

# *Cogita*

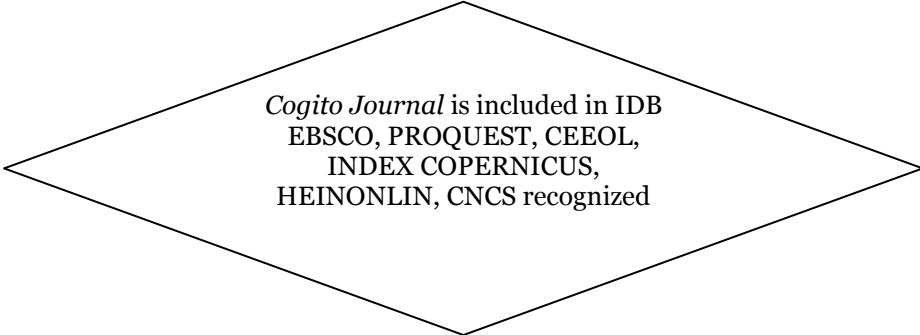
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# THE LANGUAGE AND ONTOLOGY OF SUBJECTIVITY

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**Abstract:** *The contributions of linguistics – from Saussure and Benveniste to Hagège –, of the theory of speech acts, and the new theoretical-methodological strategies (structuralism, semiotic, and hermeneutics) can be integrated into the ontology of the human. The analytical accent is placed on the noticing of the manner in which one theoretically assimilated the presence of the subjectivity into language. The above-mentioned approaches are integrated into and operate with the Cartesian paradigm on the subject. The alternative proposed by Francis Jacques is shaped by the primum relationis principle, stimulating a radical change within the way of understanding/interpreting subjectivity, person, communication and the very dia-logical architecture of mind.*

**Keywords:** *language, speech, subjectivity, person, primum relationis.*

Contemporary methodological specializations – accompanied by epistemological issues and metaphysical turns – are integrated – together with specific reflexive horizons and reductive/polemic [pre]dispositions – into [re]thinking of the irreducible specificity of the human. The field of nowadays quarells and promises is shaped by conceptual innovations and conceptual grasps that are originated into – and, also follow the tradition of – structural linguistics, semiotic, heremenutic and their post-modern continuations. „The change of paradigm represented by the passing from a philosophy of consciousness to a philosophy of language constitutes – as J. Habermas notes – a cut (an epistemological one) so deep as the metaphysical one. So far, linguistic signs were taken as tools and accesories of representations: from now on, the intermediate realm and symbolic meanings gain their own value. The relations between language and world or between sentence and states of affairs take the floor in the case os subject-object relations. The operations of constructing a world, that belonged to transcendental subjectivity, are taken care of by grammar structures. The reconstructive effort of linguists replaces an introspection that is difficult to control. Finally, the rules of linking signs, of phrase forming, of statements creating can be drawn from the linguistic configurations that are, so to say, realities that we are presented with”<sup>1</sup>. This is the result of some anti-metaphysical perspectives – from I. Kant to positivists – and of some attempts to ideal constructions, on the background of unveiling the old metaphysical skills –

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<sup>1</sup> Jürgen Habermas, *La Pensée postmétaphysique*, Armand Colin, Paris, 1988, p. 13.

process that was started by Fr. Nietzsche and unexpectedly reverberated into the French post-structuralism. One must still consider the obvious lack of equilibrium between the development of natural sciences and humanities. The tendency of equating the entire knowledge with categorial structure of reason eliminates or shades some other ways through which the spirit relates to itself and everything outside of itself. As a consequence, the modern man is raptured by the intersection of four movements of the spirit – says Daryush Shayegan<sup>2</sup>: 1) instrumentalization of thinking – the contempt for contemplation, the diminishing of value of the archetypes of the irrational, the obsession and illusion of collective objectivity; 2) the mathematization of the world – the flattening of the vision over the nature, the unveiling of universal order, lack of sensibility when confronted with the mystery of existence, the replacement of visionary man with visual man – the perception of the surface by faking astonishment when confronting with the depths of the world; 3) the naturalization of man – the passing from spiritual substances to primitive impulses, such that man is no longer interpreted with reference to his polar dimension of returning to origins, but following the linear perspective of a natural evolution where there are gradual differences from other species; 4) the unveiling of time – the secularization of the Providence, history being understood as a mediation between real and ideal, as a process of the human towards its telos by means of which he reproduces himself.

Given these main lines of contemporary spirit one can understand the turn Habermas refers to: from a philosophy of consciousness to a philosophy of language. The special interest for meaning has, without any doubt, a psycho-social justification. But – as A. J. Greimas notes – the issue of meaning is a main one within nowadays concerns, especially due to an epistemological reason, since it engages reflections that ground the passing from the level of fact to theoretical unification in social sciences and humanities. “We cannot transform the registration of human behaviours into anthropology and the series of events into history unless we raise questions about the meaning of human activities and history. The world seems to be essentially defined as a world of meaning. Thus, humanities can find a common ground into the search for meaning. Finally, if, in the case of natural sciences, one asks questions in order to find out how man and world are, humanities raise the question of what do man and world mean, but in a less explicit manner.” According to this, linguistics is the most advantaged science, it is a “pivotal science” that assumes the “role of catalyzing”<sup>3</sup>. A certain willingness towards the unification of other scientific perspectives over man is integrated into the linguistics of Saussure; according to this, it is enough to mention that the manner of referring to the relation Language-Speaking proves the assimilation of some methodological distinction from that era – for instance, that referring to the relation between social and individual within the representation of consciousness, either it is all about the sociology of Émile

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<sup>2</sup> Daryush Shayegan, *Les quatre mouvements descendants et ascendants de l'Esprit*, in *Colloque de: Tsukuba Sciences et symboles – Les voies de la connaissance*, Présenté par Michel Cazenave, Éditions Albin Michel, S. A., 1986, p. 26-36.

