society; and (3) that it would open avenues for bourgeois elements to misuse the

committee and camouflage their reactionary activities.<sup>39</sup> The real reason seems to have been the fact that by being given the opportunity to maintain a space of their own, ethnic minorities, whether Jewish, German, or Hungarian retained a space of alterity that allowed them not to be absorbed into the mainstream. Rotman has rightfully called these spaces “islands of alterity” or “parallel spaces” to the power structure of the state, as they entailed a subversive potential.<sup>40</sup>

A very important issue in dealing with the history of the Jewish community in Romania is *aliyah*. Because of the high number of Shoah survivors (375,000),<sup>41</sup> Romania was an important pool for future Israeli citizens, and thus the State of Israel had a particular interest in dealing with the Romanian authorities. Furthermore, Romania’s geographic position also made it an important harbor for departing Jews. I agree with Radu Ioanid that the “selling” of the Romanian Jews is a sensitive, double-facetted issue: while Romania was interested in receiving compensations for allowing its Jewish citizens to leave the country, so the State of Israel was willing to remunerate the Romanian authorities for allowing *aliyah*.<sup>42</sup> Until 1948, the authorities did not develop a strategy with respect to *aliyah*. They adopted a policy of non-intervention: while not explicitly encouraging it, they did not do anything to prevent it either. After the proclamation of the State of Israel in May 1948 and the requests of numerous members of the Jewish community to emigrate, the Romanian state decided to allow *aliyah*.<sup>43</sup> The State of Israel, through its Minister of Foreign Affairs, Moshe Sharett, justified its interest in Romania’s Jewish population in a letter sent to Ana Pauker on March 11, 1949. The letter highlighted the fact that the State of Israel was a small nation faced with neighbors that were hostile to its existence. As long as its military potential was low, the official wrote, the country could not consider itself safe. More important than the military issue was the economic development of the country; this could not proceed without human resources of a certain quality for which Eastern Europe in general was the main reservoir.

“Israelul este astăzi o mică națiune, având a face față unor vecini dominați, pentru moment, de forțe și interese ostile existenței și dezvoltării noastre. Chiar dacă am reușit până acum să respingem invazia, noi nu considerăm situația noastră militară asigurată, atât timp cât potențialul nostru de război este redus, în special ca efective. Dar situația militară, atât de importantă, nu este decât un aspect al problemei. Un altul, de o importanță predominantă, este dezvoltarea economică. Israelul trebuie să fie credincios crezului său în creșterea economică. Regiunile sale deșertice și puțin

dezvoltate trebuie supuse la o cultură intensivă și populate de o manieră decisivă, iar posibilitățile industriale trebuie realizate pe deplin ... Îndeplinirea acestor comandamente cere un material uman de o anumită calitate, iar rezervorul principal al unor astfel de elemente îl constituie țările Europei de Est.”<sup>44</sup>

Two questions arise naturally after the confrontation with documents such as the above-mentioned: Why did people want to leave? Why did the Romanian authorities allow *aliyah*? The answer to the first question can be found in a partially dormant and partially explicit anti-Semitism still infiltrating Romanian society; in the new socio-economic realities in Romania; in the fear of a new war in Europe due to the disagreements arising among the former allies of the Second World War; and in the excitement triggered by the events in Israel.<sup>45</sup> A report of the *CDE* evaluating the year 1950 included also: the petty-bourgeois origin of a considerable number of people who refused to be reeducated in the spirit of the new times, the immediacy of a discriminatory past and persisting signs of anti-Semitism, the low level of political awareness among the masses, the strong tradition of Zionism, and the drive to follow one's relatives already settled in Israel.<sup>46</sup> With respect to the Romanian authorities, Rotman suggests that they misread the reasons behind the phenomenon. They saw it not as a genuine desire driving certain people, but as Zionist propaganda, and believed that if people were allowed to go not so many would actually go.<sup>47</sup> At the same time, the State of Israel started pressuring the Romanian state both politically and economically in this direction.<sup>48</sup> Due to the large numbers of people wanting to leave—a situation that also signaled the failure of the Communist ideology to deliver on its promises—the authorities decided to combat *aliyah* in the public discourse as of 1950, while physically allowing it to the maximum, at least during 1950 and 1951.<sup>49</sup> Overall, the authorities had an ambivalent position towards *aliyah* allowing or disallowing it according to their own needs.<sup>50</sup>

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After the events of August 23, 1944, the wartime *Barașeum Theater* dissolved. The actors either returned to the theaters where they had been active before 1940 or opened new, private theaters.<sup>51</sup> Splinter troupes performing either in Romanian or Yiddish harbored former members of

the *Barașeum Theater*. The Barașeum Hall became a building for rent like any other without an agenda or mission statement. It remained in the administration of Otto Marcovici,<sup>52</sup> who rented out the two rooms of the hall. The incomplete archival material available today makes it difficult to distinguish between the splinter troupes, since in some cases actors performed one play with one ensemble and another with a different one.

One group of actors performed under the name *Barașeum Theater* or *Barașeum Studio Theater* in Romanian under the guidance of Otto Marcovici and P. Bereșteanu. It opened the 1944 season on October 6, with an adaptation by Mihail Sebastian of Henning Berger's *The Flood* starring Beate Fredanow and Alexandru Fiñți.<sup>53</sup> Reviewers of the performance placed this troupe in the continuation of the wartime *Barașeum Theater*. One in particular recalled the role of the *Barașeum* during the Antonescu regime and stressed its unique position as an instance of moral resistance for the Jews, but also as a site of fraternization between Jews and Romanians who refused to accept the anti-Semitic impositions of the state.<sup>54</sup> The author, Sergiu Milorian, went on to proclaim the end of light repertoire on the Barașeum's stage and the beginning of a new phase in which the theater would live up to its ontological rationale. He refused to overlap "theater of essence" with "propaganda theater" and decried the heavily didactical tone of the performance he had seen. "We understand and militate for a repertoire of substance engaging social aspects," Milorian wrote, "but we will always be on the other side of the barricade, when the theater becomes something else than what it should be: an expression of life."<sup>55</sup> Praises on his part went to some directorial decisions (the suggestive compositions of human unity in the face of calamities) and some of the actors. The review pointed to two aspects confronting the theater: it showed that at that time true theater criticism was again and still possible, and it sketched the expectations entertained vis-à-vis the theater—to distance itself from its former vaudevillian character and not to become a political mouthpiece. The review of the main rehearsal in *Mântuirea (Redemption)* underlined also the fact that the performance of *The Flood* united for the first time on the Barașeum's stage Romanian and Jewish actors.<sup>56</sup>

On December 20, 1944, the *Barașeum Theater* performed another adaptation by Mihail Sebastian, *Moonless Nights (Nopti fără lună)* based on John Steinbeck's 1942 novel *The Moon Is Down*.<sup>57</sup> Ștefan Baciu of the daily *Libertatea (Liberty)* saw in the *Barașeum Theater's* performance

one of the most qualitative offers of the season and bestowed laurels on the founders of the small theater.<sup>58</sup> Other reviews focused on the appropriateness of the topic and on the artistic achievement of the entire ensemble,<sup>59</sup> although some criticized Sebastian for his choices in the process of dramatizing the novel. The objections were on purely artistic grounds without ideological undertones.<sup>60</sup> In a review for the newspaper *Democrația* (*Democracy*) Monica Lovinescu clearly placed the *Barașeum Theater* on the cultural map of quality Romanian theater when discussing another adaptation by Mihail Sebastian after Marcel Achard *Viața e frumoasă* (*La vie e belle*).<sup>61</sup> The critic wrote: "We appreciate the effort of the Barașeum Theater to work honestly in the realm of theater without making use of tricks and cheap achievements often employed by the majority of Romanian stages at the moment."<sup>62</sup> This ensemble included: Alexandru Finți, Romald Bulfinski, Gh[eorghe] Mărutza, Vasile Lăzărescu (who was also an actor for the National Theater),<sup>63</sup> Sorin Gabor, Dorel Livianu, Al[exandru] Marcovici, Costin Popescu, N[icolae] Tomazoglu, Beate Fredanov, Athena Marcopol, Maria Sandu, E. Ricardo, Dinu Gherasim, Em. Rony, Eugen. Arădeanu, Max Hermann Maxy, Eleazer Semo, C. Vurtejeanu, Ana Negreanu, Titu Vedea, G. Mazilu, W. Siegfried, Lucie Chevalier, Theodora Anca, George Rafael, and J. Straucher, Dinu Negreanu, Moni Ghelerter as stage directors.<sup>64</sup>

Nonetheless, a review from September 26, 1945, described the same ensemble as a mere neighborhood theater and listed Vasile Crețoiu as its manager. It performed in Romanian the 1892 melodrama *Schuldig* (translated as *Am ucis*) by Richard Voss. The only actor from the previous troupe was N[icolae] Tomazoglu.<sup>65</sup> In November 1945, the *Studio Barașeum*, again under Otto Marcovici, performed the musical comedy *Comedianta* (*The Comedian*), which was an adaptation from Yiddish into Romanian by Lica Grünberg, who had belonged to the wartime theater, as had some members of the cast: Bebe Spitzer, Nușa Grup, and Beno Vereă.<sup>66</sup>

There were also other Yiddish ensembles in Bucharest: On September 15, 1944, Iso Schapira directed the opening show of a Yiddish language troupe performing the one-act *Mentshn* (*People*) by Sholem Aleykhem and verses by Moris Rosenfeld, Itzak Leib Peretz, and Eliezer Steinbarg.<sup>67</sup> Around the same time A. Samuelly-Sandu and Boris Segal initiated the *Naier Idisher Teater* (*New Yiddish Theater*), which united Seidy Gluck, Samy Davidsohn, Max Reisch, Marcu Glückman, Lya and Joji Sterling, Leon Julkower, Ifim König, Sarah Etfinger, and Solomon Friedman.<sup>68</sup>

The *IKA (Idisher Kinstler Ansamb)* under Mauricius Sekler enlisted Haim Schwartzman, Dina König, Isy Havis, Borch/Burech Rintzler, Gitta/Ghita and Karl Tef[f]ner, Benno Poplicher, Liuba Maiden, Avram Goldiner, Marcu Glückman, and used one of the two rooms of the Barașeum Hall.<sup>69</sup> There was also the *BIFT (Bukarester Idisher Folks-Teater)* that defined itself as a progressive theater and was created May 1, 1946.<sup>70</sup>

This coexistence makes it apparent that the theater scene in Bucharest was very heterogeneous and that all these theaters attempted to survive in the city's cultural landscape by (re)negotiating with and for themselves a state of normalcy. This again underlines another vital aspect: the availability of a large public to see the performances, but also to accept and reject the theaters depending on their offers. A major concern for all theaters was finding a stage on which to perform. Marcovici, who had at his disposal the Barașeum Hall, rented it from October 10, 1945 until May 31, 1946 to the *IKUF-Theater*.<sup>71</sup> Marcovici offered the hall, the firmament, the lighting, the heating, the sets, the costumes, and the requisite. He was also responsible for renovating the building, which included whitewashing the walls, fixing the furniture, the floor, the stage, and making sure that the water, light and heating systems were in good working conditions. The *IKUF-Theater* on the other hand brought into the union the capital, the artistic ensemble, and the repertoire, and took over the expenses for posting and advertising, paying salaries, and taxes.<sup>72</sup> At the same time, the 1945 playbill of the *Naier Idische Teater* mentioned that this theater could also benefit from the Barașeum Hall due to the generosity of the same person: Otto Marcovici.<sup>73</sup>

Post-Second World War Yiddish culture in Romania is most commonly and substantially linked to the organization *Idisher Kultur Farband*. The *IKUF* was founded in 1937 out of the genuine need for culturalization on part of Jews in Bessarabia, Moldavia, and Maramureș.<sup>74</sup> The preoccupation with and interest for Yiddish came from the left, as Zionists embraced Hebrew as the defining language of Jews.<sup>75</sup> Before August 23, 1944, the *IKUF* recommenced its activities in Moldavia most likely due to the advancement of the Soviet Army in that part of the country. It improvised a theater group that performed in Yiddish in Botoșani in the same hall where Abraham Goldfaden had acted in 1876 during his tour. The performance was called *Naht-Tog (Night-Day)*.<sup>76</sup> After August 1944, the *IKUF* was recognized as a legal person and became very active in organizing Jewish cultural life throughout the country with a heavy emphasis on Yiddish.<sup>77</sup>



In July 1945, the *IKUF* created in Bucharest the *IKUF-Theater*<sup>78</sup> under the leadership of Iacob Mansdorf. It premièred on October 17, 1945,<sup>79</sup> with the play *Ikh leb (I live)* by the Soviet-Jewish author Moshe Pinchevski. Iacob Mansdorf was a man of the Yiddish theater in the old tradition. He was a graduate of the drama school in Warsaw and a former student of both David Hermann and Konstantin Stanislavski. He had been a member of the famous *Vilna Troupe* and of other ensembles (*AZAZEL*, *Pariser Idischer Arbeiter Teater*, *GOSSET*) and had performed side by side with the star of the Jewish theater in Moscow, Solomon Mikhoels.<sup>80</sup> When he arrived in Bucharest, he was determined to craft the theater established by the *IKUF* into a quality enterprise. In what seems to have been his first interview in the Romanian capital on July 28, 1945, he talked about the bad reputation that the Romanian theater, in general, and the Yiddish, in particular, enjoyed abroad, due to its boulevard character. The theater was dominated by mercantile considerations, in the case of the Yiddish theater probably also due to the absence of official subventions and the reliance on donations by the public that in return asked for cabaret-style-entertainment. Thus, Mansdorf argued, the theater lacked a cultural, educational, and artistic agenda, which he was determined to bring to it. His goal was to transform the *IKUF-Theater* into “an art theater.” He affirmed:

“Our agenda is the obligation to put on stage our rich heritage of historical figures—Bar-Kokhba, Yehuda Maccabi—not some nonsensical appearances built on pranks. As Sholem Aleykhem fought in past times with a positive *oeuvre* against the shoddy literature of Shomer, so will we replace cheap shows with true art.”<sup>81</sup>

The article was programmatically entitled “In Goldfaden’s Footsteps” and there is no reason to doubt Mansdorf’s statement for his previous activity mirrored dedication to his ideals. In order to put together an ensemble that corresponded to his demands and expectations, Mansdorf went outside Bucharest to recruit young people. This situation can be interpreted in two ways. On the one side, like any master, Mansdorf might have wanted to mold his own actors in the spirit of the tradition for which he himself stood. On the other hand, given the left-wing tendencies of the *IKUF*, actors of the pre-war era who were already in Bucharest might have willingly kept their distance from this troupe. In an interview with me, Anton Celaru<sup>82</sup> remembered that Mansdorf was also eager to

avoid becoming involved in the usual intrigues of the theater milieu characteristic of the Yiddish theater world as well. Instead of putting up with the whimsical moods of stars and starlets, he wanted to generate his own.<sup>83</sup> Mansdorf's troupe enlisted in addition to him Borch/Burech Rintzler, Edith Horovitz, Gitta/Ghita Tef[f]ner, Silvia Tylbor, Itoc Lasclover, Iso Shapira, I[ancu] Alpern, Moise Rubingher, Zita Frucht, and Haim Schwartzman as conductor and musical director.<sup>84</sup>

The opening performance was a success, and available reviews praised Mansdorf for his artistic and directorial skills and determination.<sup>85</sup> Present at the pre-opening alongside N. D. Cocea (General Director of Theaters), Nicky Atanasiu (President of the Artists' Union), Jacob Groper (President of the Yiddish Writers' Association), and Ury Benador (President of the Association of Jewish Writers Writing in Romanian), Mihail Ralea, Minister of Arts, emphasized the importance of the theater and the historic moment unfolding before the public's eyes. The performance received the support of the government but it is unclear in which form.<sup>86</sup>

The play recounted the story of a group of Jewish prisoners in a German camp in the Ukraine. Rabbi Tzala Shafir, his daughter Miriam, and the singer Hershel Klezmer become the protagonists, as the camp's commander sends the rabbi and the singer in the woods to spy on partisans. He keeps the rabbi's daughter as warranty and picks Klezmer's eyes out. The two prisoners depart on their mission without knowing that the German soldier Paul followed them. One day the soldier catches a partisan woman and wants to take her to his superior, but the rabbi prevents him, ultimately strangling him. When the camp's commander retrieves the rabbi and the singer, he sets out to have the rabbi executed, but the partisans arrive and save him. Shortly afterwards the Soviet Army frees the camp. After the initial moment of joy, the rabbi and the singer vow to continue the fight and the curtain falls on the rabbi shouting: "There is no other way; it's either live in freedom or die fighting."<sup>87</sup>

The applause of a large and enthusiastic audience at the end of the show rewarded the ensemble both for its efforts and its creativity in conveying a message that resonated with most of the spectators.<sup>88</sup> The play was without a doubt a tribute to the Soviet Army who had delivered not only Romania's Jewish population, but also half of Europe from National Socialist Germany, and as such it was cheered in contemporary reviews.<sup>89</sup> However, it also thematized Jewish activism during the war without subordinating it to Communist forces. A rabbi joining the partisan resistance in the Ukraine was a potent image meant to empower the

members of the audience and raise their self-consciousness. The blind singer who did not succumb to despair personified the strength of the jovial Jewish spirit enduring in the *galut*.<sup>90</sup> The banner in Hebrew adorning the stage on the night of the première *The people of Israel lives!* appealed precisely to these sentiments, while also hinting at Jewish solidarity.<sup>91</sup> The chronicle in the newspaper *Victoria* (*Victory*) newspaper transposed this plea for solidarity into the artistic reality of the time:

“If the proverbial Jewish solidarity were a fact, ‘Ih Leb’ would benefit from an amazing echo, which would manage to motivate also students from conservatories to follow the activities of the ‘IKUF’ ensemble; this could help them contribute with their own talents to the replacement of the entertainment and functionary theater with the theater as a school, *an art theater*. By so doing they would not only save themselves from compromises no matter how well remunerated, but as a collective they would restore the stage to the role it deserves structurally in [the process of] our reparation.”<sup>92</sup>

Shortly after the première, in the newspaper *Viata evreească* (*Jewish Life*) Geri Spina pointed out the meaning of the *IKUF-Theater* beyond its artistic significance, which he called upon the theater critics to evaluate. He greeted the *IKUF-Theater* for its socio-political role, which he identified in the carrying of the “cultural torch” put out by the war.<sup>93</sup> Goldfaden’s tradition was an important aspect of the *IKUF-Theater’s* dramatic activity, not only because Mansdorf had taken the classics of Yiddish literature as his standard, but also because parts of the public remembered and cherished that tradition. Mansdorf hailed this disposition of the Jewish public in Bucharest in an interview with Hanna Kawa on January 5, 1946. He rejoiced at the reaction of the Jewish public vis-à-vis the theater, especially since he had been warned before arriving in Romania that Romanian Jews spoke no Yiddish.<sup>94</sup> He was, however, also dissatisfied with the reluctance of other Jewish cultural organizations to cooperate with the *IKUF-Theater*.<sup>95</sup> Their reasons were motivated by politics—as the *IKUF Association* stood for leftist ideals, distance from its theater meant distance from its views—but Mansdorf could not accept that. For him, this theater was a site of artistic dialogue and his choice to debut with *Ikh leb* was also a first statement about the theater’s potential. It would not only honor the classics, as Mansdorf had advocated in his interview, but it also enrich the repertoire by promoting new texts, which were also relevant to the audiences and their recent experiences during the war. When he realized the impossibility to engage in such a dialogue

in a country set for the Communist order, he left, before the authorities could misuse his passion and idealism.<sup>96</sup>

From the onset, the *IKUF-Theater*—like the other troupes in Bucharest—faced meager financial possibilities and needed the assistance of sponsors.<sup>97</sup> It found them in the wealthy manufacturer Herman Segal for its second show, *Tevie der Milkhiker* (*Tevie the Milkman*), and in the *Jewish World Congress*, through its representative in Bucharest the lawyer Arnold Schwefelberg, for the subsequent performances: *Der eibiker nigun* (*The eternal melody*) based on Itzak Leib Peretz and *Di Khishufmakhern* (*The Witch*) by Abraham Goldfaden.<sup>98</sup> The *IKUF-Theater* also lacked a stage on which to perform. *Tevie der Milkhiker* was presented in the upper room of the Barașeum Hall,<sup>99</sup> and, according to reviews, one of its most remarkable achievements, *Di Khishufmakhern*, was staged in a beer garden, *Astoria*. “Somewhere in Dudesti,” a critic wrote, “around a corner on Mircea-Voda [Street], in a yard on Anton Pann [Street], between a country-side-like convenience store and a showcase with fruits and vegetables a [beer] garden has opened. The only green is that of the paint covering the chairs and the only flowers are made of paper or painted; they are on a narrow stage made of primitive boards like the ones used for *Mosi*. On this ‘stage,’ in this ‘Garden’ every evening one plays theater in Yiddish before a small and enthusiast audience.”<sup>100</sup> The circumstances were not different from those that had caused Goldfaden or the *Vilna Troupe* to leave Bucharest, but Mansdorf persisted in his endeavor. A year after his first interview, he was pleased that the theater had premiered three plays and was preparing the fourth. Despite the hardships, the theater carried on.<sup>101</sup> His staging of *Di Khishufmakhern* reminded some critics of the *Vilna Troupe*, footprints Mansdorf was more than eager to fill.<sup>102</sup> In the most faithful Goldfadian tradition, he ridiculed religious superstition while maintaining the rightful measure between *prodesse* and *delectare*.

Despite these successes, an article from January 11, 1947 signaled the demise of the *IKUF-Theater*.<sup>103</sup> Iosif Faerstein began by praising its existence, which had demonstrated that creations in Yiddish could still move the Jewish population, and its successes, which had confirmed, that the population was interested in artful events and not merely entertainment of doubtful taste. “The existence of this theater,” the journalist concluded, “responded [...] to stringent, organic, and general needs and callings [within the Jewish population].”<sup>104</sup> Then Faerstein

went on to point out the real matter at stake: the *IKUF-Theater* had ceased its performances and the reason behind it had been the lack of a stage and appropriate conditions for the *IKUF-Theater*. Faerstein did not limit himself to stating the problem; he also indicated the party he considered responsible for the situation and asked for the intervention of the Ministry of Arts to find solutions. He condemned the administrator of the Barașeum Hall—Otto Marcovici<sup>105</sup>—who “commercialized the stage, transformed frivolity into a goldmine, and worked hard to prevent the evolution of the spectator away from trivial art,” yet had no understanding for true art.<sup>106</sup>

The article constituted but one example of a discourse gaining contour in the press, which thematized both the shortcomings faced by the various troupes and especially by the *IKUF-Theater*, and the latter’s so-called historic duty towards Jewish culture. Thus, directly or indirectly the press prepared the ground for the intervention of the Romanian state in dealing with this issue. Willi Savill’s article “Teatrul evreesc la răspântie?” (“The Jewish Theater at a Crossroads?”) printed in September 1946 in *Neamul Evreesc (The Jewish Kin)* was symptomatic of the situation. In the author’s description, the theater lacked self-understanding and a sense of responsibility. The article defined the calling of the *IKUF-Theater*: “to incorporate all those artistic elements present or about to become visible among the Jewish population.” This goal had not been achieved and the author deplored the absence of the premises favoring the creation of a homogenous and permanent theater. Jacob Mansdorf was seen as a shooting star that had initiated the process by leading the way and forming a public, but, the author suggested, certain actors’ personal egoism and artistic infatuation had prevented them from understanding the demands of the new times—collective efforts and achievements. Their mentality was deemed an obstacle in a qualitative redefinition of the theater.<sup>107</sup> The same reviewer in an article entitled “Idischer Kinstler Ansambl” (probably also from 1946) saw the unification of all troupes as an imperative matter, as neither the *IKUF-Theater* nor the *IKA* could create valuable art under the conditions available to them. He asked solemnly: “Where is the man who with the necessary authority can fuse these groups for the security and prestige of the fragile art site that the Yiddish theater has to be?”<sup>108</sup> Interventions in the *IKUF-Blöter*, the Yiddish newspaper edited by the *IKUF* from March 1946 until March 1953, by Moshe Lax, the association’s president, suggest without a doubt that the *IFUK* understood itself as a standard setter for the entire Yiddish culture taking shape in

Romania at that time. Lax appealed to Jewish intellectuals in Bucharest and elsewhere in Romania not to tolerate “irresponsible troupes” with repertoires of low quality, but to support the *IKUF-Theater*.<sup>109</sup>

As mentioned earlier, the *CDE* reunited Jewish organizations of different political backgrounds into one over-arching organization, whose goal was to annul diversity among the members of this community and to homogenize it in accordance with the directives of the new establishment. In this sense, the association *Prietenii teatrului evreiesc din România* (*The Friends of the Jewish Theater in Romania*) was founded in 1946 to support the activities of the Jewish theater morally and financially.<sup>110</sup> In November 1947, at a symposium on contemporary problems of the Jewish theater, it was decided that the *IFUK-Theater* should establish contact with the *Asociația dramaturgilor din România* (*The Playwrights’ Association in Romania*) in view of possible collaborations.<sup>111</sup> As time went by and the new political regime crystallized, the role and social position of theater in general changed. The Yiddish theater’s tradition was more and more discarded as cheap, a-cultural, and an-aesthetic, an enemy to good artistic and moral taste.<sup>112</sup> The demand was for social realism. A text by Emil Dorian “*Ceva despre teatrul idiș*” (“*Something about Yiddish theater*”) from 1948 clearly defined the attributes of this new kind of Yiddish theater that denied its Goldfadenian roots and looked upon the Soviet Union as its matrix.<sup>113</sup> Dorian wrote that the Yiddish theater’s birth on Romanian soil had been purely haphazard. He rejected Abraham Goldfaden’s theater as mediocre due to its vaudevillian character through the reliance on humor, music, lyricism, and dance.<sup>114</sup> In his view there was no true Yiddish theater as there was no quality Yiddish dramaturgy. The true Yiddish theater had appeared in the Soviet Union where it had created a repertoire that sprang directly from the development of Jewish life during Sovietization.<sup>115</sup> The Yiddish theater had to make use of the context that had brought it to life and create a new artistic ideal, i.e. art for the people, for its moral recovery, for uplifting its conscience.<sup>116</sup>

A letter by Marcovici dated June 16, 1948, in which he asked permission to continue the activities of the *Barașeum Theater*, bears the side note: “Otto Marcovici is a known exploiter and businessman. [...] His request will be rejected.”<sup>117</sup> This suggests that at least by that time the *Barașeum Theater* ceased to exist as such, but details about its activities between December 18, 1946—date of the last review available to me—and June 1948 are unavailable. I have, moreover, not been able to trace the *IKUF-Theater’s* (in)existence between January 1947—when Faerstein

decried its absence—and March 1948. In the *CDE* files the first references to theater date from after the *TES'* creation.<sup>118</sup> I found no information about Mansdorf's departure, his replacement, or Bernard Lebli's involvement with the theater. On March 24, 1948, the *IKUF-Theater*, under Lebli's leadership and with the financial assistance of the Ministry of Finance (Minister Vasile Luca), the Ministry of Arts (Minister Ion Pas), and the *Joint* reopened in the newly renovated Barașeum Hall. It performed Sholem Aleykhem's *Dos groyse gevins* (*The Grand Prize*)<sup>119</sup> It is relevant that although it was not yet a state institution, the Romanian authorities had already given this theater their blessing. Transforming it into a state subsidized and subordinated body was just a formality, which came about in the summer of 1948, while the theater was on tour. Thus, on August 1, 1948 at the suggestion of the *CDE* and the association *IKUF*, the *Jewish State Theater* was founded in Bucharest.<sup>120</sup> The Barașeum Hall became its permanent stage; the country's Ministry of Culture partly subsidized it, and the *IKUF* (until it was dissolved in 1953) and the Federation with the help of the *Joint* (until it was ousted in 1949) gave the remaining necessary funds.<sup>121</sup> It united under one roof all previous Yiddish theater troupes, forming an ensemble of 110 actors. In his written demand for the theater to become a state institution, Bernard Lebli, *de facto* director although his appointment was issued bearing the date September 1, 1948,<sup>122</sup> listed the following reasons: the *IKUF-Theater* was the only Yiddish theater in the country "to correspond to the impetuous need for culturalization and politicization of the Jewish masses;" Romania had the largest Jewish population in Europe after the Soviet Union and as such this community had to be the vanguard of progressive culture in Yiddish among Jews living elsewhere, and especially in countries befriending the People's Republic of Romania; despite the support of Jewish organizations, the theater was faced with dire material hardship which only a subvention by the state could alleviate.<sup>123</sup>

The *TES'* creation served a propagandistic purpose for the authorities: it was meant to attest to the new leadership's internalization of the Leninist principle of ethnic indiscriminatio by affording minorities equal rights, as long as their members were loyal citizens, i.e. supported the state's new ideology. It was also meant to set the new government apart from any other previous government and make it stand out as a just and inclusive political system, which offered the Jewish minority opportunities it had never had before. The goal of the theater was, thus, in accordance with the general directives to enlighten the Jewish community in the political

sense of the newly established regime. The main points on the theater's agenda became: to promote social realism over formalist traditions; to call out for the establishment of the Socialist society and for solidarity within the working class; to denounce class enemies inside and outside the country; to denounce religion as superstition; and to praise the Communist Party and the Soviet Union, seen as the selfless savior of the past war. All of these ideas appeared clearly formulated in Lebli's insertion in the playbill of the opening show, entitled "Teatrul evreesc 'Ikuf'" ("The Jewish Theater 'Ikuf'")<sup>124</sup> and it could not have been otherwise. However, performing Sholem Aleykhem's *Dos groyse gevins* also gave the theater a chance to go beyond the official level and build a bridge to the past and to a different tradition of Yiddish theater. The cast embodied that potential as well: Dina König, Sevilla Pastor, Iudith Kronenfeld, Benno Popliker, Mauricius Sekler, Samuel Fischler, Mano Rippel, and others.

Sholem Aleykhem told the story of the tailor master Shimele Soroker and his family living at the beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup> century in a Ukrainian *shtetl*.<sup>125</sup> Soroker possesses a lottery ticket and dreams that one-day he will win the grand prize, which would deliver him and his loved ones from their mediocre life and social position. The day when his creditors assault him insisting on being paid back, Soroker's dream comes true and he wins 200,000 rubles. He becomes a wealthy man, yet he is inexperienced in dealing with the world of great capital, so that his business partners bring him to bankruptcy. Parallel to this story line unfolds the tale of Beilke, Soroker's daughter. She is courted by the two helpers in her father's tailor store, Motl and Colp, but also by the rich Solomon Fain, who is charmed by her beauty. After Soroker wins the lottery and ascends to the world of social prestige, the way is open for an arranged marriage between Beilke Soroker and Solomon Fain. The girl, however, rejects this option and runs away with Motl and Copl, agreeing to marry one of them. News of her escapade reaches the reunion between her and the Fain family at the same time as that of her father's ruin, thus preventing any association between the two. Rushing to find their daughter, Shimele and his wife Etemene, arrive at the wedding ceremony just in time to give their blessings to Beilke and Motl and celebrate the new union.

Available reviews suggest that during the staging process both the director and the cast disregarded ideological demands. The ensemble preserved a formalist tradition that had become associated with Yiddish theater *per se* and conferred to it its specificity. "Today's IKUF ensemble," Simion Alterescu deplored, "composed of elements gathered from



wandering troupes retains unanimously a mannerism—characteristic of the old Jewish theater—that has become in time a tradition—that of expressionism.”<sup>126</sup> He reproached Dina König for caricaturing her character and B[eno] Sadigurski for connecting too much with the audiences. He disapproved of Haim Schwartzman’s musical score and Moise Rubingher’s setting designs.<sup>127</sup> The reviewer’s repetitive observation that the theater would have to renounce its extant style in the future underscores the fact that it had not done so already. To quote but one example: “The show at the Ikuf [Theater], aside from numerous qualities we shall mention later, preserves the sin of formalism, which in time the Jewish theater will have to abandon.”<sup>128</sup> He accoladed the director’s ability to coordinate the actors and make use of the newly available technical support, Cora Benador’s choreography, and the promising potential of the ensemble to live up to the expectations of the new order.<sup>129</sup> Unlike Alterescu, Ion Marin Sadoveanu congratulated the cast and the producers on their achievements and expressed confidence about the theater’s future without tying it ideologically.<sup>130</sup> “Overall,” the journalist noted, “it was an interesting show [denoting] honest effort and a good beginning, and most of all persistence and enthusiasm on the part of all collaborators in hope for a fruitful artistic life.”<sup>131</sup> His only critique targeted the orchestration, which Sadoveanu found not inappropriate but excessively opulent.<sup>132</sup>

On October 1, 1949 the *TES* presented the first autochthonous play, *Nahtshiht* (*The Night Shift*) by Ludovic Bruckstein. This marked a milestone: it was the first original dramatic work to have been written in Yiddish; it was also the first attempt to thematized Jewish existence in post-Second World War Romania; and it was a direct response to the “repertoire crisis” that haunted the *TES*. The plotline was uncomplicated. While waiting for their husbands, Aron and Eli, to return from the night shift of a factory in the People’s Republic of Romania, two former Auschwitz inmates, Lana and Mira, recalled their ordeal in the camp and how they were saved through the actions of a Soviet Communist. They remembered how the National Socialist persecution had began with the burning of the *Reichstag* and the subsequent hounding of the Communists, the Jews, and other so-called “inferior races,” which included according to the characters “the Austrians, the Czechs, the Poles, the Hungarians, and the Romanians.”<sup>133</sup> In addition, the two women evoked the memory of Ivan, a Soviet political prisoner, who coordinated acts of sabotage in the camp and led the liberation fight against the guards in

the last act. The remembering process served also as a springboard to the characters' present painted in rosy tones.

The play incorporated several obligatory elements for literary creations at the time. It condemned the past not only in the form of the war, but also as the time of a ruthless bourgeoisie, which irrespective of its nationality was responsible for the war. After 1948, the political discourse had changed: the idea of ethnic unity that had been so important in the early 1940s was reinterpreted as reactionary deviation.<sup>134</sup> The new demand was for unity among the members of the working class and for the denunciation of the so-called "bourgeois elements" regardless of ethnicity. Through the figure of the Jewish merchant Sacher, who betrayed his fellow inmates to the German commanders, the playwright rendered the new requirement artistically. The play extolled the merits of the Communists and especially of Soviet Communists. If in Pincewski's *Ikh Leb* liberation had had a double character—physical liberation through the Soviet Army, but also, and more importantly, self-liberation by overcoming one's passivity as embodied by the rabbi—such a subversion of the liberator role was no longer tolerable. The Soviet Communists alone could fill that position and had to be depicted as such. Feeble outbursts by Jewish inmates in Auschwitz had to be subsumed under the leadership of Ivan, the harbinger of the new *Weltanschauung*. The reference to Auschwitz itself was symbolic, yet, like elsewhere in the world, a confrontation with it impossible. Another mandatory element was the description of the People's Republic of Romania as a haven allowing for the friendly and fruitful cooperation between Jews and Romanians, as in the case of Aron and Traian, who perfected a common invention. The author thus aligned its voice with the official propaganda, slowly gathering momentum for a vigorous anti-Zionist campaign. In this sense, two notions of work during the night shift were juxtaposed: the sacrilegious incineration of dead bodies in the camp, which was the result of the previous bourgeois order, and Aron and Traian's teamwork in the factory of a Socialist republic. Not only was the latter form righteous because it was not forceful exploitation, but also because it paved the way for the integration of national minorities into the Romanian society.