<sup>3</sup> A. J. Greimas, *Sémantique structurale (Recherche de méthode)*, Presses Universitaires de France, 1986, p. 5, 6.



Durkheim or the psychologism of Gabriel Tarde – but, at the same time, it assumes original openings by placing linguistics itself within the realm of semiology – about which [also] psychology will have to say a word. Nevertheless, an entire philosophical tradition – starting with Greek Antiquity – equates the study of language with the analysis of human thinking. Decisive, in the case of language analysis, are the relations with external and/or internal world, consciousness/reason, knowledge, communicating in the terms of meaning, signification, reference. This is why the theoretical-methodological dispersion is, by tradition, accompanied by the clarifying speculation of philosophy. The changes in paradigm do not cancel – but temporarily shade – the philosophical relevance of the mentioned issues. Even the impulse towards inter-disciplinarity points – at an epistemological level – towards a need to general philosophical interpretation of language, beyond the restrictive methodological specializations. If, in the case of Saussure, one clearly sees the intuition of some procedures that are mutual for all humanities, Charles W. Morris – without preferring the linguistic restriction – suggests the possibility of semiotically using some traditional disciplines, as logic, grammar, and rhetoric. To semiotic – as a meta-science and, in particular, organon – one attributes integrative and systemizing capacities. L. Hjelmslev clearly states that, in describing humanist phenomena – which means the desire of making an object of knowledge out of humanism – we must choose between the poetic perspective and scientific attitude; if mutual exclusion between the two types of approach is limitative, their beneficial coordination can be realised by means of identifying a common ground of all social-humane knowledges within linguistic structures. Although, in another system of reference, Morris' project is likewise: semiotic can generate the constitution of humanistics into science. Humanistics is a theoretical meta-language/discourse aimed to describe, to clarify and organize following types, the humanities that are signs – object, respectively, primary discourses that point to receiving, in terms of value, of cultural productions (literature, moral, painting, music, religion, a. s. o.). As discourses immediately applied to some creative activities of man, humanities represent the epistemic object of a meta-theory: humanistics; semiotic – says Morris – offers, for now, to humanistics the tools of a descriptive meta-discourse/meta-language that is promising from a scientific point of view.

Structuralism, semiotic, and hermeneutic are theoretical-methodological openings, that have integrative abilities, over all that can be grasped within the realm of meaning. Within the system of distinct references – often polemic, although, in principle, complementary and, thus, recently, interfering – either it is called “symbolic activity” (P. Ricoeur *et alii*), “symbolic behaviour” (Chomsky *et alii*) or human “capacity”/aptitude of signifying/symbolizing (from Saussure, Benveniste *et alii* to Hagège, Francis Jacques *et alii*). At the same time, one places accents on totalities, organized ensembles, to which one subordinates components; the existence/manifestation of meaning is looked upon at the level of systems of signs, of large significant unities/architectures – and not of isolated signs – in which the packets of relations/interdependencies generate symbolic configurations that are irreducible to (and independent of) factual impressions

and analytic atomizations. At the same time, the exemplar object of research is represented by the textually incarnated hypostases (in a wider meaning) of human impulse to signify. The un-veiling of symbolic background is initiated by aiming towards what is beyond subject and object – “objectified spirit” (N. Hartmann), “the third world” (K. Popper), “symbolic forms” (E. Cassirer). The fact that structural method and semiotic choose a neutral descriptive/applicative attitude, a de-subjectified one, and hermeneutic deepens into interpreting subjective experiences of meaning does not represent more than different presuppositions, postulates, epistemological legitimacy and a type of (meta-)theoretical discourse, but without ultimate raptures. It is true that structuralism and semiotic are able to clarify – by constructing models – those internal conditions that make possible the existence (either real, or potential) of meaning, while hermeneutic sets its attention, from the beginning, upon the meaningful wealth of the text, the sub-text and con-text, thus on the meaning lived through affective complicity. But scientific approaches can no longer be supposed to be “positivist”, “scientist”, but must be philosophically integrated, since they essentially offer elements of ontology of meaning that help the hermeneutic approach to de-centrate subjectivity (de-psychologization). Mutual corrections stir the very evolution of every methodological perspective. Besides, it is clear that linguistics starts to be aware of its hermeneutic assumptions (in separating object – Saussure; in selecting some features – Benveniste, Searle); semiotic grasps the issue of “interpretation” (of a hermeneutic origin), and the “hermeneutic arrow” feels the advantage of assimilating the structuralist-semiotic models as a ground and instance of control for the comprehensive act (P. Ricoeur). If hermeneutic – involved in the very manner of practicing philosophy from Kierkegaard on, or in the initial methodological posture (Schleiermacher, Dilthey) – offers some re-humanizing alternatives to scientist pressures, which are fed by the cultural fame of natural science – assuming, through Gadamer, an epistemologic vigilance –, today it can no longer avoid the dialogue with scientific paradigms – especially structural linguistic and semiotic – whose performances appeared at the very level of social-human sciences. Between the self-knowledge of man – mediated through language/signs/symbols/texts – towards which semiotic tends and, on the other hand, the concept of semiosis – by which the human subject is treated as an actor of semiotic practice – the methodologic distance does not cancel, however, a certain compatibility of the two theoretical projections over the human.

With a fertile imprecision, Francis Jacques states that “what is essential in language does not pertain to linguistics”<sup>4</sup>. In describing, interpreting, classification, and explaining linguistic facts one touches issues that surpass linguistics, since it is obvious that “we arte thinking of an universe which was firstly shaped by out thought. The variety of philosophical or spiritual experiences is under an unconscious dependancy of a classification that language operates by the mere fact of being language and symbolizing”<sup>5</sup>; therefore, all that pertains to “mental categories” and “laws of thought” does not more than mirroring the

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<sup>4</sup> Francis Jacques, *L'espace logique de l'interlocution. Dialogiques II*, Presses Universitaires de France, 1985, p. 18.