Turning anew to the press, one gains a distinct notion of the commencing ossification of the critical idiom. The reviews contained no real artistic critique, but merely preprogrammed statements inserted into a template language: the demand for socialist realist art, with no expressionist tones;<sup>135</sup> the request for an accessible Yiddish dialect spoken

by the masses and not an aestheticized form;<sup>136</sup> and the commendation that the play was a good beginning for the development of indigenous Yiddish literature.<sup>137</sup> Valentin Silvestru's very detailed chronicle in *Flacăra* (*The Flame*) is representative of the process of renegotiating registers taking place within the realm of theater criticism.<sup>138</sup> The ideologized trace was unmistakable in passages eulogizing the Soviet Army and its role during the war, or the insight of the Marxist teachings that had helped the playwright—a former Auschwitz inmate—"clarify and organize the material collected through his own life experience." Silvestru underscored the culpability of the bourgeoisie as a treacherous collaborating force and the virtues of "anonymous heroes" who had followed the call and example of the Communist fighter embodied by the "Soviet man." A surprising element was the laudatory presentation of a good German, Heinrich the anti-fascist. In view of the international developments of the year 1949, this discursive twist served the integration of the German Democratic Republic and its people into the Socialist camp on the same level as all other Soviet satellites: as former victims of National Socialism and covert supporters of the Soviet Union. Germans could thus no longer be exposed as National Socialists *in toto*, but as a bad majority of obedient Hitler followers and a good minority of contesters, who, however, had to be adherents to the ideals of the Soviet Union.<sup>139</sup> Both Bruckstein and Silvestru followed suit in their renderings.

Silvestru welcomed the manner in which Mauricius Sekler had staged the play: realist, accentuating simplicity of expression and without traces of formalism as in previous shows at the *TES*. He uttered his harshest critique with respect to the prologue, which he considered insufficiently developed and not corresponding to the social reality of Jewish life in post-war Romania. "Probably," he wrote, "[Bruckstein] has not studied sufficiently the conditions of the Jewish worker today and the problems arising from this new life-style. The class struggle is not over; it presents special forms among the Jewish population of our Republic. The state of complete happiness in which the four characters find themselves in the prologue and epilogue is not in conformity with reality; they talk only about the enemy abroad and give the impression that here [i.e. Romania] they have liquidated the antagonized bourgeoisie."<sup>140</sup> In order to compensate for this slippage, Silvestru called on Bruckstein to write a play examining the contemporary problems of the Jewish community in a more thorough manner.

Bruckstein's work was a concession to politics. The play does not stand the test of time and has no intrinsic literary value, yet as a historical artifact it is part of the *TES*' becoming and adds nuances to its own understanding during the time. The theater wanted to persist and therefore gave in to the official pressure at times. Before this performance, the *TES* had staged *Goldfaden* (*Di tzwei kune-lem/ The Two Kune-Lemls*), Nicolai Gogol (*The Revisor*), and Friedrich Schiller (*Kabale und Liebe/ Intrigue and Love*).<sup>141</sup> These productions had displayed the same duality as *Dos groyse gevins* and were reprobated for it.<sup>142</sup> *Nahtshiht* was the compromise, followed only in the 1951 season by another more aggressive instrumentalization of the theater.

*In shotn funem palmenboym* (*In the shade of a palm tree*) by Ionel Țăranu was the most politically engaged performance of the *TES* incipient years. It openly condemned *aliyah* as treason not only to Romania—a country working hard to become a comfortable “home” for its Jewish population—but also to the “honorable cause of Socialism.” The play premièred on January 1, 1951 at the height of the Romanian authorities' anti-Zionist crusade. In order to publicize this performance the *TES* displayed two billboards on *Calea Dudești*, the heart of the Jewish neighborhood, and at the *Sf. Gheorghe* Square; it broadcast advertisements on the radio; and published excerpts in the Jewish press.<sup>143</sup> On March 11, 1951 the *CDE* Bucharest organized discussions with the public about the play and its meaning.<sup>144</sup> The intense campaign illustrates the utmost importance the decision makers attributed to this performance.

The storyline followed the young dentist Emil who obtained his visa to immigrate to Israel. He left his family and his fiancée, Frieda, behind and departed confident for his future. He counted on support from his former superior Dr. Ochsenfeld, who had encouraged him to leave and had promised to help him settle in Israel. However, in Israel no one awaited him and Emil had to polish shoes in the harbor of Haifa in order to survive. A return to Romania was not possible since he had broken all the ties to his family so that he remained in a dire situation. In the meantime, in Bucharest his family had been assigned a new apartment and celebrated the achievement with a house-warming party where Jews and Romanians alike were merry and happy to be living in the People's Republic of Romania.

The play stands out through its vicious anti-Zionism and its anti-Semitism when applied to inhabitants of the State of Israel. Grözinger has rightfully pointed out that names such as “Ochsenfeld” or “Wurmstaub”

could easily have been chosen from a manual for anti-Semitism.<sup>145</sup> Moreover, Israel appeared as the playground for American capitalism, represented derogatorily by drunken sailors pursuing prostitutes in the harbor of Haifa. It is the typical picture of a corrupted bourgeois world in which the individual does not count and money talks. Meant to inspire awe, the black and white depiction of the realities in Israel and in Romania, only succeeded in reproducing syntagmata of the *CDE* jargon.<sup>146</sup> Through this performance the *TES* disregarded Goldfaden's legacy and lowered itself indeed to manipulating its audiences. The question though is: Could it have done otherwise?

Bureaucratically speaking the *TES* functioned according to *Decree Nr. 168* published in the *Official Monitor (Monitorul Oficial)* No. 175 from July 31, 1948. The ruling stipulated that the theater operate under the same conditions as the *National Theater (Teatrul Național)* in Bucharest, whose statute entailed that the directorial committee had to consist of: the theater's director as president; the mayor of Bucharest or his vice-mayor; a public lawyer; an artist with a permanent appointment and accepted by the *League of Artists' Writers' Journalists' Labor Unions (Uniunea Sindicatelor de Artisti, Scriitori, Ziaristi din Romania)*; the Rector of the *Academy for Music and Dramatic Art (Academia de Muzica si Arta Dramatica)* or another cultural figure proposed by the *Union*. The artistic director was appointed by ministerial decision at the suggestion of the *TES'* director and had to be a literary critic, editor, or prestigious *literatus*.<sup>147</sup> The theater had to perform a play first for the officials and then for the public, and the *General Directorate of Theaters (Direcția Generală a Teatrelor)* sent a delegate to every performance.<sup>148</sup> The *TES'* official role was "that of raising the population's cultural standards and that of mobilizing it to build Socialism"<sup>149</sup> The *TES'* official ideological character during the years under consideration can be inferred from its playbills. Unlike earlier times when their pages included information about the play, the author, the main actors, but also substantial amounts of advertisements, the *TES'* playbills included quotes from Joseph Stalin, Gheorghe Gheorghiu-Dej, Ana Pauker, Iosif Chișinevschi or Ilya Ehrenburg. They recorded also the articles of the Romanian constitution that validated the *TES'* creation (Art. 23 and 24), as well as panegyrics to the Soviet Union and its culture. Inevitably they also contained a description of the play's plot with unmistakable ideological undertones. The playbill as a construct legitimized the *TES* as an enterprise in the larger context of ideologized Romanian culture.

Nonetheless, a look at reports from the *CDE's* Cultural Commission yields a different image of the theater. Given that loyalists of the regime conceived them for the use of the power structures, these documents might rightfully be regarded as unreliable sources. To my mind, it is precisely because they were produced for inner-power fora and, thus, did not need to embellish reality for propaganda purposes, that they are useful research tools. In a meeting on June 21, 1949 the complaint was made that only four—of the *TES'* 110—employees were party members.<sup>150</sup> The “Report Concerning the Activity of the Jewish State Theaters in Bucharest and Jassy” resulting from a meeting of the *CDE's* Cultural Commission between February 9-15, 1950, called attention to the low level of political awareness and engagement among the members of the theaters' staff; those who had been there since the founding days displayed a “petit-bourgeois mentality” devoid of “a political level” and the young elements, who had been recruited after an examination in 1949, lacked not only political understanding but also experience.<sup>151</sup> Bernard Lebli, director of the *TES* in Bucharest was reprimanded for poor social skills, for failing to fasten the ties between the *TES* and the *CDE*, and for attending the meetings of the *CDE's* Cultural Commission only sporadically.<sup>152</sup> When evaluating the echo of the *TES'* activity, song and dance shows along with cabaret numbers enjoyed a much wider popularity than other performances.<sup>153</sup> For the time span July 1 until September 30, 1951 under the header *Shortcomings (Lipsuri)* Paul Iscovici still listed insufficient political implication among the *TES'* personnel. The ideological *niveau* of the staff had remained low, and during tours the plays had not been properly problematized for the audiences, so that the ideological content remained insufficiently revealed. He also deplored the shortage of autochthonous plays with appropriate political content.<sup>154</sup> In the report for the year 1952, the relation between the *CDE's* “conviction work” and the response among the *TES'* employees continued to be uneven. Many “elements” were still eager to emigrate. This report deplored as well the lack of fruitful collaboration between the *CDE's* and the *TES'* leadership, as the latter failed to adopt a “determined attitude” against members of the ensemble who refused to comply with the ideological demands of the times.<sup>155</sup>

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There can be no doubt that the *TES* appeared as a result of the nationalization process initiated by the Romanian state. It is just to remark that this process inhibited private initiative, stopped the activities of traveling troupes, imposed a repertoire with ideological tendencies, and promoted the mingling of political activists into theatrical life. Concurrently, it is important to note that becoming a state institution and receiving state subsidizes was the only chance of survival the Yiddish theater had. Financial hardship would not have made it possible for a Yiddish theater to endure otherwise.<sup>156</sup> On the one hand it can be argued that the theater served as cover-up for the assimilationist tendencies of the *CDE*, which intended to (ab)use Yiddish—seen as the vernacular of the Jewish working classes—as means to transmit the Communist Party's ideology and indoctrinate the Jewish masses. It did so more discretely until 1949 and overly afterwards.<sup>157</sup> The *CDE* helped create the illusion of the Romanian state as liberal and supportive of its minorities and combated Zionism and *aliyah* after 1950.<sup>158</sup> The kind of cultural identification it promoted was biased because it required its subjects to distance themselves from what the State of Israel embraced as “Jewish culture” and adhere to values that had never been unproblematic among Jews. The dilemma Yiddish versus Hebrew had had its own history, which the Communists could not simply sweep under the carpet.

On the other hand, it also cannot be denied that maintaining an enclave of Yiddish culture created ethnic unity beyond the shifting tendencies of the official discourse. The *TES* was, as Mirjam Lia Bercovici claims, “the institution that best mirrored the Jews of Romania [...]”<sup>159</sup> The theater popularized Jewish culture by keeping Yiddish folklore and Yiddish music alive and by engaging the classics of Yiddish literature at a time when there was a large population with an interest in maintaining or discovering these traditions. In this sense, I argue that the *TES* should be included—from its beginning—among Rotman's “parallel spaces” that afforded degrees of liberties under an oppressive regime. Due to its tours, the theater stayed in touch with audiences throughout the country. Thus the political strategy of the decision makers—be they the Romanian authorities or the Jewish community—boomeranged toward the ideologues and escaped the pre-programmed propagandistic framework. By making Yiddish culture available, the regime propped up a mentality that went against its dogmatism. The theater embodied this dichotomy: it was not simply a mouthpiece of and for the regime, but also a site for the cultivation of a Jewish identity with a Yiddish sensitivity.

## NOTES

- 1 I would like to thank Mirjam Lia Bercovici, Anton Celaru, Anca Ciuciu, Andrei Oişteanu, Rudy Rosenfeld, Liviu Rotman, and Smaranda Vultur for their help with this project.
- 2 Elvira Grözinger, Die jiddische Kultur im Schatten der Diktaturen. Israil Bercovici—Leben und Werk (Berlin/Wien: Philo Verlag, 2002) 242-243.
- 3 “[...] statul [român] a luat în seama sa organizarea a două teatre evreieşti [...]” Liviu Rotman, Evreii din România în perioada comunistă 1944-1965 (Bucureşti: Polirom, 2004) 117. The Jewish State Theater in Jassy opened in 1949 and was closed down in 1964. I will not touch upon its history in this article (CP).
- 4 Liviu Rotman in a discussion with me in Bucharest on December 8, 2005.
- 5 I use the term “Communist Party” not as a party title, but to describe the underlying ideology of a party that changed its name from Romanian Communist Party to Romanian Workers’ Party (February 1948) and back to Romanian Communist Party (July 1965.)
- 6 Andrei Pleşu, “Nostalgie şi speranţă” Obscenitate publică (Bucureşti: Humanitas 2004) 201-205, here 203.
- 7 A *maskil* is an adherent of the *Haskalah* movement.
- 8 My translation. At this point I have access to neither the Yiddish original nor the officially accepted English translation. The Romanian translation of this quote can be found in Israil Bercovici, O sută de ani de teatru evreiesc în România (Bucureşti: Integral, 1998) 68.
- 9 Arhivele Statului Român (A.S.R) Departamentul Ministerului Cultelor şi Artelor, Direcţia Generală a Teatrelor şi Operelor Române, Dosar Nr. 62/ 1940, 87. Also printed in Bercovici 174.
- 10 Letter from Felix Aderca to the General Director of the Romanian Theaters and Opera Houses from October 16, 1940 referencing Authorization No. 9335 from October 8, 1940, which allowed the existence of a single Jewish theater under his leadership. ASR, Ministerul Artelor, Direcţia Generală a Teatrelor şi Operelor Române, Dosar Nr. 12/ 1941, 95.
- 11 For the text of the Decree-Law No. 2650 from August 8, 1940 see Lya Benjamin (Ed.), Evreii din România între anii 1940-1944 (Bucureşti: Hasefer, 1993) 46-51, here 46.
- 12 Many artists and public figures in those days did not use their full name in public: some initialed their first-name; some both name and surname. In the cases when I could find the corresponded of the initials, I completed the names, sometimes inserting them into [ ] to suggest that the original text I quoted or referenced did not include the full name. When I could not trace the initials back, I left the names as they appeared in those days in the press.
- 13 Cf. Leny Caler, Artistul şi oglinda—repertoriu, roluri şi parteneri de neuitat (Bucureşti: Universal Dalsi, 2004) 173-179 and Mihail Sebastian, Jurnal 1935-1944 (Bucureşti: Humanitas, 2005) 444-577.



- 14 Hary Kuller, "Difuzarea idișului între cele două razboaie mondiale și după, în România" Buletinul Centrului, Muzeului și arhivei istorice a evreilor din Romania 12/ 2006: 47-62, here 51.
- 15 (Author unknown), "Pe urmele lui Goldfaden ... O convorbire cu Iacob Mansdorf" Viața evreească July 28, 1945: 2. *N.B.* Many of the reviews cited or simply referenced in this article display incomplete bibliographical data and I apologize to the reader for this misgiving. In the course of my research so far I have been unable to locate complete collections of the newspapers I use, so that I had to rely on fragmentary holdings or clippings without annotations. Throughout the article the missing information will be listed as (\_\_\_ unknown).
- 16 Hanna Kawa, "Tewie der Milchiger. În dialog cu Iacob Mansdorf" (newspaper unknown) January 5, 1946: (page unknown).
- 17 Rotman, Evreii 29-30.
- 18 "Au fost astfel mai întâi anii oarecum ai asimilismului [anii 20-30], pentru care diferența, identitatea era strict religioasă. Eram români de religie israelită, ca în mai toată Europa occidentală și centrală." Amalia Pavel, "Istoricitatea conceptului de identitate" Identitatea evreiască și antisemitismul în Europa centrală și de sud-est, Andrei Oîșteanu (Ed.) (București: Meta, 2003): 119-124, here 119.
- 19 Cf. Ileana Vrancea, "A Forgotten Chapter of a Common Legacy: Jewish Personalities in the Fight for Survival of Romanian Civil Society (1944-1948)" SHVUT. Jewish Problems in Eastern Europe, Liviu Rotman (ed.) (Tel Aviv: The School of Jewish Studies, 1993) 325-338.
- 20 In December 1941 the supra-communitarian organization, Federation of the Unions of Jewish Communities, was replaced by the *Centrala Evreilor din România* (Central Office of Romania's Jews), a body subordinated to the Romanian government (Decree-Law from December 16, 1941, Monitorul Oficial, No. 299, December 17, 1941)
- 21 Rotman, "Romanian Jewry: The First Decade after the Holocaust." The Tragedy of Romanian Jewry, Randolph L. Braham (ed.) (New York: Columbia University Press, 1994) 287-331, here 305-309; Kuller, Evreii în România anilor 1944-1949—evenimente, documente, comentarii (București: Hasefer, 2002) 13.
- 22 Rotman, Evreii 34-36.
- 23 For an ample description see Dinu C. Giurescu, Guvernarea Nicolae Rădescu (București: All, 1996) and Dinu C. Giurescu, Imposibila încercare. Greva regală, 1945 (București: Editura Enciclopedică, 1999).
- 24 See in this sense the demand for Jewish unity ("unitate evreească"), a true buzzword of the time (Rotman, Evreii 35-36, 61, and 115; and Hildrun Glass, Minderheit zwischen zwei Diktaturen. Zur Geschichte der Juden in Rumänien 1944-1949 (München: R. Oldenbourg Verlag, 2002) 239-258.

- 25 "Proces-verbal asupra ședinței de constituire a Comitetului Democrat Evreesc, ședință ținută în ziua de 7 iunie 1945 [...]" ASR, Comitetul Democrat Evreesc, Dosar Nr. 1/ 1945, 1-5. See also Rotman, "Romanian Jewry" 287-331; and Glass 139-146.
- 26 Rotman, "Romanian Jewry" 302; Glass 157-166; and Rotman, *Evreii* 114-115.
- 27 Rotman "Romanian Jewry" 305-309; and Rotman, *Evreii* 60.
- 28 Rotman, *Evreii* 39; Radu Ioanid, *The Ransom of the Jews. The Story of the Extraordinary Secret Bargain between Romania and Israel* (Chicago: Ivan R. Dee, 2005) 39-40.
- 29 Glass 227-238.
- 30 Rotman, *Evreii* 39; and Ioanid 43.
- 31 *Aliyah* means emigration to Palestine and later to the State of Israel.
- 32 According to Radu Ioanid during 1950 and 1951 *aliyah* peaked at 47,071 (1950) and 40,625 (1951). Ioanid 185.
- 33 "Stenograma ședinței cu conducerea Comitetului Democrat Evreesc din ziua de 16 martie 1953" ASR, Comitetul Democrat Evreesc, Dosar 23/ 1953, 7.
- 34 "Aici se întâlneau oamenii, se discutau problemele specifice, se colportau zvonuri—reale sau false, ele erau o formă originală de 'informare'—și, nu în cele din urmă ca importanță, se spuneau bancuri în care era persiflată realitatea politică. În mod obiectiv, fără voia conducătorilor vigilenți ai comunității, se crea o anume formă de 'societate civilă.' În ciuda controlului permanent al Puterii, în diversele foruri comunitare se întâmpla 'altceva.' Aici se nășteau uneori și forme originale de rezistență: bătăi din picioare sau tuse neîntrerupt când trimișii Puterii încercau să ducă 'munca de lămurire.' O altă formă de rezistență era ruperea caricaturilor antisioniste și antiisraeliene pe care oamenii C.D.E.-ului le puneau pe pereții comunității sau ai sinagogilor." Rotman, *Evreii* 78.
- 35 Glass 227-238; and Rotman, *Evreii* 41-49.
- 36 Rotman, *Evreii* 48-49.
- 37 Vladimir Tismăneanu, *Stalinism for All Seasons. A Political History of Romanian Communism* (Berkeley/ Los Angeles/ London: University of California Press, 2003) 133
- 38 "Stenograma ședinței Biroului Politic al Comitetului Central al Partidului Muncitoresc Român, 14 ianuarie 1953" ASR, Comitetul Democrat Evreesc, Dosar 2/ 1953, 8-39, here 20-21, 23, 32.
- 39 "Expunere cu privire la autodizolvarea și încetarea activității Comitetului Democrat Evreesc din RPR și a comitetelor sale regionale și locale" ASR, Comitetul Democrat Evreesc, Dosar Nr. 45/ 1953, 68-79, here 77.
- 40 Rotman, *Evreii* 121.
- 41 Ioanid 14.
- 42 Ioanid 164-173.

- 43 Rotman, *Evreii* 92-94; and Ioanid 53-67.
- 44 Letter from Moshe Sharett to Ana Pauker, March 11, 1949, printed in *Romania-Israel, Ministerul Afacerilor Externe. Documente diplomatice, vol. I, 1948-1969* (București, 2000), 6-10.
- 45 “Stenograma ședinței cu responsabilii organizațiilor de masă, 5 octombrie 1945” ASR, Fond CC al PCR—Cancelarie I, Dosar 86/ 1945, 14-28; “Proces-verbal al ședinței de instrucție cu instructorii centrali [...], 11 martie 1948” ASR, Fond CC al PCR—Cancelarie I, Dosar 6/ 1948, 32; “Procesele-verbale ale ședinței secretariatului Comitetului Central privind proiectul de statut al Uniunii Tineretului Muncitoresc [...], 21 februarie 1949” A.S.R, Fond CC al PCR—Cancelarie I, Dosar 18/ 1949, 217.
- 46 “Raport asupra problemei emigrării din rândurile populației evreiești în cursul anului 1950, 28 decembrie 1950” ASR, Comitetul Democrat Evreesc, Dosar 24/ 1950, 147-154.
- 47 Rotman, *Evreii* 94.
- 48 For concrete examples see Ioanid 56-62.
- 49 Glass 114-120; and Ioanid 185.
- 50 Radu Ioanid’s book provides a trustworthy account of the dealings involving the Romanian and the Israeli states, although I find the style in which he chose to present this information at times problematic.
- 51 For example Leny Caler who opened the *Teatru Victoria* (*Theater Victoria*) with George Vraca (Caler 117).
- 52 Otto Marcovici had been—among other things—the owner of the newspapers *Dimineața* (*The Morning*) and *Adevărul* (*The Truth*) in the inter-war era. Tudor Teodorescu Braniște, “Otto Marcovici” in the playbill of the *Teatrul Barașeum Studio* (*Barașeum Studio Theater*) for the season 1944-1945. ASR, Departamentul Artelor, Dosar Nr. 18/ 1941, 28b.
- 53 Sergiu Milorian, “Teatrul Barașeum: ‘Potopul’ de Berger” (newspaper, date, page unknown); (author unknown), “Beate Fredanov despre ‘Potopul’” *Renașterea Noastră* October 6, 1944: 2; Al. Cerna-Rădulescu, “Teatrul Barașeum: ‘Potopul’ prelucrare în trei acte de Mihail Sebastian, după Berger” *Ultima oră* October 10, 1944: (page unknown); dr. i. flavius, “Teatrul Barașeum ‘Potopul’” *Timpul* October 12, 1944: (page unknown); (author unknown), “Teatrul Barașeum ‘Potopul’ de H. Berger prelucrare de Mihail Sebastian” *Renașterea Noastră* October 13, 1944: 2; and Sebastian, diary entry for October 13, 1944, 570.
- 54 Milorian.
- 55 *Ibid.*
- 56 (author unknown), “În preajma premierii piesei americane ‘Potopul’” *Mântuirea* (date, page unknown).
- 57 Sebastian, diary entry for December 18, 1944, 576.
- 58 Stefan Baciu, “Teatrul Barașeum ‘Noapți fără lună’, piesă în 8 tablouri după J. Steinbeck de Mihail Sebastian” *Libertatea* December 31, 1944: (page unknown).

- 59 V. Timuș, "Teatrul Barașeum-Studio: 'Nopti fără lună' piesă în 8 tablouri de d. Mihail Sebastian după romanul lui John Steinbeck" Jurnalul December 24, 1944: (page unknown); Victor Iliu, "Teatrul Barașeum: 'Nopti fără lună' spectacol în 8 tablouri, după romanul lui John Steinbeck, de Mihail Sebastian. Direcția regizorală: I. Straucher. Decoratia scenică: M. H. Maxy" Scânteia December 25, 1944: (page unknown); I. Flavius, "'Nopti fără lună.' Piesă după romanul lui John Steinbeck." Timpul January 15, 1945: (page unknown).
- 60 Iliu; and Flavius.
- 61 Monica Lovinescu, "Barașeum: 'Viața e frumoasă' de Marcel Achard" Democrația March 18, 1945: (page unknown).
- 62 "Aprecieri efortul *Teatrului Barașeum* de-a lucra onest în domeniul teatrului, fără a se servi de desele trucaje și realizări eftine ale majorității scenelor românești, în momentul de față." Lovinescu.
- 63 Flavius.
- 64 Timuș; Milorian; Lovinescu; Valeriu Mardare, "Teatrul Barașeum 'Viața e frumoasă!' comedie optimistă, în trei acte, de Marcel Achard traducere de d. M. Sebastian" Universul March 29, 1945: (page unknown); Timuș, "Teatrul Barașeum: 'Viața e frumoasă' comedie optimistă, în trei acte de Marcel Achard" Jurnal March 18, 1945: (page unknown).
- 65 (Author unknown), "Teatrul Barașeum: 'Am ucis' melodramă în trei acte de Richard Voss" Poporul September 26, 1945: (page unknown).
- 66 R. A. C., "Impresii teatrale: 'Comedianta' cu Bebe Spitzer la Studio Barașeum" Era nouă November 22, 1945: (page unknown).
- 67 Bercovici 197.
- 68 M. Laistor, "'Bețivana' cu Lya Sterling" (newspaper, date, page unknown).
- 69 Announcement for *Dorfsjung*, Neamul Evreesc (page unknown). I have also found announcements for a play *Femeia sub mască* (*Woman under a Mask*) with no further references by the IKA.
- 70 Arhiva Centrului pentru Studiarea Istoriei Evreilor din România (ACSIER), Dosar 79, 1bis and 27.
- 71 Agreement signed on August 16, 1945, ACSIER, Dosar 79, 9-10.
- 72 *Ibid.*
- 73 A. Samuely-Sandu, "Să facem un teatru IDIS!" Program Stagiunea 1945, ACSIER, Dos 79, 37-45, here 39.
- 74 "Stenograma ședinței cu conducerea CDE din ziua de 16 martie 1953" ASR, Comitetul Democrat Evreesc, Dosar 23/ 1953, 15.
- 75 Kuller, "Difuzarea" 51.
- 76 Bercovici 195.
- 77 Bercovici 198.
- 78 Invitation to a meeting discussing the Yiddish theater, ACSIER, Dosar 79, 1.
- 79 Bercovici 198; Kuller, *Evreii în România*, 188; Kuller, "Difuzarea" 60.
- 80 (Author unknown), "Pe urmele lui Goldfaden"

- 81 "Programul nostru e obligația de a aduce pe scenă, bogata noastră moștenire de figuri istorice: Bar-Kohba, Iehuda Macabi,—nu diverse apariții fără rost—clădite pe anecdote. Așa cum altădată Salom Aleihem a combătut cu o operă pozitivă, 'literatură' șundistă a lui Șumăr, la fel vom înlocui cu arta adevărată spectacolele ieftine." Ibid.
- 82 Anton Celaru was born Iosif Faerstein in June 1919 in Huși. He worked as an editor-in-chief first for the *IKUF-Bleter*, later for the *CDE* newspaper *Unirea (Unity)*—called *Viața Nouă (New Life)* as of January 1951. In 1953 when the *CDE* ceased its existence, the newspaper was also suspended. Celaru changed to *Informația Bucureștiului (Bucharest's Information)* from where he took an early retirement in 1974 due to his disappointment with the political and social situation in Romania. As a young man Celaru had truly believed that Communism would deliver the world of injustice and ethnic discrimination. Interviews with Anton Celaru at his residence in Bucharest, July 1 and 2, 2006. See also Alina Darie, "Presă și suferință. Interviu cu Anton Celaru, cel mai în vârstă ziarist din județul Vaslui" *Adevărul de Vaslui* July 1, 2006: 3.
- 83 Interview with Anton Celaru, July 1, 2006, at his residence in Bucharest.
- 84 Oscar Lemnaru, "Teatrul Barașum: 'Ih leb, piesa în 3 acte de Pincewskî' Facla, October 1945, pg. 2. Oscar Lemnaru, "Teatrul UKUF: Tevie Laptarul. Dramatizare în 4 acte de I. Mansdorf, după Solem Aleihem; XXX În loc de cronică dramatică: Tevie Laptarul" *Renasterea Noastră* 5.01. 1946; Hanna Kawa, "Abraham Goldfaden: Vrajitoarea" (#1550)
- 85 Oscar Lemnaru, "Teatrul Barașum: 'Ih leb' piesă în 3 acte de Pincewskî' *Facla* October 2, 1945: 2; i. fl., "Teatrul Barașum: 'Trăiesc!'... Trei acte de Pincewsky" *Timpul* October 26, 1945: (page unknown). (author unknown), "Teatrul de artă idiș 'I.K.U.F.' a câștigat bătălia. Spectacolul 'Trăiesc' o mare biruință artistică" *Era Nouă* November 8, 1945: (page unknown); C. F., "Ansamblul de artă IDIȘ 'IKUF' 'Ih leb!' (Trăiesc), 3 acte de M. Pincewsky" *Victoria* November 28, 1945: (page unknown); St. T., "Ih leb..." *Libertatea* December 6, 1945: (page unknown).
- 86 Lemnaru.
- 87 Synopsis based on Lemnaru. A transcript of the play is unavailable.
- 88 fl.
- 89 Lemnaru; G[eri] Spina, "Sensul ne-artistic al teatrului IKUF" *Viața evreească* October (date unknown) 1945: (page unknown).
- 90 *Galut* is the Jewish exile or Diaspora.
- 91 I am thankful to Anton Celaru for informing me about the banner. Interview with Anton Celaru, July 1, 2006 at his residence in Bucharest.
- 92 "Dacă proverbiala solidaritate evreească ar fi o realitate, 'Ih Leb' ar beneficia de un răsunset uluitor care, ar parveni să-i constrângă și pe elevii conservatoarelor la urmărirea activității ansamblului 'IKUF', de unde ar deprinde să contribuie, cu mânărea însușirilor lor, la înlocuirea teatrului—

- divertisment și funcționarism dramatic, cu teatrul școală, cu *teatrul de arta*. [C]onvenind că prin aceasta, individual, s'ar salva dela compromisuri, fie ele cât de strălucit retribuite, și colectiv, i-ar distribui scenei, în redresarea noastră, rolul pe care structural, îl merită." C. F.
- 93 Sapina.
- 94 Kawa, "Tewie der Milchiger"
- 95 *Ibid.*
- 96 According to Anton Celaru, Iacob Mansdorf left Romania in 1947 and died not too long after that in South Africa. Interview with Anton Celaru July 1 and 2, 2006, at his residence in Bucharest.
- 97 Unsigned letter from the *IKUF-Teater* addressed to Max Ausschnitt asking for financial support. June 3, 1946. ACSIER, Dosar 79, unnumbered.
- 98 Bercovici 198; Arnold Schwefelberg, *Amintirile unui intelectual evreu din România* (București: Hasefer, 2000) 157.
- 99 M. Roșca, "Teatrul de arta Ikuf-Barașeum: 'Tevie Laptarul'" *Veac Nou* (date unknown): 10.
- 100 "Undeva prin Dudești, pe după un colț din Mircea-Vodă, într-o ogradă de pe Anton Pann, s-a deschis de curând, între o băcănie ca de țară și o vitrină cu fructe și zarzavaturi: o 'grădină' unde singura verdeță e vopseaua cu care au fost date scaunele și singurele flori sunt ori de hârtie, ori pictate și se află pe o scenă îngustă de scânduri dintre acelea primitive ca dela Moși. Pe această 'scenă', în acesta "Grădină" se joacă în fiecare seară în fața unui public mărunț și entuziast: teatru în limba idiș." I. M. "Grădina 'Astoria' *Vrăjitoarea* Comedie muzicală de A. Goldfaden" (newspaper unknown) July 11-12, 1946: (page unknown). Cf. also Emil Suter, "Grădina Astoria: Teatrul de artă idiș (IKUF): *Vrăjitoarea*, comedie în 3 acte (7 tablouri) de A. Goldfaden" *Scânteia* July 22, 1946: (page unknown).
- 101 Iacob Mansdorf, "La a IV-a premieră a teatrului IKUF" (newspaper, date and page unknown) probably sometime before June 1946.
- 102 W[illi] Savill, "Vrăjitoarea" *Neamul Evreesc* (date, page unknown)
- 103 I[osif] Faerstein, "1947 fără teatru evreesc!" *Unirea* January 11, 1947: (page unknown).
- 104 *Ibid.*
- 105 Iosif Faerstein, today Anton Celaru, identified Marcovici as the target of his attacks from 1947. Interview with Anton Celaru at his residence in Bucharest, June 1 and 2, 2006.
- 106 Faerstein.
- 107 Savill, "Teatrul evreesc la răspântie?" *Neamul Evreesc* September 3, 1946: 2.
- 108 "Unde este omul care cu autoritatea necesară să contopească aceste grupuri pentru securitatea și prestigiul fragedului așezământ de artă care trebuie să fie teatrul idiș?" S(avill), "Idischer Kinstler Ansamb!" (newspaper, date, page unknown).