<sup>5</sup> Émile Benveniste, *Problèmes de linguistique générale*, I, Gallimard, 1966, p. 6.

organization and distribution of linguistic categories. This cultural evidence is not ignored within the scientifically specialised approaches, but only methodologically suspended, given the complexity, in order to make possible the establishment of an attitude that allows and promises the controlled increase of intelligibility. Over a horizon opened to speculation, linguistic projects methodological criteria, principles and restrictions, where some selections are made by specifying the object, the descriptive-clarifying techniques, conceptual constructs that grasp the issue of signification. The object is not presented as such and does not precede the theoretical perspective; on the contrary, one can say that “the viewpoint creates the object”<sup>6</sup>, but it is obvious that “the object that presents itself to thinking is not, as such, an effect of methodological procedures”<sup>7</sup>.

As Frédéric Worms notices, in Saussure’s contributions one finds the origin of the tendency to consider that humanities must identify their meaning into structures taken as systems of signs ; in other words, one “generalizes and takes as ultimate element the new model of meaning proposed by structural linguistics, which resides in taking it as a system of differences”<sup>8</sup>. By analogy with the model of Language, the humanities interpret the objectivity of meaning found in various domains of reality, taken as systems of signs. The risk of reductive discourses cannot be avoided. We refer to the fact noticed by Roman Jakobson : the *langue-parole*, *Language-Speech*, *système linguistique-énoncé*, *Type-Token*, a. s. o. astonish the logic of language, “but we must admit that the concepts of *code* and *message*, introduced by the theory of communication, are far more operational than what the traditional theory has to offer in order to express this reality”<sup>9</sup>. Thus, language can be seen as a mere code, a system of rules/conventions that make human communication possible. Arild Utaker believes that the theory of Saussure is compatible to “the image of language-tool”, being opened towards modern technologies of communication, in comparison to “language-organism” proposed by the romanticists; “Saussure underlines stresses communication and the fact that it is man who speaks and communicates”<sup>10</sup>.

The primate of communicative function – taken only as transmission of information – seems theoretically neutral, but induces or allows value hierarchies. From such a perspective the style and – at a more general level – subjectivity are qualified as derivative linguistic phenomena. Émile Benveniste, in turn, starts from the premise that “one cannot conceive a language without the expressing of a person”<sup>11</sup>. The symbolic articulations show us a deeper truth about human condition: “there is no natural relation, an immediate and direct one, between man

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<sup>6</sup> F. de Saussure, *Cours de linguistique générale*, Publié par Charles Bailly et Albert Séchehaye avec la collaboration de Albert Riedlinger, Édition critique préparée par Tullio de Mauro, Postface de Louis-Jean Calvet, Éditions Payot & Rivages, 1995, p. 23.

<sup>7</sup> Arild Utaker, *La philosophie du langage: une archéologie saussurienne*, Presses Universitaires de France, Paris, 2002, p. 170.

<sup>8</sup> Frédéric Worms, *La philosophie en France au XXe siècle. Moments*, Éditions Gallimard, 2009, p. 469.

<sup>9</sup> Roman Jakobson, *Essais de linguistique générale*, Paris, Minuit, vol I, 1963, p. 31.

<sup>10</sup> Arild Utaker, *La philosophie du langage: une archéologie saussurienne*, ed. cit., p. 212.

<sup>11</sup> Émile Benveniste, *Problèmes de linguistique générale*, I, ed. cit., p. 261; cf. also p. 260

and world or between man and man”<sup>12</sup> – implying the recognition of grounding functions of culture as an artificial environment where human life goes on. “Basically, the entire mechanism of culture has a symbolic character”<sup>13</sup>. Symbolization, the fact that language engages the realm of meaning, generates relational and value codes. Linguistic can bring, together with other sciences, decisive contributions for “a real science of culture, that will ground the theory of symbolic activities of man”<sup>14</sup>. Subjectivity is closed into the linguistic statute of the person, being, at the same time, a condition of language, since one cannot conceive a language without a person’s expressing. Under the name of “ego”, philosophy recuperated subjectivity as a psychical unity: an identity that transcends the totality of lived experiences it gathers together, ensuring the permanence of consciousness. According to Benveniste, this subjectivity, also referred to in phenomenology or psychology, is not more than the incarnation of a fundamental characteristic of language. “«Ego» is the one that says «ego»”. Here we find the ground of «subjectivity», determined by the linguistic statute of the person”<sup>15</sup>.

The categorial couple Language-Speech, of a Saussurian origin, played a decisive role in theoretical-methodological configurations of linguistics. Francis Jacques utters a principal objection: “European linguists worked on the signs, languages, phrases, leaving aside the reference”<sup>16</sup>. The reference is conceived only intra-linguistically; as a reply, the followers of analytical perspectives underline the contextual praxis. The structural linguistic of Saussure has Language as its object; complementarily, other types of research favour Speech and Discourse. Francis Jacques proposes a textology, since “between *discourse* and *text*, the relation is as that between activity and product, *energeia* and *ergon*”<sup>17</sup>. After the *linguistic turn* comes the *textual turn*, due to semantic demands/evidences: the meaning of a statement can no longer be left to pre-discursive instances, like idea, will or even desire/will to say/transmit something<sup>18</sup>.

The theory of speech acts<sup>19</sup> - developed in the realm of [post]analytic philosophy, starting with J. L. Austin until the standard perspective of John Searle – goes beyond the limits of linguistic – where it brings decisive contributions in interpreting the categorial couple (imposed by F. De Saussure) “Language-Speech” from a pragmatic perspective. The contextualization is clearly

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<sup>12</sup> *ibid.*, p. 29

<sup>13</sup> Émile Benveniste, *Problèmes de linguistique générale, II*, Éditions Gallimard, 1974, p. 25.