- 109 “Ne adresăm intelectualității evreiești fie din București, fie din provincie, să nu tolereze activitatea daunătoare a acestor trupe iresponsabile. Noi, IKUF-ul, sîntem îndreptățîți să cerem aceasta, căci am dovedit într-o scurtă perioadă de timp că cu strădanie și cu voință de bine se poate realiza un teatru evreiesc, care să fie la nivel artistic corespunzător și care, în același timp, să aducă cu sine frumusețe, bucurie și înălțare sufletească maselor evreiești, care sînt gata să primească și să spijine cuvîntul cinstit și artistic în limba noastră idiș.” Moșe Lax, (title unknown) *Ikuf-Bleter* July 2, 1946 (page unknown).
- 110 Bercovici 199; Kuller, *Evreii în România 190*; Kuller, “Difuzarea” 60.
- 111 Bercovici 199.
- 112 U(ry) B(enador), “Despre teatrul IKUF și alte lucruri culturale” (newspaper, date unknown): 2.
- 113 Emil Dorian, “Ceva despre teatrul idiș. Amintiri și note” *ACSIER*, Dosar 6-G, 4.
- 114 *Ibid.* 5-6.
- 115 *Ibid.* 9.
- 116 *Ibid.* 10.
- 117 Letter from Otto Marcovici to the General Directorate for Theaters, ASR, Ministerul Artelor și Informațiilor. Direcția Teatrelor, Dosar 84/ 1948, (unnumbered).
- 118 ASR, Comitetul Democrat Evreesc, Dosar 7/ 1948.
- 119 (Author unknown), “Teatrul Evreesc de Artă IKUF s-a deschis” *Unirea* (date unknown, probably March 1948): 3. For a detailed account on the titles under which Sholem Aleykhem’s works were published in English see Louis Fridhandler, *Indexes to the Yiddish Works of Sholem Aleichem and their English Translations* available on-line at: <http://yiddish.haifa.ac.il/SholAley/indices.pdf>, here pg. 35.
- 120 Bercovici 202.
- 121 Bercovici 200.
- 122 Decree No. 21583/ 1948, ASR, Ministerul Artelor și Informațiilor. Direcția Teatrelor, Dosar 84/ 1948, (unnumbered).
- 123 Request addressed to the Minister of Arts and Information by Bernard Lebli, June 19, 1948, ASR, Ministerul Artelor și Informațiilor, Dosar 6/ 1950, (unnumbered).
- 124 “Program Stagiunea 1948” *ACSIER*, Dosar 79, Doc. 44 (individual pages unnumbered).
- 125 *Shtetl* means small Jewish township in Eastern Europe.
- 126 “Ansamblul de astăzi al teatrului Ikuf format din elemente adunate din trupe răzlețe este totuși păstrătorul unanim al unui manierism—care caracteriza teatrul evreiesc—devenit cu vremea o tradiție—a expresionismului.” Simion Alterescu, “Teatrul Evreesc I.K.U.F: ‘Lozul cel mare’ comedie de Șolem Aleichem” *Rampa* April 3, 1948: (page unknown).

- 127 *Ibid.*
- 128 "Spectacolul de la Ikuf dincolo de numeroasele calități pe care le vom pomeni mai la vale păstrează însă păcatul acestui formalism de care cu vremea teatrul evreiesc va trebui să se desbare." *Ibid.*
- 129 *Ibid.*
- 130 Ion Marin Sadoveanu, "Teatrul Evreesc 'IKUF': Șolem Aleichem: 'Lozul cel mare 200,000'" Timpul April 6, 1948: (page unknown).
- 131 "În general un spectacol interesant, de trudă, de bun început și mai ales, în stăruință și entuziasm al tuturor colaboratorilor, de nădejdi pentru o rodnică viață de artă." *Ibid.*
- 132 *Ibid.*
- 133 Ludovic Bruckstein quoted in Mioara St. Cremene, "Începutul unei literaturi dramatice noi de limbă idiș: 'Schimbul de Noapte' de L. Bru[c]kstein la Teatrul Evreesc de Stat" Contemporanul No. 164 (date, page unknown).
- 134 Cf. Rotman 113.
- 135 Cremene; I. G. Voinescu, "Cronică dramatică: Schimbul de noapte" (newspaper, date, page unknown).
- 136 Sara Feuer, "La Teatrul Evreesc de Stat se repetă piesa 'Schimbul de noapte' de L. Bru[c]kstein" (newspaper, date unknown): 2.
- 137 Sadoveanu, "Teatrul Evreesc de Stat: 'Schimbul de noapte' de d. Ludovic Bruckstein" Universul October 13, 1949: (page unknown).
- 138 Valentin Silvestru, "O piesă și un spectacol care arată odată mai mult de ce luptăm pentru pace: 'Schimbul de noapte' de Ludovic Bruckstein pe scena Teatrului Evreesc de Stat" Flacăra October 15, 1949: 5.
- 139 Cf. Jost Hermand, "'Der häßliche Deutsche wird wieder schön!' Das westdeutsche Wandlungsbild in den Nachrichtenmagazinen der Luce-Presse (1947-1955)" Angewandte Literatur. Politische Strategien in den Massenmedien (Berlin: Sigma, 1996) 73-87.
- 140 "Probabil că nu a studiat îndeajuns condițiile în care lucrează astăzi muncitorul evreu și problemele pe care i le pune noul fel de viață. Lupta de clasă nu s'a terminat, ea cunoaște forme speciale în sânul populației evreiești din Republica noastră. Starea de fericire completă în care se găsesc cele patru personaje din prolog și epilog nu este conformă cu realitatea; ele vorbesc numai despre dușmanul de peste granițe și dau impresia că aci au lichidat cu burghezia vrăjmașe." Silvestru.
- 141 Bercovici 276.
- 142 Silvestru, "'Cei doi Kune-lem!' de A. Goldfaden la teatrul Evreesc de Stat" Flacăra October 24, 1948: 14-15; Aurel Baranga, "Teatrul Evreesc de Stat (fost teatrul IKUF): 'Cei doi Kune Lemel' de A. Goldfaden in regia lui M. Rubinger" Libertatea November 4, 1948: 2; Sadoveanu, "Teatrul Evreesc de Stat: 'Revizorul' de N. Gogol" Universul April 3, 1949: (page unknown); Cr[emene], "Câteva probleme în legătură cu activitatea Teatrului Evreesc de Stat (Pe marginea spectacolului 'Revizorul')" Contemporanul No. 134 (date



- unknown): 10 and 12; Cremene, "La Teatrul Evreesc de Stat 'Intrigă și amor' de Schiller" Contemporanul (probably February) 1949: (page unknown); Sadoveanu, "Teatrul Evreesc de Stat: Fr. Schiller: 'Intrigă și amor'" Națiunea February 4, 1949: (page unknown).
- 143 "Raport de activitate în perioada 1 ianuarie 1951 – 1 aprilie 1951" ASR, Comitetul Democrat Evreesc, Dosar 34/ 1951, 10-19, here 16.
- 144 *Ibid.*
- 145 Grözinger 255.
- 146 Cf. S. Stein, "Beim bukarester idische melukhe-teater: 'In shotn funem palmenboym'" IKUF-Blätter March 3, 1951: 2.
- 147 Writing from the TES to the General Directorate for Theaters, September 24, 1948, ASR, Ministerul Artelor și Informațiilor, Direcția Teatrelor, Dosar 84/ 1948, 15.
- 148 Writings from the IKUF to the General Directorate for Theaters, May 12 and 13, 1948, ASR, Ministerul Artelor și Informațiilor, Direcția Teatrelor Dos 84/ 1948, 23.
- 149 "[...] rolul teatrului în general, acela al ridicării nivelului cultural al populației și a mobilizării ei în vederea construirii socialismului." Cremene, "La Teatrul Evreesc de Stat 'Intrigă și Amor' de Schiller."
- 150 "Proces-verbal al ședinței din 21 iunie 1949," ASR, Comitetul Democrat Evreesc, Dosar 13/ 1949, 56-67, here 64.
- 151 "Raport cu privire la activitatea teatrelor evreiești de stat din București și Iași" February 9-15, 1950, ASR, Fond CC al PCR (Cancelarie I), Dosar 24/ 1950, 19-24, here 21-22.
- 152 *Ibid.* 22.
- 153 *Ibid.* 20.
- 154 "Dare de seamă, 1 iulie – 30 septembrie 1951," ASR, Comitetul Democrat Evreesc, Dosar 34/ 1951, 57-66, here 65.
- 155 "Dare de seamă, 1 ianuarie – 1 iunie 1952," ASR, Comitetul Democrat Evreesc, Dosar 42/ 1952, 22-40, here 32.
- 156 Cf. also Kuller, *Evreii în România 192*; Kuller, "Difuzarea" 61-62.
- 157 Kuller, *Evreii în România 186*; Kuller, "Difuzarea" 56.
- 158 Willy Moglescu, "Teatrul evreesc" Contribuția evreilor din România la cultură și civilizație, Nicolae Cajal/ Hary Kuller (Ed.) (București: [Hasefer], 1996) 374-381, here 379.
- 159 "Teatrul evreesc a fost instituția care a oglindit evreii din România cel mai bine [...]." Interview with Dr. Mirjam Bercovici at her residence in Bucharest, July 5, 2006.





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# THE USE OF FOLK COMPOSITIONS IN CONVEYING IDEOLOGICAL MESSAGES: THE COLLECTIVIZATION PROCESS<sup>\*</sup>

## 1. Introduction

Folk compositions are influenced by the context in which they are generated, transmitted, and performed. The constitutive elements of each performing situation— the time and the place, the performers, the objects used, etc. – may be reflected by the text. Furthermore, each folk performance, particularly of a folk literary composition, is related to the broad context of folk culture, which is seen in the light of a specific historical period, with its distinctive social and economic aspects. In this study, I examine folk compositions produced in the early years of the Communist regime in Romania. This is the period when collective farms (*Gospodării Agricole de Producție*) were introduced. I focus on the ensuing process of forced collectivization and scrutinize the mechanisms used by the Communist power to shape the folk creation process and ensure the production of “folk compositions on contemporary themes.”<sup>1</sup> Expected to propagate official ideology, such compositions are predicated on a process of selection and fragmentation of the social and historical context in which they emerged. Against this background, I trace the way in which the social realities of the time are re-evaluated and signified by the text.

Yet, it is important to mention that beside this type of texts which represented an ideological command and which conveyed the official political message, the traditional folkloric items (those created and performed as a result of a natural creation process within the rural community) were also collected, archived and studied during the period this paper is focused on.

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## 2. The official discourse on collectivization

After private agricultural property had been placed under government control in 1945, the delivery of agricultural equipment (the Stipulation of the Ministry of Agriculture and of Landed Property, no. 825, in OG 91/19.04.1945<sup>2</sup>) and the grain share (the Decision of the Council of Ministers no. 2339, in OG 161/19.07.1945) to town councils became compulsory. The same year marks the foundation of the Supreme Council of the National Economy, with Gh. Gheorghiu-Dej as its president (OG 271/26.10.1945, OG 272/27.11.1945). However, three years later, in 1948, when the other two prominent members of the Party leadership<sup>3</sup> endorsed collectivization, Gh. Gheorghiu-Dej warned that “with no reason and under no circumstances the peasants should be forced to join the collective farms.”<sup>4</sup> On the one hand, this statement<sup>5</sup> was meant, to withstand potential criticism concerning the abuses that took place in the villages; on the other hand, it was intended to cover up the actual situation. Numerous incidents, even peasant uprisings flared up in several counties: Botoșani,<sup>6</sup> Bihor, Rădăuți, Suceava (1949), Ialomița, Vlașca, Ilfov, Giurgiu (in the case of the uprising in the village Căminesca, the local Party activists requested four lorries with soldiers to control the revolt; the soldiers fired at the peasants, who had been summoned to meet; the casualties were one dead man and several wounded people),<sup>7</sup> Gorj (1950), Galați, Tulcea, Mureș, Gorj, Brașov (1958), Bacău, Dolj, Galați, Mehedinți, Olt, Cluj (1959), Dâmbovița (1962).<sup>8</sup>

On March 2, 1949 the government issued Decree no. 83, which eradicated any remains of land ownership. Until 1949, these remains were still licit by virtue of the Petru Groza government (set up on March 6, 1945) article of law concerning the agrarian reform (art. no. 187, OG 68/23.03.1945). This time, however, not only was the land expropriated but so were the livestock, the buildings, the agricultural equipment and products, the claims, titles, and shares of the landowners’ “exploitation activity” (art. 2) Opposition to the confiscation of any goods or their hiding entailed a punishment of 5–15 years of hard labor and property confiscation (art. 4).<sup>9</sup> This decree was followed by the Central Committee’s Plenary meeting of March 3–5, 1949, which inaugurates the beginning of the collectivization campaign. One month later, on April 30, the government issued Decree no. 183, which was designed to regulate the punitive system in order to ensure the progress of the “socialist transformation of agriculture.” As a result, “hiding, destroying or altering

products or goods" carried a penalty of 5 to 15 years of hard labor and a fine of 50,000-200,000 lei (art. 4, letter d). The penalty for failure to fulfill the State plan was 1 to 12 years of severe imprisonment and a fine of 10,000-100,000 lei (art. 2, letter a).<sup>10</sup> This political process, which had serious social consequences, was deemed final on April 27, 1962, when Gheorghe Gheorghiu-Dej made the following announcement in the *Statement concerning the end of the collectivization and the reorganization of the leadership in agriculture, presented at the extraordinary session of the Great National Assembly (Raportul cu privire la încheierea colectivizării și reorganizarea conducerii agriculturii prezentat la sesiunea extraordinară a Marii Adunări Naționale)*: "In the Romanian Popular Republic socialism is irrevocably victorious in cities and villages. (Long, powerful applause) (...) The socialist sector in agriculture owns today 96% of the arable surface and 93.4% of the agricultural surface of the country; the collective farms comprise 3,201,000 families, almost all the peasant families. The goal set by the 3<sup>rd</sup> Congress of the Romanian Workers' Party in the domain of the socialist transformation of agriculture has been achieved almost four years ahead of schedule (Powerful applause.)"<sup>11</sup>

Both at the beginning and at the end of the collectivization process, the structure and rhetorical devices used in official discourse, were focused on the need to "to intensify the class struggle in the villages" and eliminate the "capitalist element" – the kulak (*kulak* was the Russian term often used in Romania, and referred to the rich peasant; the Romanian terms are *chiabur, ciocoi, boier*) – from the life of the village. Or, in other words, "to intensify the class struggle in the villages". The vocabulary chosen to illustrate this perspective is preeminently militaristic.. The shorthand report of the Central Committee's plenary of March 3–5, 1949 shows Dej's preference for warlike oratory: the scrupulous achievement of the tasks dictated by the Party leads to "the victory in the war waged by our Party for the socialist transformation of the agriculture"<sup>12</sup>; the class enemy, the kulak, is "dangerous, tenacious, combative." He "is different even from his fellows, the bourgeois in the cities, because he does not theorize much. He grabs the axe, the hammer, shoots from his hiding place, risks his life to defend his property because he's got the sense of property in his blood."<sup>13</sup> Moreover, the kulaks "have been fighting day by day, using all means to win over middle and even the poor peasants, and form alliances with them."<sup>14</sup> That is why, "the kulaks are a very powerful enemy, an enemy hidden in a forest of 12 million people,

and it is this enemy that our Plenary session intends to liquidate.”<sup>15</sup> The secretary general of the Communist Party describes the end of the collectivization process in the same terms: “*Within an extremely short time from a historic perspective, the working class, under the guidance of the Party and in alliance with the peasantry, defeated and removed from power the exploiting classes, conquered all the power, nationalized the main means of production, and proceeded to the building of the socialist society.* (Applauses).”<sup>16</sup>

An examination of the documents in the Romanian National Archives, especially those that belong to the Central Committee of the Romanian Communist Party fund, allows us to deconstruct the mechanisms the Party used to impose an organizational system that suited its own ideological needs and not the needs of the rural social and economic reality of rural life. The critical analysis of the decrees, shorthand transcripts of the Politbureau meetings, and decisions and articles of law elaborated especially during the 50’s is the starting point of this study. My goal is to discuss the official discursive strategies used by the Party to achieve forced collectivization.

A recurrent discursive strategy in the Party’s ideological arsenal was to state that persuasion was the only method for achieving collectivization. During the meeting on January 19, 1954, Alexandru Moghioroș, the minister of agriculture, pointed out: “We need to work in such a way as to make sure that everybody join the agricultural association, and I don’t want to believe that we are not able to persuade the peasants to do so. If this happens, those who do not join will have their land in the pocket and not a specific area.”<sup>17</sup> The phrase *with the land in the pocket* refers to the property ownership document that, under the conditions of collectivization, no longer represented a warrant of individual or family right to the land.

Persuasion was used in almost all conclusive contexts of the Politbureau meetings with minimal variation in wording. This strategy was aimed at reaching all categories of people: young people (belonging to UTM - the Association of the Young Working People), women (belonging to the Communist organization), soldiers, elementary school teachers, and so forth. The method of transmitting the ideological message – “mouth-to-mouth propaganda”<sup>18</sup> – followed the folk model. In order to achieve their goals, the Communist authorities availed themselves of the best propagandists, who could use the same transmission code as the addressees.



The application of the persuasive method entailed both rewards for the foremost people in agriculture and sanctions against the “reactionaries.” The political discourse also targeted the opponents of this process along with the ways in which their reactions could be controlled and thwarted. A new classification of people living in the Romanian villages was thus created. According to the Party’s resolution of March 3–5, 1949, five categories of people worked in the agricultural sector. The first was represented by the agricultural proletariat, that is, by the peasants who had no land and by those who worked for the rich (*kulaks*, *chiaburi*). The second category consisted of poor peasants who had no more than 5 ha of land, representing more than 57% of the entire land that was privately owned. The middle peasants, who covered 60% of the agricultural production of the country, formed the third category. The middle peasants used the labor force of their families, owned from 5–20 ha (i.e., 34% of the arable land) and would form the nucleus of the future collective farmers. The fourth category consisted of the rich peasants – the *chiaburi*. In this case, the classification criterion was based on their ability to hire labor force or agricultural equipment rather than on land ownership. The remaining class, the landowners, whose properties had been divided and given to the peasants during the 1945 reform, represented the fifth category.<sup>19</sup> Decree no. 83/2.03.1949 dealt with the remains of landowners’ holdings after the 1945 agrarian reform. Opposition to, confiscation and concealment of possessions carried a penalty of 5–15 years of hard labor and the seizure of any goods (article no 4).<sup>20</sup> In the summer of 1950, the Party leaders ordered the Agrarian Section take action against the “guilty” landowners and seize their holdings.<sup>21</sup> Some local authorities even bypassed the rule of law. They summarily confiscated the landowners’ holdings and sent them and their families to the Black Sea – Danube Canal without any trial.<sup>22</sup> These actions betray the Communist regime’s intent to segregate social classes and project negative connotations on rich peasants and landowners. Other social categories targeted by the regime included bankers, industrialists, merchants, owners of nationalized buildings, and “the other elements of the upper bourgeoisie” (article no. 1 of Decree 16, concerning “the former exploiters,” Official Gazette 13/31.01.1951).<sup>23</sup>

The social reality of forced collectivization caused not only economic and social changes in the Romanian village but also changes in the mentality of the population in almost all rural areas of the country. The

social hierarchy was inverted, the human relations – modified / depreciated; the individuals representing the local authorities and the eligibility criteria for nominations in official positions were changed too. Indeed, all communitarian values were reconsidered from an ideological angle.