<sup>14</sup> Émile Benveniste, *Problèmes de linguistique générale, I*, ed. cit., p. 30.

<sup>15</sup> *ibid.*, p. 260

<sup>16</sup> Francis Jacques, *L'espace logique de l'interlocution*, Presses Universitaires de France, 1985, p. 147.

<sup>17</sup> Francis Jacques, *L'arbre du text et ses possibles*, Librairie Philosophique J. Vrin, 2007, p. 8.

<sup>18</sup> Cf. also *ibid.*, p. 17, 24.

<sup>19</sup> John R. Searle, *Speech Acts. An Essay in the Philosophy of Language*, Cambridge University Press, 1969, pp. 4, 17; Searle accepts the semantic equation between “speech acts”, “linguistic acts” and “language acts”, considering his perspective as related to the theory of Language (Langue), not of Speech (Parole). Oswald Ducrot claims – in a paper that accompanies the French translation of Searle’s work – the legitimacy of this equation/interpretation; see Oswald Ducrot, *De Saussure à la philosophie du langage*, in John R. Searle, *Les actes de langage. Essai de philosophie du langage*, Hermann, Paris, 1972, pp. 7-34.

philosophical, since Searle explicitly states that: “At the foundation of my researches on the problems of language one finds the fundamental hypothesis that the philosophy of language is a branch of philosophy of mind”<sup>20</sup>. Mental/mind states are defined by intrinsic intentionality; this one, taken as “directs to/towards...” (*renvoi, directedness*) – belongs to some mental experiments (belief, fear, hope, desire, a. s. o.); the disquiet, the exaltation, a. s. o. have no intentionality. The criterion Searle applies refers to verbal restraints that can be applied to these states. The conscious intentions are only specifications of a mental intentionality – with a biological substratum – and of deeper ones. Speech acts – that are just a variety of human action, since mind sets the organism in relation to the world – possesses a *intentionality derived from* mind’s intentionality. The taxonomy of illocutionary acts is rendered in relation to this reference.

Francis Jacques notices the fact that the theories of language – from Saussure and Benveniste to Hagege, from Wittgenstein to Austin, Searle and Apel – are integrated into the Cartesian paradigm of the subject [*Je pense*] taken as monadic entity, sovereign and constitutive, Otherness/Other being an introspective ghost, a projection/double of own *Ego*. These theories sustained the myth of pure subjectivity; the manner in which linguistics displayed the presence of subjectivity within language is compatible with the reflexive cartesian *ego*, with Kantian *ego* – which is a pure form –, and with the intentional *ego* from Husserl’s phenomenology. Francis Jacques opposes an anthropology that is shaped around the *primum relationis* principles such that the transcendental grounding of experience is related to the initial relation set up by the interlocution. At this ontological level one finds the conditions of possibility of person and intersubjectivity, of meaning and reference, thus of the world as such as a co-significant and co-referred world. If we refer to immediate experience, we find this transcendental viewpoint within the very constitutive rules that shape the pragmatic competence. “Each and every particular and all particular conceptions about other’s being are grounded into an initial experience, inserted into language as a possibility”<sup>21</sup>. This fundamental/founding structure of experience shows that, in fact, the logical space of interlocution, that is equated to the structure of communicability. The pragmatic perspective is assumed but, at the same time, bypassed; one takes into account “our enunciation of contextual phrases”, but “interlocution is not the mere fact of speaking to one another, but is in the range of a foundational condition”<sup>22</sup>. The individuals become persons only in/through relating; the classical subject is egocentric; at the opposite pole, the person – who becomes and builds itself by relational involvements with others – integrates in itself tri-personal instances/structures, being, at the same time/inasmuch *I, you, he*. The Cartesian inter-subjectivity, and/or the hermeneutic one is replaced by/of the paradigm of interlocution; the producing of meaning is always co-joint, assumes the engagement into mutuality, negotiation/transaction,

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<sup>20</sup> John R. Searle, *L'intentionnalité. Essai de philosophie des états mentaux*, trad. de l'américain par Claude Pichevin, Les Éditions de Minuit, 1985, p. 9; cf. si p.18

<sup>21</sup> Francis Jacques, *Dialogiques. Recherches logiques sur le dialogue*, PUF, 1979, p. 54.

<sup>22</sup> Francis Jacques, *L'espace logique de l'interlocution*, ed.cit., p. 10-11.

co-participation, co-reference, interactioncooperation of human beings. The problem of language ant the issue of communication are rebuilt by Francis Jacques from the perspective of dialogal rationality; seen from the perspective of transcendental regime of relation/reciprocity, these objects of study are deeply re-evaluated, generating radical changes into the ontology of subjectivity and, of course, into the ontology of meaning.

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# ANALYSIS MODELS OF CULTURAL IDENTITY IN THE INTERWAR ROMANIAN THINKING

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**Abstract:** *An important issue of current Romanian culture concerns the way we relate to the symbolic values, creations and practices from our national past. Critical interpretations of the works of yesterday are influenced by the attitudes and perspectives of today. In this way, some works of the past lose importance, while others acquire current unexpected meanings. This is also true for theories developed by interwar Romanian thinkers on the Romanian cultural identity.*

**Keywords:** *cultural identity, influences, spirit of age, synchronism, stylistic matrix.*

## Themes, attitudes, contexts

The issue I address in this study concerns how we relate to the work of the Romanian thinkers of the past, especially those in the interwar period. The history of a culture is a variable combination between continuity and discontinuity, between tradition and innovation. But within the exchange flow, there is an underground thematic lineage and a relative constancy of how to see the world. There are specific elements that change very slowly. They are linked by geography, history, language, mentality. With us, history did not follow a logic, predictable development, but instead it experienced numerous breaks, sudden and confusing changes of direction, especially in the 20th c. However, Romanian culture has kept up certain patterns of thought and expression that are characteristic to it. These thinking patterns crystallized mainly in the interwar period, a period marked by sharp contrasts and ideological polarizations, and also by high-level scientific, philosophical and artistic achievements. Usually, the authors who describe the interwar period appreciate that it was crossed by many divides, such as the conflict between generations or the theoretical oppositions between the diversified rationalist trends and the spiritualist, religious, intuitive, psychoanalytic tendencies, etc. The most significant dividing lines regarded the broad cultural and ideological orientations, distributed along two main axes: modernism - traditionalism and Europeanism - autochtony. Lucian Boia believes that: „*democracy and nationalism are the main axes of the Romanian political debates in the '30s. They somehow fail to harmonize. For some, Romania was not*

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democratic enough, for others it was not Romanian enough”.<sup>1</sup>

When referring to the problematic of theoretical thinking, we find out that the theme of nation and national identity was in the mainstream of interwar Romanian thinking. This assessment is based on several recent studies on cultural history. In a fundamental work devoted to this period, Dan Dungaciu supports with solid arguments the thesis according to which: „The Agenda of Romanian sociology - and not only – had at its forefront *the national question*, addressed from different angles and with different theoretical and practical tools. Some of these are complementary, others convergent, while others are opposed”.<sup>2</sup> The author’s statement is important: the national question was not only a priority direction of sociological research (a field where Dimitrie Gusti and his school made breakthrough contributions), but it was also an issue of the whole Romanian culture. It is in a central position in the philosophical, historical, anthropological and political reflection and also in the then press debates or the cultural studies with a broader theme, such as literary criticism and history. In all these areas and forms of expression we see an obsessive concern for defining our cultural identity in a contrastive relation with European spiritual ideas and structures. This issue is a priority for the Romanian culture today, although we are in a different historical context.

The stand of the communist regime toward the interwar thinkers knew some conjectural variations. Until around 1965, the communist regime imposed a very restrictive censorship on the interwar philosophical, social and political thinking. Afterwards, censorship was relaxed and gradually key authors were published (partially or entirely), were rehabilitated and reinstated in textbooks and cultural circuit. In the post-communist period, things have changed altogether. In the early ‘90s, publishers published many works in the field of philosophical and social thinking, works that were banned or marginalized before by the communist censorship. There followed a period of intense debate over these personalities, when it was extensively discussed about the content of their work, the ideas that were promoted and their ideological orientation. However, gradually, some of these authors went into oblivion, and references to their work became more sporadic.

Notwithstanding this, I think that there are signs that the interest in the ideas and theories of these authors is increasing among the new generations of intellectuals. It is important to see how they are appreciated today and what place they take in the field of philosophical reflection thinkers such as Dimitrie Gusti, C. Radulescu-Motru, Nicolae Iorga, Lucian Blaga, Nichifor Crainic, Mihai Ralea, Mircea Eliade, Emil Cioran, Mircea Vulcanescu, Constantin Noica, G. Calinescu or Eugen Lovinescu. I mentioned in this list only those who were interested in the question of our cultural identity and systematically approached from different perspectives. Obviously, there are other Romanian authors (philosophers, sociologists, historians, writers) who wrote insightful studies on our national

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<sup>1</sup> Lucian Boia, *Capcanele istoriei: Elita intelectuală interbelică între 1930 și 1950*, București, Humanitas, 2011, p. 48.

<sup>2</sup> Dan Dungaciu, *Elita interbelică. Sociologia românească în context european*, București, Ed. Mica Valahie, 2003, p. 77



specificity in the interwar period, but I think that the ones I mentioned above developed *theories* about our identity and became authors of reference for a particular doctrinal or theoretical orientation. Although they are authors of substance, who bestow that kind of personality on modern Romanian culture, the interest shown nowadays in assimilating and interpreting their work is intermittent and varies conjecturally. But, paradoxically, once our country joined the European structures, the creative agents in various fields have felt the need to appeal to the past landmarks of our national thinking, to those models of thinking that can help today in rebuilding the self-awareness of Romanian culture, in interacting prolifically with the contemporary world, in better understanding and promoting our defining values.

### **Methodological aspects concerning the interpretation of cultural heritage**

The problematic nature of cultural history studies derives from the fact that critical interpretations of the works of yesterday are influenced by the attitudes and perspectives of today. The attitude towards time, change, history and destiny is essential for defining cultures and understanding the cultural differences between societies. Man has a creative destiny and produces different cultural universes, said Blaga, because he is a „historical being”. In Romanian author’s outlook, all cultures have simultaneously two defining dimensions: on one hand, symbolic and „revealing”, on the other stylistic and differentiating. The two functions are found in all cultures, hence they are universal, but the stylistic dimension explains the very specificity of cultures, the fact that they are distinguished by certain expressive features. Blaga expresses this idea in the following formula: „Man alone has become a historical being, which means permanently historical, i.e. a being who eternally exceeds its creation, but who never exceeds its creative destiny”.<sup>3</sup> Historicity is thus a permanent feature of human existence and it requires a living relationship between past, present and future. Cultural values do not live in the absolute, but in the relative of history. Therefore, the criteria for assessment are dependent on cultural and historical contexts. Whatever the epoch, societies maintain a comprehensive critical dialogue with the past, with values, creations and symbolic practices of previous eras, those that are acquired and settled in what we call cultural tradition. In this sense, tradition is the active part of the cultural heritage, what remains alive from the cultural past, active elements shaping the present. Tudor Vianu defined in an expressive way tradition: „in brief, cultural tradition is the influence of the previous cultural work on the present”.<sup>4</sup> Tradition is „condensed” into works and shapes up through educational and thesaurus institutions and through the mechanisms of social memory.