In order to impose the new system of agricultural organization, the Communist regime used three main methods: first, the direct interaction between villagers and political propagandists; second, the use of mass media (newspapers, which were collectively read at the village club, political programs broadcasted through loudspeakers, etc.); and third, the creation and transmission of a new kind of composition – “the new folk song.” This new literary genre embodied a fictional reality that offered the only structural and thematic model that was deemed ideologically acceptable in contemporary folklore.

### **3. “Public transcript” and “hidden transcript”**

The above-cited documents belong to and also shape the discourse that builds and imposes the vocabulary and rhetoric of the Communist regime. In James C. Scott’s terms, such documents belong to and create the “public transcript” used as “a shorthand way of describing the open interaction between subordinates and those who dominate.” The American anthropologist explains that “*public* here refers to action that is openly avowed to the other party in the power relationship, and *transcript* is used almost in its juridical sense (*proces verbal*) of a complete record of what was said. This complete record, however, would also include nonspeech acts such as gestures and expressions.”<sup>24</sup> The role of the “*public transcript*” is to “provide convincing evidence for the hegemony of dominant values, for the hegemony of the dominant discourse.”<sup>25</sup> A public transcript can have three aims: “to magnify the awe in which the dominant elite is held or to keep certain social facts out of public sight altogether or to serve cosmetically to beautify aspects of power that cannot be denied.”<sup>26</sup> Yet, the two groups – those who dominate and the subordinates – could not use the same code both for transcribing reality and for relating to it. Both the dominant group and the subordinates use a discourse that takes place “offstage” and consists of speeches, gestures, and practices that confirm, contradict, or inflect what appears in the public transcript. This kind of discourse is called by James C. Scott “*hidden transcript*”.<sup>27</sup>

It is important to emphasize that the *hidden transcripts* of the two groups are “never in direct contact. Each participant will be familiar with the public transcript and the hidden transcript of his or her circle, but not with the hidden transcript of the other.”<sup>28</sup> If for the dominant group it is “an artifact of the exercise of power,” for the subordinate one, it is “an acting out in fantasy – and occasionally in secretive practice – of the anger and reciprocal aggression denied by the presence of domination.”<sup>29</sup>

Against this background, the above-mentioned official documents can be subsumed to the *public transcript* of the dominant group. In the following section, I discuss folk compositions on new themes, which I consider to be expressions of the official version of the subordinates. These texts cover all ideological themes and motifs used in the official discourse of the Communist regime. In fact, they can be seen as metatexts that reshape and alter reality to offer a fabricated image of life, attuned to the demands of official ideology.

*The new folk song*<sup>30</sup> focuses on a specific aspect of socialist society, namely, on the process of collectivization. But the meaning and the value of the agricultural transformations found in these texts are totally different from the actual ones. The official versified structures embody the image of collectivization as promoted by the official Party policy. They do not mention the deportations of those peasants who did not want to join the collective farms, the peasants’ rebellions, or the police and Securitate’s abuses. The *new* literary compositions gathered in anthologies represent the official folk creation, which emerged in response to political command. This literature took the form of contests (whose purpose was the creation, collection, and performance of folk compositions) or of imposed performances, officially organized by village propaganda brigades. These new forms of poetic manifestation were not the result of a natural creation process within the rural community. They had a propagandistic purpose, representing a way of legitimizing the Communist leadership by constructing a fictitious reality. These creations did not appear spontaneously but as a result of the political command. The fact that the new folk compositions were performed only in a fabricated context – on stage – is also significant. Staging created opportunities for the emergence of a new category of performers – the artistic brigade members. Another explanation for the use of the images representing “the realities in the socialist society” may be the ideological “bombardment” dispatched by the official newspapers, radio broadcasts, and political agitation. All these means of mass propaganda promoted the

“achievements” of the Communist Party and the folk songs that were awarded prizes at the contests organized by the Creators’ houses. The language used in the new folk lyrics was adapted to the information conveyed by official propaganda and its intended purpose. Thus, a linguistic, thematic, and cognitive model was imposed, which may clarify to a certain extent the nature of some of the new folk creations.

These creations are generally referred to as *folk lyrical poetry on contemporary themes*,<sup>31</sup> *new folk songs*,<sup>32</sup> or *new creation of folk songs*.<sup>33</sup> In her introductory study *Cântecul popular nou*<sup>34</sup> (*The New Folk Song*), Eugenia Cernea does not object to the denominative syntagm but to its meaning: “The term *new folk song* (author’s emphasis) meant, in fact, the folk creator’s musical and literary product, which directly or implicitly approaches the life of the working classes in the spirit of the new mentality. But the term is conventional. We also adopted it because it had remained in force with the above-mentioned meaning since it was launched in our folklore studies three decades before. Taken ad litteram, the term is self-contradictory. As a product of a collective creation process that unfolds in time and space, the folk song cannot represent, in any shape or form, a totally new product (...) A creation whose component elements are totally new (i.e., absent in traditional folklore) cannot be considered a folk creation. Thus, a song cannot be both folk and new in the same time. The qualifier *new* (...) refers to the themes inspired by the new socialist reality in Romania. The creation of new folk forms involved partial innovations in the structure and developmental directions of folk language. Thus, the term *folk song should be understood as a song based on the folk tradition, in which the contemporary folk creator participates in order to express his attachment to the socialist country through the use of verse lines and tunes* (author’s emphasis).”<sup>35</sup>

In addition to a detached description of the purely formal attributes of the folk song, this definition includes a subjective (even emotional element) – ‘the attachment to the socialist country.’ This element is an essential ingredient of this type of folk creation.

Most studies written on this subject during the Communist period, put forward the notion that folk poetic compositions should reflect the socialist reality. In C. Bărbulescu’s article “The New Creation of Folk Songs,” the artistic creation of the “working masses” is deemed to be “a significant product of our epoch, which vividly reflects the new socialist reality” and “an active agent that contributes to the development of our society.”<sup>36</sup> Thanks to these studies, an adjacent literature develops that prescribes

the rules for creating new folk compositions. By the same token, this literature establishes the researchers' tasks for developing the phenomenon of new folk lyrical poetry. In the above-mentioned article the folklorists' tasks are clearly stated: to examine in depth the process of folk creation; to establish the laws of its development; to provide new elements of "artistic craftsmanship" closer in spirit to the socialist realism laid down for writers, artists, and composers; to guide amateur groups, folk orchestras, and song and dance ensembles; and to publish folk compositions.<sup>37</sup>

One can say that in a dictatorial regime, a relationship exists between two sides of life: The first is represented by the concrete reality – the objective social and historical conditions of life – which can be studied from archival documents, legislative materials of the time, or personal memoirs. The second side is represented by the official position of the power apparatus, whose ideological discourse filters each segment of reality through its own system of values. The result is not a distorted image but one in which the signifier acquires the opposite sign. Thus, the *public transcript* of the dominant group turns into a fictitious metatext, whose role is to break down the coherence of the former element. The new folk song becomes an instrument of ideological manipulation and deceit by disseminating , the concepts and mechanisms of Communist ideology to the masses. In this light, the folk composition could be seen as the *public transcript* of the subordinates. The same role is accomplished by the propaganda brigades, the mass media, or authored literature and music. In their turn, all these creative manifestations are expected, to portray the achievements of Socialism.

The studies written during the Communist period on this subject can also be seen as fictitious metatexts. Not only do they promote these versified structures discussed above as a model of folk creation; they also recommend them as sources of documentary evidence on the "objective" reality of life. Moreover, these studies offer (ideologically motivated) reasons for sidestepping certain aspects of traditional culture, which were relegated to the passive folk repertoire. This was the case, for instance, of rituals. Since they involve religious behavior, they were considered obsolete and retrograde.

"Because the gnoseological and social bases that generated folk genres such as the charms,<sup>38</sup> no longer exist, these folk forms seem obsolete to the contemporary mentality and were abandoned; others, which flourished during the feudal and precapitalist period, such as the *doina* (an elegiac

folk song) and the ballad, suffer a rapid process of involution, losing their former role and meaning. Other folk forms, namely, the song and the dance, moved instead to the forefront, acquiring new features. At the same time, forms of expression only accidentally found in traditional folklore, such as the unsung poem, became widespread, and were now recited by the brigade or written as propaganda material."<sup>39</sup>

The new folk compositions were included in the research plan of the Institute of Ethnography and Folklore, in Bucharest, in 1949. The first materials were collected 1949 and 1950 in Bucharest, and the informants were fiddlers and vocalists in the folk music band "Taraful Gorjului." In 1951 the researchers collected materials in Batrâni, a village near Ploiești<sup>40</sup> and in Ieud, Maramureș.<sup>41</sup> An important stage in the creation and transmission of the new folk lyrical poetry was marked by the national contest organized by the Institute of Ethnography and Folklore and by the Central House of Folk Creation, in 1960. The theme of the contest was *The Collection of the New Folk Songs and of the Workers' Revolutionary Songs*. The materials were classified into three categories: new literary texts (legends, ballads, poems, verses, riddles, brigade texts); new songs (texts and tunes – collected or personally created) and workers' revolutionary songs (before August 23, 1944).<sup>42</sup> Some of the pieces sent for the contest were published in *Revista de folclor (The Folklore Review)*.<sup>43</sup> After selecting the literary and musical creations, the Institute's researchers agreed upon the representative centers for this segment of folk compositions: Rupea, Sighet, Lăpuș, Găești, Costești, Drăgășani, Mediaș, Urziceni and Craiova – towns and villages where the folklorists did their fieldwork to record the pieces for the contest.

The new folk compositions were collected in anthologies and classified according to the following criteria: thematic, the regional, or alphabetical (by the first line). From a thematic perspective, two new levels can be observed in the new folk compositions: a surface level and a deep level. The surface level consists of officially prescribed themes for folk creation and collection contests. On this level, the themes are general and coexist within the same piece: the (Communist) Party, the Republic, the antifascist struggle, the socialist transformations in agriculture. These themes include subthemes that attempt to cover all the segments of a collectivized village – the collective farms, the mechanization in agriculture, the electrification of villages, etc.), life in the new village, the feeling of satisfaction following the abolition of the exploiting classes (the class struggle), working in factories and on the building sites, etc.

On the deep level, folk creation has two basic aims: on the one hand, to shape the profile of the “new person,” and, on the other hand, to stabilize the “just” social structure – the class structure – according to Communist ideology. A typical image of the “new person” is the woman who acquires new attributes (the beautiful girl is singing *doinas* on the tractor, she is elected among local authorities, she does not have time for kissing because she has to harvest with the brigade, etc.) and new appellatives (she is the tractor driver, a brigade member, etc.). The very criterion of choosing romantic partners is thus modified, as suggested by the following lines:

“Green leaf of a peony, / My beauty on the tractor, / Don’t make me suffer!  
/ Stop the tractor for a while / ‘Cause my heart burns with desire. / Come  
down to hear my words / For my heart to be relieved, / I cannot even eat /  
Because of your love. / - I will not eat until tomorrow, / It doesn’t bother me  
at all, / I don’t stop my tractor to hear your praises, / All I have to do is cross  
the road / And will surely find another one like you,, / Even a nicer and a  
foremost one, / Not like you, a loiterer. / Forget about love / And go to work,  
/ There’s no time to sit and talk, / The field has to be ploughed / So let’s start  
the tractors / All over the fields.”<sup>44</sup>

The use of standardized subjects in folk poems on new themes conveys the notion that all folk creators think alike and write according to a pre-established model.

This *public transcript* fostered an enhanced version of reality and constructed a frozen model of people’s mentality. Behind this transcript, however, another reality was unfolding – the tragedy of collectivization, which was mirrored by the *hidden transcripts* of both groups. The funds of the National Archives in Bucharest include reports that detail the actual state of things during the collectivization process. These reports provide information on the use of force as the main method of “persuading” peasants to join collective farms: “[...] arrested, beaten, tortured, threatened with guns, they were terrorized when summoned at the Provisional Committee during the night; their children were sent home from school, the middle peasants were threatened that they would be enlisted as kulaks [...]” People were forced to make a choice: joining the Collective Farms or imprisonment for sabotage. When persuasion or violence failed to succeed, extreme solutions were used, namely putting to death some kulaks on the spot. The reports speak about peasants’ uprising as well and reveal the methods used by the peasants to avoid yielding their

shares. For example, they would hide the products in the ground, share the crops with the poor peasants, bribe some of the collectors for being asked a smaller share, soak the grains to weigh more, harvest during the night, etc.

On January 29, 1958, the prime secretary of the Darabani region, E.Tzurcanu, signed a report on the violations committed during the socialist transformation of agriculture in his district. Quoted below is a passage from this report:

“Despite the directives given by the regional office, the office of the Party District Committee in some villages replaced the work of the local agitators’ group with the limited activity of some groups of 3-4 employees, who summoned the people at the People’s Council, and when they failed to persuade the working peasants to join the agricultural association, they sometimes used methods of intimidation and even resorted to abuse. Thus, in the Miorcani village, although on November 18, 1957 there were only 5 requests of 1.14 ha on an area of about 200 ha, Culică Ion, the president of the village council, with the approval of the regional instructor of the village popular council, brought a tractor and started to furrow the whole area. The working peasants, about 200-300 people, who owned lands on this field and who hadn’t even been asked whether they wanted to join the agricultural association, gathered on that field, and the women Matei Natalia and Lupașcu Maria flung themselves down, in front of the tractor. The president of the village council and the regional instructor of the people’s village council ignored the peasants’ discontent and went further, ordering another part of the field to be furrowed and the two women to be convicted.”<sup>45</sup>

To apply Scott’s terminology, this document discloses a part of the *hidden transcript* of the dominant group, namely, the actions of the officials empowered to carry out the forced collectivization. These actions were presented as isolated rather than typical cases and appeared in documents of limited circulation.

On the other hand, the *hidden transcript* of the peasants who experience the process of socialist transformation of agriculture is more difficult to reconstruct because of the scarcity of texts documenting opposition to the regime. Although such texts could hardly be collected during that period, a few examples have still been preserved in the Archive of the Institute of Ethnography and Folklore in Bucharest. During the fieldwork carried out in Săliște, Maramureș, in August 1950, researchers



Alexandru Amzulescu and Emilia Dragnea wrote down two variants of a text labelled as „a kulak’s song.” This is a parodic text that reflects the real social image of village political officials, mentioning and explaining their nicknames.<sup>46</sup>

The researcher’s informant, Stefan Bornar, points out that this poem’s author was Vlad Dare, son of Simion. Vlad had been imprisoned one year before because a police officer found the text in his money belt. He was sentenced to 6 years of hard labor at the Black Sea – Danube Canal. After 1989, another Institute researcher, Dr. Cornelia Călin Bodea, discovered a photocopy of Vlad Darie’s handwritten lyrical compositions in a notebook. In fact, these lyrics are personal narratives distinguished by the presence of rhyme and meter but the absence of verse lines. These texts are an account of the author’s humiliating and excruciatingly painful experiences<sup>47</sup> from the moment of his arrest and transportation to the Black Sea-Danube Canal to his incarceration in the Communist prisons at Sighet and Poarta Albă. The last compositions in this notebook are three poems about the 1989 Revolution.

Also preserved in the Institute’s folklore archive are two more compositions that prove the existence of versified expressions of the peasants’ revolt against the Communist regime. These compositions were collected during research fieldwork. I am referring here to two information sheets:<sup>48</sup> no. 24376 and 24 103. The former preserves a stanza collected on May 16<sup>th</sup> 1961, in Mocod, Năsăud. At the official opening of the collective farm in Nimigea de Sus, Năsăud, in January 1961, the following lines were heard in the crowd.

“Damn you, my barn / I have exchanged you for a piece of steak / Damn you my wealth / I have exchanged you for a bottle of beer.”<sup>49</sup>

The researcher’s comments on this stanza emphasize several noteworthy aspects. Firstly, that its theme recurrently appears during the researcher’s “private” conversation with the informant. Secondly, that this stanza was “jokingly” recited and does not represent a social reality but isolated points of view shared by those with “a bourgeois mentality who find it difficult to separate themselves from their personal belongings when joining the collective farm.” And, finally, the researcher’s notes indicate that samples of this kind of folk composition were collected for scientific reasons. Accordingly, he not only justifies his interest in this kind of folk composition; he also offers an “official” explanation for

studying it and by provides an ideologically “clean” context for collecting samples.

The latter information sheet preserves a lyrical text that betrays lack of trust in the collective ownership of land. It is a song in which a daughter begs her mother not to marry her to a rich but undesirable man. Neither does the girl love the man, nor is she interested in his land because the collective farm will take the land away anyway, and she will be left with an unwanted husband.<sup>50</sup>

#### **4. The collective farm – a utopian place**

When the Communist regime took control over the political, social, and cultural areas of life, it reshaped the concepts and the symbolic universe through which the leading elite justified its existence and organized all its actions and institutions. The emblematic signs, forms, and discursive structures built by the political power were meant to integrate all the social elements into its own frame of ideological purpose and meaning. This symbolic power system was used not only to impose the Communist social conditions but also to “influence people’s indigenous norms of conduct so that they themselves contribute, albeit not necessarily in a conscious way, to a government’s model of social order.”<sup>51</sup>

The significations of the already existing social structures were changed to perfectly fit the ideological system of meaning. In this manner, the Communist regime forcibly imposed its networks of power and projected a negative connotation on the previous axiological grid. The values informing it were considered retrograde and incompatible with the regime’s requirements for social reconstruction.