How the past is known, understood and assumed profoundly moulds the cultural creation of the present and the projections of a national community in the future. The image of the cultural past is recomposed in terms of current

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<sup>3</sup> Lucian Blaga, *Aspecte antropologice*, în *Opere*, vol. 11 (*Trilogia cosmologică*), București, Ed. Minerva, 1988, , p. 307.

<sup>4</sup> Tudor Vianu, *Filosofia culturii*, în *Opere*, vol. 8, București, Ed. Minerva, 1979, p. 245.

theoretical models of identity. After 1990, due to the changed system in Romania, there occurred new perspectives of interpretation and new criteria for assessing the personalities and cultural works, different criteria from those prevalent ideological and restrictive ones under the communist regime. Consequently, the history of Romanian culture (especially literature and philosophical and social thinking) was rewritten from different angles of interpretation. Naturally, in recent years we have witnessed a vast operation aimed to restore the historical truth, the circulation of information and major works, which sheds new light on some cultural and political personalities. A number of authors, some of the first magnitude, were not published during the communist regime, were not accessible to the public, so that several misunderstandings still persist over them. Other authors were partially recovered and introduced into the educational system, were interpreted in a deforming manner or buried under negative ideological labels. Likewise, there are cases when some mediocre writers were oversized in the hierarchies of yesterday, mainly for political reasons.

All suchlike situations should be corrected, and value judgments should be reviewed in line with the “spirit of the time”, to use a phrase used by Eugen Lovinescu. A proper and coherent picture of Romanian culture can be built only through a reinterpretation of the authentic works through a genuine critical filter, an indispensable tool for analysis and reassessment of our cultural tradition. Therefore, Maiorescu’s call has unexpected current resonances: „Criticism, even bitter, only to be right, is a necessary element of support and our prosperity”<sup>5</sup>. As a result of changes occurred in the Romanian society, but also due to the new geopolitical context in which Romania is placed, as a member state of the European Union, the Romanian culture undergoes a welcome comparative examination and a significant process of re-problematization and redefinition of its identity. Knowledge and evaluation, from a current perspective, of our spiritual heritage is an action of national interest. The image of our country in the European space can be improved by promoting intelligently and efficiently the values which represent us in terms of culture. This beneficial undertaking of critical reinterpretation brought to the foreground, more dramatically, the theme of our cultural identity, which dominated the idea debates in the interwar period. It is no accident that the question of our identity in the European context has lately generated clashes of ideas and hot debates in the public and the media.

The historical studies on national culture raise many methodological difficulties, and also in point of vision and critical perspective. In order not to be subject to arbitrariness and subjectivity, a history of this type must be guided by a set of criteria and principles explicitly stated that keep us from erroneous assessments and allow us to reconstruct an accurate image of the currents of ideas and creative personalities from different epochs. I shall mention a few of these criteria, although I shall not deepen them analytically and problematize them.

- *Relating the works to the historical and cultural context in which they were written.* The historicism principle requires us to correlate the content of the

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<sup>5</sup> T. Maiorescu, *Dirrecția nouă în poezia și proza română*, în vol. *Opere, I*, București, Editura Minerva, 1978, p. 213.

works with the problematic of the age in which they appeared, to relate cultural history (currents, works, personalities) to the social, political, economic history and the evolution of mentalities. It is important to place our cultural history in a European context of interactions, influences and geopolitical relationships in which it took shape, in order to highlight the lines of historical continuity, and also the ruptures, discontinuities, desynchronizations and gaps.

- *The autonomy of values and cultural domains.* In every cultural domain, there are at work specific criteria for assessing and validating performances. It is the principle Maiorescu pioneered in our culture, according to which we have to analyze and interpret each work in keeping with the specific criteria of the area it fits into: in literature, the aesthetic criteria prevails, in science the criteria specific to that area, so on and so forth. The case of Nicolae Paulescu who in 2003 at the International Congress of Diabetology was refused the honors, on the grounds of his undemocratic political stands, of extreme right, during the interwar period.

- *The priority of axiological criteria.* It is a principle derived from the previous one warning us of the danger of politicizing cultural histories. Symbolic and cultural creations must be assessed, primarily based on their intrinsic value, determined by critical examination and comparison, taking into account the performance standards of various creative fields. Of course, authentic artistic creations have implicitly certain social, moral and ideological significances, which are integrated organically into the substance of those works and also into the expressive fabric of the artistic language, not formulated for didactic or propagandistic purposes. Obviously, it would be absurd to ascribe ideological significances to scientific discoveries or theories. The misuse of ideological and political criteria ravaged Romanian culture, not only during the Stalinist dogmatism.

- *The current significance of works.* It is an important criterion to determine the status of a work, its power to resist over time, its ability to resonate with certain topical themes. The criterion of “timeliness” starts with the question: what significance or what message do these works send to us today? The passage of time does not work the same for all works. The present makes a value selection in the body of tradition, updates some values and obliterates others. By this operation, some works of the past lose the importance they once had, while others acquire new meanings and present resonances.

- *The universal significance of works.* It is a synthetic and cumulative criterion, which helps us compare the intrinsic value of a work, and also its degree of international recognition, its sphere of circulation, its echo or influence in other cultural environments. A controversial aspect regards value judgments. The relation of a work with the European and international context (influences, confluences) can determine its degree of originality, its value compared to some similar creations in a specific area.

### **„The Spirit of the Age” and the law of synchronism**

There are other requirements and perspectives of analysis, but those mentioned above help us emphasize the contribution made by the interwar thinkers to analyze the cultural identity and evaluate the theories they developed

for understanding contemporary situations. This is necessary because in today's world there is much debate about identity crises, about the tension between globalization and cultural identity. Thus, referring to Romanian thinkers I mentioned, we see that their theories on cultural identity differ with regard to the way in which they approach a number of relationships, such as those between unity and diversity, universal and specific, global and local, national and European - relations that can be analyzed from very different perspectives. Theorists give to these terms different accents and axiological meanings, depending on the ideological, social and cultural positioning of the respective authors. The relations mentioned above can be viewed either as in opposition or in convergence, as their analysis can be placed *at a level of background*, anthropological and axiological, or *at a level of relief*, historical, pragmatic and communicative. Therefore, the equation of cultural identity acquires different configurations depending on the theoretical assumptions the authors start from and the explanation of cultural differences.

For example, if we analyze the conceptions embraced by Blaga and Lovinescu, we shall see that they are founded on different theoretical assumptions about the creative process, culture, civilization and values, so designing different visions about the relationship between national and European. The two authors illustrate two different paradigms of cultural identity, paradigms tacitly facing the issue of unity and cultural diversity. It is the 19th c. type paradigm of classical rationalism and mono-linear evolutionism, and the paradigm of cultural relativism, which established a new perspective for the interpretation of cultural differences. This perspective was endorsed by the 20th c. anthropological research and eventually came to overwhelm postmodern conceptions.

Eugen Lovinescu's conception illustrates the paradigm of mono-linear evolutionism. He developed a theory on cultural influences to explain the mechanism by which modern Romanian civilization came into being. The key concepts are those of influence, imitation, form and substance, spirit of time, convergence, synchronism. He assumes that societies which have interdependencies are shaped by common ideas, values and principles, by moral and spiritual trends that form a „spirit of age”. „There is a spirit of the age Tacitus called *saeculum*, namely a set of material and moral conditions shaping the life of the European peoples in a given period”.<sup>6</sup> Under the pressure of these factors, there comes into being „an identity of social forms, ideas, beliefs” within various societies, „a solidarity of European life”, a convergent evolution of societies and their gradual cultural homogenization. This process may be termed as „the law on synchronism law”. Whereas some authors exalted the virtues of Orthodoxy and pre-modern tradition, Lovinescu appreciated that the East and Orthodoxy “are the forces of the past, and not of the present”, forces which hindered our modern development.<sup>7</sup> The new spirit of the time, one that defines the modern age, causes an increased synchronization between modern societies, leading to a progressive *standardization* of political and economic structures and their spiritual and

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<sup>6</sup> Eugen Lovinescu, *Istoria civilizației române moderne*, București, Ed. Minerva, 1997, p. 262.

<sup>7</sup> *Ibidem*, p. 12-13.

cultural *homogenization*.

The law on synchronism „works so as to level up and not to differentiate”, said Lovinescu.<sup>8</sup> According to background assumptions which guided his approach, Lovinescu understates the national conditions and overstates the external factors. He identifies modernization with Westernization, considering that the Western model is the only viable formula of development. Within the identity paradigm he builds up (and which had a great influence at the time), the external factors of our modernization were more important than the internal ones, while the Western *forms* played an active, shaping and stimulating role, whereas the forces representing the national *background* were passive and often refractory to the requirements of the modernization process. Starting from the idea that in the modern age *Ex occidente lux!*, Lovinescu claims that the imitation of Western models is our only solution of modernization. „Progress can mean to us only the fertilization of our national fund by the Western creative ideology”.<sup>9</sup> It is a schematic view of the history of Romania, for which he was oftentimes criticized. The progressive synchronization of societies, under the pressure of the new „spirit of time” would result in cultural homogenization, a thesis which is found today in many interpretations on globalization. It is probably the most questionable aspect of his theory, which was amended by the replies he received in his age and afterwards.

Projected on the current world, Lovinescu's theory has surprising applications, confirmations and analogies, since the phenomena he described acquire in the context of globalization an infinitely greater scale than in the interwar period. We have to underline that the way in which Lovinescu describes the mechanism of Romania's modernization also applies to our post-communist transition and integration in the EU (the changes of forms anticipated the changes of substance). Lovinescu's most important contribution is that he effectively imposed a fertile concept in the theory of culture, that of *synchronization*, which anticipated the phenomenon of current globalization.

, the spatial and temporal horizons, the dominant axiological accents, the values and meanings attributed to time, movement, history and human destiny, the preference for certain values in the order of creation.

### **The stylistic matrix - a tool for the analysis of cultural identity**

A contemporary with Lovinescu, Lucian Blaga embarked on a completely different theory about cultural identity. Educated in the German intellectual milieu, at the crossroads of various influences, Blaga builds up a new concept to explain the identity of cultures: *the stylistic matrix*. It is a combination of factors guiding the cultural creation of a community, factors that are rooted in the collective unconscious structures of peoples. These factors shape up cultural creations and explain cultural differences between societies, peoples and epochs. The main factors that make up a cultural stylistic matrix would be: the spatial and temporal horizons of the unconscious, prevailing axiological accents, the values

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<sup>8</sup> *Ibidem*, p. 275.

<sup>9</sup> *Ibidem*, p. 13.

and meanings conferred to time, movement, history and human destiny, the preference for certain values (typical and general, particular and individual, elementary, ghostly and organic.<sup>10</sup>). These factors form a „cosmos-type” structure and allow us to analyze the cultural identity from various perspectives. Fixed into the layer of collective unconscious layer, the stylistic matrix steers up the creations of a people and its historical manifestations.