The concept of *power* used in this study is based on Michael Mann’s typology of power.<sup>52</sup> All types of power defined and discussed by Mann can be identified within the Romanian Communist society after 1947: *extensive power* (“the ability to organize large numbers of people over far-flung territories in order to engage in minimally stable cooperation”); *intensive power* (“the ability to organize tightly and command a high level of mobilization or commitment from the participants, whether the area and numbers covered are great or small”); *authoritative power* (“willed by groups and institutions” and comprising “definite commands and conscious obedience”); *diffused power* (power that “spreads in a more spontaneous, unconscious, decentered way throughout a population,

resulting in similar social practices that embody power relations but are not explicitly commanded. It typically comprises, not command and obedience, but an understanding that these practices are natural or moral or result from self evident common interest"); *ideological power* (power that "derives from three interrelated arguments in the sociological tradition: *meaning, norms* and *aesthetic/ritual practices*"); and *political power* ("derives from the usefulness of centralized, institutionalized, territorialized regulation of many aspects of social relations").

The focus of this study is *ideological power*. In this respect, the Communist regime can be said to have monopolized and controlled three important elements mentioned above: meaning, norms, and aesthetic/ritual practices. The folk composition became a channel for conveying the "proper" meanings, i.e., the political message that distorts actual events to support a propagandistic goal. This newly achieved purpose of the folk composition altered its very significance and structure.

The folk discourse was not only meant to "reflect the new social reality" but also to establish the social norms of conduct that regulated the relations among villagers in the context of "the socialist transformation of agriculture," namely the imposition of the collective farms (Cooperativele Agricole de Producție). The intrusion of ideology in the world of folk poetry modifies both its language and its content. As mentioned earlier, a new category of texts is now created for this purpose – *folk texts on new themes*. The form in which the political message was shaped and transmitted to the masses bore, on the one hand, the characteristics of "the wooden language"<sup>53</sup> but on the other, it was adapted to the intended recipients through the use of traditional themes, motifs, and structures.

The issue of "wooden language" was comprehensively approached by Francoise Thom in her study *Langue de bois*.<sup>54</sup> In her *Introduction*, the author discusses the origin and the evolution of this phrase and its uses: it comes from the Russian expression *dubovii iazik* (literally, *oak tongue*) and, before the Communists came to power, was used to designate the heavy style of the czarist bureaucracy. In the 1920s, this way of writing was spread by the newspapers and was often ridiculed. The writer Mikhail Zoshchenko labeled it "monkey tongue." During the same period, a "frozen language" emerges in Poland, but the first who understood that the "wooden language" is not just a ridiculous yet harmless form of form of political discourse but a metamorphosis of the language caused by its contact with ideology was George Orwell. It was him who revealed the actual role played by "wooden language" (Orwell's "Newspeak") in a

totalitarian state. After considering the stages in the evolution of the term, Françoise Thom concludes that the wooden language has only one function: to be a vehicle for ideology.<sup>55</sup>

Among the Romanian studies<sup>56</sup> dedicated to this topic, Tatiana Slama-Cazacu's deserves special mention. Her study relates the ideologized form of the language to the socio-political contexts that generate it, to the mechanisms used for imposing it to the masses, and to the intended effects.<sup>57</sup>

Considering these approaches to the structure, functions, and contexts in which the "wooden language" appears, the use of these discursive formulae in the *folk texts on new themes* shapes a certain horizon of linguistic expectations and a specific architectural pattern. Fixed, rigid structures are inserted in the texts next to traditional folk expressions, themes, and motifs, which are supposed to create the imagistic and linguistic frame familiar to the peasant population. Thus, verbal and conceptual folk elements appear in the *new folk texts* with different meanings and functions than in their genuine context. Two such examples can be found in an article published in *Revista de Folclor* in 1959.<sup>58</sup>

The first concerns the amateur artistic brigade in Fetești. The brigade paraphrased a text recited during the ritual of *paparude*<sup>59</sup> and performed it in its characteristic tune. However, the versified structure was distorted in order to convey a satiric message meant to ridicule "certain shortcomings or remnants of the past in people's conscience. Thus, the content and the meaning of this custom have been changed: its ritual character and magic function have totally disappeared; the old custom has been transformed into a show with an important educational function."

The second example concerns the brigade in Brănești. This brigade "satirized the indolence of some cultural work organs (that did not find a conductor for the choir of the village club<sup>60</sup>), using for this purpose the paraphrased text of a charm 'against snakes'; thus, they reached a dual educational goal: to fight against an old practice<sup>61</sup> by proving its ineffectiveness and to criticize people's incorrect attitudes in order to improve them."<sup>62</sup>

If the formal level met the requirements of both the political language and of the category of addressees, the content level was expected to reflect the new institutions (with their attributes, characteristics, and functions), the social village hierarchy, as well as the villagers' attitude towards the "revolutionary gains." The most important institution in a collectivized village was the collective farm (*gospodăria agricolă*

*colectivă*), with its imperfect variant, the agricultural association (*întovărășirea*).<sup>63</sup> The analysis of about 300 texts<sup>64</sup> stored in the Archive of the Institute of Ethnography and Folklore in Bucharest offers a utopian image of the socialist village. Under the auspices of the new political leadership, this image bore the signs of *renewal*, *change*, and *new beginnings*.

The organization of a collective farm entirely transforms the place where it exerts its civilizing influence, making it unrecognizable.<sup>65</sup> It becomes the space of “togetherness,” where private property is eliminated to be replaced by collective ownership. One no longer works for oneself but for the entire community, on the joined lands of the collective farm. A religion of labor is, thereby, developed:<sup>66</sup> one must work diligently (“*cu hărnicie*”), in an organized way and following the brigade’s plan (“*planificat, în brigăzi organizat*” – mgt. 627i), or in a humane way (“*cu omenie / La noi în gospodărie*” – mgt. 1701gg). Even those who lead an ill-advised life style are reintegrated within the community through work and competition.<sup>67</sup>

The reward of one’s labor is measured in material goods (houses, TV sets, grains, sugar, furniture) or in money, which can be earned by the collective work of the people.<sup>68</sup> Besides listing examples of newly acquired goods, the texts also convey the image of the perfectly organized new village, where the institutions reorganized by the “democratic regime” are themselves the community’s gains. Thus, the villagers benefit from acquiring big, new houses, loudspeakers, radio stations, cinemas, clubs, tractors, etc.<sup>69</sup>

Electrification and wire broadcasting are two more elements of the collectivization propaganda. References to loudspeakers and the electric light are always present whenever the decision to join the collective farm is mentioned. In fact, they are the results of this decision.<sup>70</sup>

All these elements impress the *folk compositions on new themes* with the image of an earthly paradise, built by villagers who have freely accepted the call of the Party. (The discursive strategy used here is identical with the one used in official speeches: The emphasis is on the need to persuade rather than force the peasants to join the collective farms). All positively connoted social and professional categories of people (collective farm members, members of the Romanian Union of Working Youth, tractor drivers, weavers) work together and sing the *new folk songs*<sup>71</sup> on the joined lands. Thus, these texts function as a metatext for the new type of creation, which they try to legitimize and impose as the unique

folk pattern. The performers use traditional dance tunes<sup>72</sup> in order to appeal to the receivers' familiarity with the folk tradition and facilitate the process of assimilation.

Apart from the happiness and prosperity enjoyed by the working people, a happiness and prosperity possible only within the context of a collectivized village, the analyzed texts also record the social categories that were negatively connoted by the official ideology. Singled out were the enemies of the new social order, the kulaks – who were either expected to adjust themselves to the conditions imposed by the Communist authorities or risked to be excluded from the community.<sup>73</sup> They were the only cloud in the blue sky above the collective farm because they represented the remains of the former, property-based social structure and, therefore, they were seen as a threat to the “perfect” system of collective ownership.

Collective ownership of the land is the foundation of the socialist transformation of agriculture. Nevertheless, the authority and control of the collective farm extends farther, affecting the personal life of each individual. It legitimizes and institutionalizes matrimonial relationships (e.g., the marriage ceremony takes place within the “protective” space of the its authority)<sup>74</sup> and relates them to the rhythm of working in the field, which is the only purpose of the future family.<sup>75</sup> Dating locations do not extend beyond the collective farm area, which can be seen either as an enclosure or as an indefinitely expanding, boundless space.<sup>76</sup> This space also dictates the fulfillment of people's feelings and harmonizes their rhythms to the very rhythm of work in the collective farm.<sup>77</sup> Indeed, marital happiness merges into collective happiness within the most important institution of the village.<sup>78</sup> Gender-specific terminology is mainly borrowed from working class professions: she is a weaver (“lucrătoare, țesătoare / Pentru clasa muncitoare”), a front worker in the fields (“fruntașă pe ogoare”), “the child of the collective farm” (“copila gospodăriei”), a brigade member or leader, a deputy or a guide for agricultural work (“îndrumătoare”). The male character is the “pride of the collective” (“fala colectivului”) and is most often depicted while working on the “joined lands”, driving a tractor, plowing, or sowing. The country's industrialization forced many villagers to migrate to the cities, converting them to urban dwellers. As a result, urban themes and images make their way into the world of folk poetry: the man works in a factory (“la Onești, la combinat”), in a pit, is an oil-industry worker, or a foremost driller.

People lose their individuality. They are now perceived only as fixed and unchangeable elements in the complex social mechanism. The roles they play, either willingly or unwillingly, replace their actual personalities<sup>79</sup> and turn them into tokens of standardized and unilateral categories.<sup>80</sup>

The texts on new themes create a versified pattern of the utopian land<sup>81</sup> promised by the Communist regime. They offer a frozen image of a collectivized country in which everybody is working and singing in the green fields.<sup>82</sup>

The happiness of the working people and the beauty of the country are brought about by the Communist Party, as it is striving to build a "new road" towards a prosperous way of life.<sup>83</sup>

## 5. Performing contexts and creation mechanisms

As mentioned before, the purpose of the *new songs* was to legitimize the social structures introduced and imposed by the Communist regime. They did not spontaneously appear in answer to esthetic or ritual needs of the village community. That is why their performing contexts were also ideologically fabricated to generate, support, and transmit these artifacts. Archival materials indicate that the stage – in village clubs, collective farm, radio stations, houses of culture – was the favored environment in which these creations took shape. The stage also accommodated suitable folk genres: village choirs and ensembles, propaganda artistic brigades, collective farm, festivals, and contests.

The genesis of the *new folk creation* can further be explained in at least two other ways: First, this process became possible thanks to cultural activists who worked at Houses of Popular Creation (either regional or the one in Bucharest) and whose task was to write, collect, and disseminate folk lyrics. Using folk rhyme and metrical patterns, the activists versified the official political message and gathered their lyrics in anthologies and collections. (Some of them included scores of folk tunes that were totally different from those created in their genuine context). Such lyrics became prerequisites for contest or festival participation.

Additional sources for the *new folk creation* were folk lyrics that the Institute's researchers recorded during their fieldwork. Archival documents

also provide personal information about the informants. Many of them mention that they used to be very poor before 1949, then joined the new forms of village authority which, above all, offered them privileged positions: collective farm worker, weaver, bookkeeper at the consumers' co-operative society, barkeeper ("bufetieră la Trustul Alimentar 8"), member of work brigade, etc. Their declared reasons for creating folk lyrics bore the stamp of the official ideological discourse. As one informant put it, they created "in order for the peasants to know which path we all should follow."<sup>84</sup> These informants were such good versifiers that they could extemporaneously produce a text on demand. Thus, some *new songs* were created during fieldwork, when the researchers would tell the informants what they were looking for. These folk poets were also motivated by the potential prestige to gain from participation in contests and festivals or from performing in radio broadcasts.

Considering all the elements involved in the creation, transmission, and imposition of *new folk compositions*, namely – their form, content, functions, structure, context of performance, and mechanisms of creation – the *new folk songs* emerge as a laboratory of ideological creation serving the interests of the Communist regime. This form of political discourse achieved a certain degree of circulation, but it has not survived outside the contexts especially created for it or after the end of the Communist era.



## NOTES

- 1 This syntagm strictly refers to the communist period, being specific for those texts created in concordance with the official ideology.
- 2 All the data referred to the period of collectivization between 1945 and 1962 (the latter year represent the date when Gh. Gheorghiu-Dej announced that the process of collectivization was completed) are taken from Octavian Roske, „Colectivizarea agriculturii în România, 1949-1962” (“The Collectivization of Agriculture in Romania”), in *Arhivele totalitarismului*, Anul I, Nr. 1/1993, pp. 146-169.
- 3 Ana Pauker declared in the newspaper *Universul* no. 229/2.10.1948, that the victory of socialism in Romania is inconceivable without the fulfillment of collectivization. Teohari Georgescu praised this process in the same newspaper, no. 260/7.11.1948. (*apud*, O. Roske, *cit. art.*, p. 151).
- 4 Gh. Gheorghiu-Dej, *Articole și cuvântări (Articles and Speeches)*, Editura pentru literatură politică, Bucharest, 1953, p. 231, *apud* O. Roske, *cit. art.*, p. 151.
- 5 His statement was followed, in 1951, by a Party memorandum that warned: “[E]ach economic or administrative pressure put on the working peasants with the aim of forcing them to join the collective farms will be severely sanctioned” (The Ministry of Justice, *Legislația Gospodăriilor Agricole Colective și a Întovărășirilor Agricole – The Legislation of Collective Farms and of the Agricultural Associations*, Editura de Stat pentru literatură economică și juridică, Buc., 1956, *apud*, O. Roske, *cit. art.*, p. 157-158).
- 6 The first conflicts between the peasants and the Securitate troops took place in Roma, a village in Botoșani, where the troops put down the peasants’ resistance by means of fire arms.
- 7 The archive of the commission for the research on abuses and for petitions in the Romanian Parliament, File no. 6172/1992, p. 2, Bucharest, *apud*, O. Roske, *cit. art.*, p. 157.
- 8 *Apud* O. Roske, *cit. art.*, p. 152-167.
- 9 Dan Cătănuș, Octavian Roske, *Colectivizarea agriculturii în România. Dimensiunea politică (The Collectivization of Agriculture in Romania. The Political Dimension)*, vol. I, 1949-1953, p. 33.
- 10 *Idem*, p. 34.
- 11 “Raportul cu privire la încheierea colectivizării și reorganizarea conducerii agriculturii prezentat la sesiunea extraordinară a Marii Adunări Naționale” (Report concerning the end of collectivization and the reorganization of leadership in the field of agriculture; presented at the extraordinary session of the Great National Assembly), in Gheorghe Gheorghiu-Dej, *Articole și cuvântări (Articles and Speeches)*, 1961-1962, Editura Politică, Bucharest, 1962, p. 287.
- 12 Dan Cătănuș, Octavian Roske, *op. cit.*, doc. 2, p. 87.
- 13 *Idem*, p. 88.

- 14 *Ibidem.*  
 15 *Ibidem.*  
 16 Gh. Gheorghiu-Dej, *op. cit.*, p. 292.  
 17 Romanian National Archives, Central Committee of the Romanian Communist Party, file no. 6/1954. p. 9.  
 18 *Idem*, file no. 45/1954, p. 14.  
 19 Ghită Ionescu, *Communism in Romania, 1944-1962*, Oxford University Press, London, 1964, p. 187-189, *apud* Dennis Deletant, *Teroarea comunistă în România. Gheorghiu-Dej și statul polițienesc 1948-1965 (The Communist Terror in Romania. Gheorghiu-Dej and the Police State, 1948-1965)*, Ed. Polirom, Iași, 2002, p. 106.  
 20 O. Roske, *cit. art.*, p. 151.  
 21 Robert Levy, "The 'Right Deviation' of Ana Pauker", in *Communist and Post-Communist Studies*, vol. 28, no 2, p. 244, *apud* Dennis Deletant, *op. cit.*, p. 108.  
 22 D. Deletant, *op. cit.*, p. 108.  
 23 O. Roske, *cit. art.*, p. 158.  
 24 James C. Scott, *Domination and the Arts of Resistance. Hidden Transcripts*, Yale University Press New Haven and London, 1990.  
 25 *Idem*, p. 4.  
 26 *Idem*, p. 52.  
 27 *Idem*, p. 4.  
 28 *Idem*, p. 15.  
 29 *Idem*, p. 37-38.  
 30 The denominative syntagms for this are discussed further below.  
 31 Nicoleta Coatu, *Lirica populară cu tematică actuală (The Popular Lyric with Contemporary Thematic)*, Ed. Minerva, Bucharest, 1984.  
 32 Eugenia Cernea, Vasile D. Nicolescu, Monica Brătulescu, Nicolae Rădulescu, *Cântece și strigături noi (New Songs and Verses)*, Ed. Muzicală a Uniunii Compozitorilor din R.S.R., Bucharest, 1966 and Eugenia Cernea, Nicoleta Coatu, *Cântecul popular nou (The New Folk Song)*, Ed. Muzicală, Bucharest, 1986. These are but two anthologies, which contain in their title the above-mentioned syntagm.  
 33 C. Bărbulescu, *Creația nouă de cântece populare (The New Creation of Folk Songs)*, in "Studii și cercetări de istorie literară și folklor", Anul I, Nr. 1-4, 1952, p. 193-220.  
 34 E. Cernea, N. Coatu, *op. cit.*, p. 15-16.  
 35 *Ibidem.*  
 36 C. Bărbulescu, *cit. art.*, p. 193.  
 37 *Ibidem*, p. 206.  
 38 One of the least ideologically permissive species.  
 39 "Introducere" (Foreword), Eugenia Cernea, Vasile D. Nicolescu, Monica Brătulescu, Nicolae Rădulescu, *op. cit.*, p. 4.

- 40 The folklorists Paula Carp and Tiberiu Alexandru first recorded them in Bucharest, then Ghizela Sulițeanu, Boris Marcu, and Paula Carp recorded the same informants in their native villages.
- 41 Paula Carp, Ghizela Sulițeanu and E. Popovici-Feuer recorded the materials during the fieldwork, at the agricultural farm "Scântea", in Ieud.
- 42 *Idem*, p. 3.
- 43 Vasile D. Nicolescu, "Din materialele premiate la concursul de cântece noi și cântece muncitorești – revoluționare" ("Selected award materials from the new songs and workers' revolutionary songs contest"), in *Revista de folclor*, Anul VII, Nr. 1-2, Bucharest, 1962, p. 72-93.
- 44 E. Cernea, V. D. Nicolescu, *op. cit.*, p. 113.
- 45 C.C. al P.C.R. – Cancelarie, *Dosar nr. 5 / 1958*, p. 84-85.
- 46 „Morți voj de comuniști / Cum v-om face fermentiș / Prin pădure, prin costiș / Și-ț șede cum șad și eu / Când era Martin Birău (Președintele Cooperativei) / Președinte, om cu școală / Bun de ucenic la moară. / Coastă ruptă secretar (referentul luga Vasile) / Buciulean este notar (Gheorghe Lupu) / Bucă scurtă de pă vale (Pop Vasile, instructor județean) / Țîne câte-o cuvântare / De colhoz că ce rost are / Și o ține de colhoz / Să alea un colomoz (Ca cân să distrugă un lucru) / Mîrtin și cu Talianu (Preș. Gosp. Colect.) / Și cu Grigore Țiganu (Omu care bate doba) / Ieremi schinare ruptă (agent agricol) / Au ajuns gazdă de munte / Titirezu Zapului (luga Ion de la colectare) / Din capătu satului / Șăzu sindicatului / Lihet, nas încârligat (gestionar cooperativă, preș. Frontul Plugarilor) / L-o pus Groza deputat / Sări-i-ar ochii din cap / Vasîluc, nas de picioac / A ajuns zaviț la joc (mai mare) / Și cîn joacă cite-o sîrbă / Cîn îi vez nasu țî-i scîrbă / Lăzăruc agent agricol (Chiș Ion, fost agent agricol) / Aoleo ce mai pericol / Cîn te baji la el în casă / O putoare nu te lasă / Hilip cu-a lui doi feciori (Dunca Filip, îngrijitor tauri) / Dă mîncare la taori / Și-i mătură-n primărie / De colb și de hîrțulie / Și mai spală și closetu / Unde cacă comitetu. / Cucu boacter desmățat (Vlad Ion, guard comunal) / Tot bate doba pîn sat / Cîrcu boacter desmățat (Vlad Dumitru) / Și de spate înduplecat / Și cur mare din Budești (Bud Ileana, moașă, secretara UFDR) / Fă carnete femeiești / Las-să facă că nu-i bai / Că-i de 40 de ani.”
- 47 „Pentru ce-am horit o hore, am stat doi ani la închisoare. Dar când am venit acasă, comuniștii iar mă lasă fără boi și fără casă, fără boi, fără curele, fără liacă de avere și îmi trăiesc tot cu durere. Iesă lumia la arat, numa eu rămîi în sat. Boii mi-au confiscat, pămîntu l-au comasat. Rău mă doare în inimă când văd plugu tot rugină. Teleguța lîngă plug și n-am boi ca să-i înjug și la arat să mă duc. (...) Inima mă doare când văd pluguri și tractoare. Tractoarele ară pe șes, noi punem pe deal ovăz. Dar cota musai s-o dai și de grâu și de mălai. Bate-i, Doamne, ce mai stai.” (Mss. 226)
- 48 The information sheets contain data that are only handwritten during fieldwork and not recorded on tape.

- 49 "Dumnezău tău de șură, / Că te-am dat pe o friptură. / Dumnezău tău  
de-avere, / Te-am dat pe-o sticlă de bere."
- 50 „Foaie verde d-un susai, / Măicuță să nu mă dai / După Ion a lu' Mihai. /  
C-are căruță și cai. / Are, mamă, și pământ. / Nu-l iau mamă că-i urât. / Că  
pământu' stă pă coastă / Iar urātu șade-n casă. / Pământu' mă putrezește,  
51 / Urātu mă-mbătrânește. / Pământu-l ia colectivul, / Iar eu rămâi cu urātu'.”  
Cris Shore and Susan Wright, *Policy. A new field of anthropology*, in  
*Anthropology of Policy. Critical perspectives on governance and power*,  
edited by Cris Shore and Susan Wright, Routledge Taylor and Francis Group,  
London and New York, 1997, p. 6.
- 52 Michael Mann, *The Sources of Social Power. Vol. I. A history of power from  
the beginning to A.D. 1760*, Cambridge University Press, 1988, pp. 7-8,  
22-23, 26-27.
- 53 This phrase is literally translated from French *langue de bois* (see Tatiana  
Slama-Cazacu ed., "The <<wooden language>>. A topical problem for  
psycholinguistics and for modern linguistics", in *IJPL*, 13, no. 2[37] Thematic  
issue). In English there are also other words for it: *officialese* or *gobbledegook*  
(Patrick Sériot, *Analyse du discours politique soviétique*, Institut d'Études  
54 *comunicaționale și manipularea*, Polirom, Iași, 2000, p. 59)  
I have used the Romanian translation of the book - Francoise Thom, *Limba  
de lemn*, Humanitas, Bucharest, 2005.
- 55 Francoise Thom, *op. cit.*, p. 34.
- 56 For the analysis of the totalitarian discourse in Romania, very useful is  
Cristiana-Nicola Teodorescu's *Patologia limbajului comunist totalitar*,  
Editura Scrisul Românesc, Craiova, 2000.
- 57 Tatiana Slama Cazacu, *Stratagemă comunicaționale și manipularea* (Chapter  
2. "Limba de lemn", pp. 55-101), Polirom, Iași, 2000, p. 71.
- 58 Florin Georgescu, "Folclorul și mișcarea artistică de amatori", publicat în  
*Revista de Folclor*, an IV, nr. 1-2, 1959, pp. 97-113.
- 59 A ritual performed by children and meant to bring the rain during the  
droughty summer periods.
- 60 I've translated *cămin cultural* by *village club*.
- 61 That is, the performance of, and the belief in, charms.
- 62 Florin Georgescu, article cited, p. 108.
- 63 „Bună-i întovărășirea / Dar mai bună-i colectiva.” (Mgt. 1846b)
- 64 These texts were recorded during 1954 and 1962 during fieldwork or in the  
Institutes' studio.
- 65 „Ș-am zis verde matostat / Astăzi satul s-a schimbat. / Uite neică și privește /  
Satul meu cum înflorește / Că-n colectiv să muncește.” (Mgt. 1668c) „Foaie  
verde ș-un dudău / Drag îmi e și satul meu. / Când în el totul e nou. / Avem  
colectivă-n sat / Acum toate s-a schimbat.” (Mgt. 1670j) „Firicel de bob de  
66 rouă / Azi trăim o viață nouă. / Toți în colectiv muncim / Țara noastră

- să-nflorim." (Mgt. 1742z) „Cântă cuce cum poștești / Ce-ai lăsat nu mai găsești. / Plugul ai lăsat cu boii, / Și-ai găsit tractoare noi. / Țarina ai lăsat-o (mie?) / Și-ai găsit gospodărie. / (...) / Ne-ai lăsat stingheri trudind / Ne găsești uniți muncind (...)” (Mgt. 2136b).
- 66 „De când e colectiv la noi / Avem viață-mbelșugată / Că munca-i organizată / Muncim cu râvnă și spor / C-avem traiul mai ușor.” (Mgt. 1701ii) și „De când e democrație / E mai mare veselie / Toți suntem colectivști / Și lucrăm mai fericii / Căci muncim organizat / Munca ni s-a ușurat. / (...) / Și traiu ni l-a schimbat / Căci muncim planificat.” (Mgt. 1700jj) Contextul competiției între colective devine stimulant și recuperează prin muncă chiar și pe cei cu o viață dezordonată: „Dar la noi la colectiv / Chiar Istrate cel bețiv / Când e vorba de muncit / Se avântă-nveselit / Și cu spor el că muncește / Și pe toți ne-nveselește / Și ne-ndeamnă să muncim / Primul colectiv să fim.” (Mgt. 1787k)
- 67 „Dar la noi la colectiv / Chiar Istrate cel bețiv / Când e vorba de muncit / Se avântă-nveselit / Și cu spor el că muncește / Și pe toți ne-nveselește / Și ne-ndeamnă să muncim / Primul colectiv să fim.” (Mgt. 1787k)
- 68 „Iară noi în colectivă / Muncim bine, fără grijă / Că-ntr-o zi de sărbătoare / Ne luăm televizore / Case noi ne vom clădi / Și mai bine vom munci.” (Mgt. 1701z); sau în bani „Foaie verde matostat / În colectiv am intrat / Și-am muncit cu hărnicie / Și-am scăpat de sărăcie / Bucate mi-am adunat / Case noi mi-am ridicat / Partidu m-a ajutat / Și bani din bancă mi-a dat / Banii se plătesc în rate / Și fără dobândă frate.” (Mgt. 1698 le) and also „Frunzuliță verde din vie / Bine-i în gospodărie / Știm lucra și știm munci / Știm face economii / Surplusu de-un an întreg / Noi îl depunem la CEC / (...) / La CEC banii se păstrează / Și la sută se dublează / Îi scoatem la un an, doi / Și ne facem case noi.” (Mgt. 1701y) or „Colectivul nostru harnic / Azi ne-arată că e darnic / din belșug / El ne dă la toți bucate / Bani și zahăr și de toate / să avem / Casele să le-mbrăcăm / Mobilă să ne luăm / tot ce vrem / Astăzi viața ne e dragă / Cu partidul nu-i de șagă / măi flăcăi / Pe cât ne-a planificat / Mai mult am realizat / pentru noi.” (Mgt. 1787j)
- 69 „Foaie verde și-o lealea / În comuna Dacia / În regimul democrat / Multe lucruri s-a schimbat / S-a făcut tovărășie / Și o mare gospodărie / Și să lucră frățioare / Cu mașini și cu tractoare / Partidul ne-a ajutat / Satul nostru s-a schimbat / Case noi s-au ridicat / Și tot omu frățioare / Are-n casă difuzoare / Și s-a mai făcut în sat / Crepuri pentru adăpat / Cămin mare arătos / Și un cinema frumos / (...) / Multe lucruri s-a schimbat / Doar aici la noi în sat / Este-un sat ca un model / Parc-ar fi un orașel / Și de drag să stai în el.” (Mgt. 1698 ld)
- 70 „Foaie verde ca bobu / Satul nostru Mocodu / Este sat radioficat / Că s-a colectivizat / Că noi mult nu ne-am gândit / Cererea am iscălit / (...) / Mocodu e un sat mare / Tătă casa difuzoare / Datorită grijii lui / Dragului partidului.” (Mgt. 1850e) and „Colectivă să trăiești / Că tu dragă ne mai ești / Ne-ai adus lumină-n sat / Libertate tu ne-ai dat.” (Mgt. 337a)

- 71 „Foaie verde iasomie / Bine-i în gospodărie / Frunzuliță matostat / Cătu-i țara-n lung și-n lat / Nu mai e plâns și oftat / Pe câmpiile cu rouă / Răsună cântarea nouă / Cântarea muncii unite / A zilelor fericite.” (Mgt. 1732f)
- 72 „Haideți dragi colectivști / Utemiști și tractoriști / Hora mare să jucăm / Cu toți să ne bucurăm.” (Mgt. 1961d) „Vin ciobanii de la stână / Codrul verde larg răsună / Unii cântă, alții joacă / Joc bătuta să se-ntreacă / Foaie verde iasomie / Bătuta cine o știe / Să o cânte mai cu foc / (...) / Tuturora ea le place / Muncitori și muncitoare / Și țărani de pe ogoare / Toți muncesc cu drag și spor / Pentru țară și popor.” (Mgt. 1787p)
- 73 „Mereu cu drag să muncim / Traiul să ni-l fericim / Că în timpul cel trecut / Multe rele-am petrecut / Munceam la ciocoi măi frate / Azi ni-i munca în dreptate.” (Mgt. 1852g) or „Foaie verde de-o sipică / Mărioară, Măriucă / Mai ții minte-alaltăieri / Eram slugă la boieri / Ba țin minte bade-al meu / Cum munceam la el din greu / Îi munceam trei zile-odată / Mă lăsa o zi c-o vacă.” (Mgt. 1942k) and also „Să-mi ajute Dumnezeu / Să-i duc la canal pe toți / Să scăpăm țara de hoți / Fir-ar ai dracului morți.” (Mgt. 1974a) „Frunză verde merișor / S-arătăm chiaburilor / Ei să treacă-n țara lor / Astă țară nu-i a lor / Că-i a proletarilor / Cu chiaburii la-nchisoare / Cu proletarii pe ogoare / Foaie verde iarba găștii / Să trăiască comuniștii.” (Mgt. 1729s)
- 74 „Foaie verde de stejar / S-a dus badea militar / (...) / La toamnă s-o libera / Ș-o veni și m-o lua / Ș-om face nuntă frumoasă / În gospodăria noastră.” (Mgt. 1631 IIIh)
- 75 „Mare-i hora și frumoasă, / Cine mi-e drag, nu-i acasă. / Armata de-o isprăvi / El acasă o veni. / Și-mpreună om munci / Om munci cu omenie / La noi în gospodărie.” (Mgt. 1852h)
- 76 „Foaie verde iasomie / Drag mi-e și la vară mie / C-oi lucra-n gospodărie / Cu bădița lângă mine / (...) / Mi-o fi drag a secera / Într-o holdă cu badea / Bădița mi-o lega snopii / Eu i-oi da gura și ochii / Bădița mi-a pune clăi / Eu i-oi da ochii-amândoi / Și snopii i-om treiera / La batoză cu badea. / Ș-om avea recoltă multă / Ș-oi face cu badea nuntă.” (1852h)
- 77 „Așteaptă-mă, puică dragă, / Să termin tarlaua-ntreagă / Și la tine oi veni / Și-amândoi ne vom iubi, / Când de-arat oi termina / Câmpu-ntreg și țarina.” or „Hai, mânduțo, să lucrăm / Norma pe zi s-o gătam / Ș-apoi să ne iubim / Până noaptea va veni.” (1700 Ih)
- 78 Și la toamnă, mă, bădiță, / Ne căsătorim / Ș-amândoi în colectivă / Frunțași o să fim / Casă nouă ne vom face / Cămin fericit / C-odată cu colectiva / Noi am înflorit.” (1846d)
- 79 „Foaie verde iasomie / Plin este de voinicie / Cu flori mândre-n pălărie / Frunțaș în gospodărie / Și când vine din câmpie Cu mult drag îmi zice mie / la te uită, tu, Mărie / Cât de bine-ți șade ție / Frunțaș-n gospodărie.” (Mgt. 2095k)
- 80 „Poți să fii mire-mpăcat / Ce mireasă ți-ai luat. / Știe coase, știe țese, / Și-n colectiv să lucreze;” or „Ce mai fete mândre-s pe la noi / Știu a țese la război

/Toată ziua-n colectiv lucrează / Seara cântă și brodează". (Mgt. 1857d) and „Rău mă teme maică-mea / Că mă iubește neica / Mă iubește-adevărat / Dacă el nu-i altu-n sat / E voinic și sprâncenat / Și dulce la sărutat / El când pornește tractorul / Pân la prânz ară ogorul / Trage brazde-adânci și late / Și crește mândre bucate / Trage brazde-adânci și bine / Și ma iubește pe mine.” (Mgt. 1865d)

81 “One can define utopia as an image of a future and better world, which is: felt as still unfulfilled and requiring an additional effort to be brought about; perceived as desirable, as a world not so much bound to come as one which should come; critical of the existing society; in fact a system of ideas remains utopian and thus able to boost human activity only in so far as it is perceived as representing a system essentially different from, if not antithetical to, the existing one; involving a measure of hazard; for an image of the future to possess the qualities of utopia, it must be ascertained that it will not come to pass unless fostered by a deliberate collective action.” Zygmunt Bauman, *Socialism: the active utopia*, Holmes and Meier Publishers, New York, 1976, p. 17.

82 „Florică micșunea, / Mi-e dragă primăvara / Că văd tractoarele arând / Tractoristele cântând. / Primăvara cân’ sosește / Codru iarăși înverzește / Și ară tractoarele / Pe toate ogoarele. / Cântă ciocârliile / Pe toate câmpiile. / Pornesc flăcăii la muncă. / Cântă fetele pe luncă / Cântă cucu’ și mierla / Că nu mai e viața grea / C-au sosit tractoarele / Și semănătoarele.” (Mgt. 2133o)

83 „Foaie de iasomie / Bine-i în gospodărie, / Numai cânt și veselie / Așa cum îmi place mie. / Viață nouă a-nflorit / Că partidul a muncit / Drum nou de ne-a construit / Soare nou a răsărit. / Foaie verde, foaie lată, / Ce frumoasă-i țara toată / Becurile strălucesc / Oamenii muncii muncesc. / Asta-i viață de trăit / Că ni-i traiul fericit.” (Mgt. 2133z)

84 Informant’s sheet no. 12 221.

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For writing this paper I have also used the information provided by several interviews conducted with former researchers of the Institute of Ethnography and Folklore (Lucilia Georgescu, Helga Stein, Ghizela Sulițeanu, ing. Ion Georgescu).