Mention should be made that Blaga developed the concept of stylistic matrix while the American anthropologists worked on the concept of cultural *pattern*. The two concepts have similar functions and cover much the same factors that differentiate cultures. Then, it is important to note that Blaga did not single out our identity, but he integrated it organically into the European one. In his outlook, the Romanian and European identity are consonant, not opposite. A partisan of a conjunctive paradigm, the author is interested to keep the balance between extremes, between national and European, between tradition and modernity, between East and West. „What road the Romanian stylistic matrix will take is hard to say. But sometimes a simple observation can take the place of a prophecy: we are neither at the sunset, nor at the sunrise. We are where we are: with all our neighbors together - on a watershed land”<sup>11</sup>. Therefore, Blaga’s identity paradigm can be framed in the broader orientation of cultural relativism, which runs counter to the approaches on mono-linear evolutionism and Western-centered visions. Hence, the author of the *Trilogy of Culture* develops another model of analysis, uses another language and advances other assumptions legitimizing other axiological standpoints. For Blaga synchronism does not generate a „leveling up” and „standardization”, but instead it produces cultural differentiation *within* the circuits of global interdependence. The exchange of values between cultures do not homogenize them, but it reveals them and strengthens their specific characters.

An important criterion by which we differentiate the theories on our cultural identity is their attitudes towards the values and trends of ideas coming from the West. Some thinkers, such as Nichifor Crainic, Nae Ionescu and Dimitrie Stăniloae, believed that our spiritual and mental structure is shaped by Orthodoxy and is radically different from the Western one, marked by Catholicism and Protestantism. Other thinkers believed that as a Latin people, Romanians belong naturally to the Western civilization, wherefrom they got salutary and fruitful influences that helped them build up their cultural and political modernity. Of course, between these opposing attitudes, we encounter numerous intermediate positions (see the outlooks embraced by Blaga, Eliade or Călinescu), who saw in the Romanian culture a complex alloy, a combination of native and European elements, a culture of synthesis or a „culture of interference”, which absorbed different influences.<sup>12</sup> Hence, the vocation of Romanian culture to be a communication bridge between East and West, and its ability to combine traditional elements with modern ones.

Many other Romanian authors would deserve to be rehabilitated and

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<sup>10</sup> <sup>10</sup> Lucian Blaga, *Trilogia culturii*, București, Ed. Minerva, 1985, pp. 179-180.

<sup>11</sup> *Ibidem*, p. 330.

<sup>12</sup> Sorin Alexandrescu, *Identitate în ruptură*. București, Ed. Univers, 2000, pp. 11-13.

reinstated in the public circuit of the present-day culture, given the value of their work. In conclusion I would say that the new generation of intellectuals have the duty to bring forth the European dimension of modern Romanian culture, the fact that interwar Romanian thinkers problematized in their works the major themes of modernity, even if these works have not received a European dissemination and do not enjoy an international acknowledgement on a par with their intrinsic value.

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# ETHICAL FUNDAMENTALS OF NON-VIOLENT COMMUNICATION IN IT SOCIETY

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mail

**Abstract:** *The present paper analyses the quality of interpersonal relations and communication in the so-called “communication society” while considering the current explosion of communication means and technologies. The paper attempts to answer the question whether the global extension of communication brings with it an enhanced satisfaction of the humans who need to deeply, truly and sincerely communicate.*

*Similarly, we intend to investigate to what extent there is an urgent need to ethically redefine the principles which govern human communication and interrelations. The reinvention of morality, the possibility to exercise respect and amiability in human interrelations are top priorities for a non-violent society.*

*Avoiding an increased level of violence in society requires, among other things, finding a substitute for judgemental attitudes, interpretation and questioning with a comprehensive attitude that should be adopted in inter-human communication. The former attitudes generate unequal relations between collocutors, i.e. relations that encourage people think in terms of inferiority-superiority, dependence of collocutors or even aggressiveness. The only attitude that encourages respect and amiability in human interrelations and which nurtures a climate that is favourable for deep communication is comprehensive attitude.*

**Keywords:** *communication society, non-violent communication, respect, amiability, comprehensive attitude.*

## Paradoxes of “communication society”

The process of communication is omnipresent in human life and in society. We communicate with each other, with our families, in institutions, in the street, etc. We communicate directly or through mass-media, we communicate even when we do not say anything. We communicate at least 11 of 24 hours according to the French sociologist L. Sfez. We may say that the contemporary society is a communication society, whose features are: the boom of communication means and technologies due to the creation of new communication dimensions and under the influence of its global extension. The question is whether this boom brings with it an enhanced quality in human interrelations (communication).

A large number of researchers, i.e. L. Sfez, A. Mehrabian, M. Wiener, J. Salome, as well as others, associate the contemporary overwhelming forms of communication with a deficit in human interrelations which seem to remain at an

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incipient, superficial, conventional and non-authentic level. Apparently paradoxical, the so-called “communication society”, “IT society”, has created a system of relations that does not satisfy the human need to deeply and authentically communicate. Moreover, this society has rather created the premises for a violent form of communication and not a form of peaceful, sincere and open communication that should be based on respect and trust. “The relational system which is dominant in our culture (SAPPE) favours dominant/ dominated relations and thus stirs people to fight for power or to remain humble; it also triggers opposing attitudes and confrontations, while cultivating dependence, lack of trust and even doubt/mutual suspicion. Despite the moral attempts of religion and social-cultural codes or personal ethics, this system generates a lot of violence and self-violence most of the time. It seems that most of the so-called civilized countries encourage a non-communication culture and human relations that do not favour the development of a high rate of interrelation between most of the individuals, and this happens in family and school education and in social life, too.”<sup>1</sup>

True, honest, open and deep communication, which is meant to ensure social cohesion, is currently threatened by an artificial, unsatisfying form of communication, by sterile theoretical discourse, by violent and manipulating communication.

At the level of social action, such a culture of dominance destroys moral standards, thus generating a low quality of human relations. On the one hand, it supports and encourages the inferior-superior dichotomy, obedience, humiliation and manipulation of the collocutor. On the other hand, due to the fact that relations/communication is a return ticket, the culture of dominance will generate what Carl Roger used to call “the defensive distortions of communication”, that is: lack of sincerity, exaggerations, lies, hypocrisy, etc.

This social context significantly limits the deep satisfaction of the need to identify, recognize and respect both one’s own inner and outer life, i.e. respect for the other’s inner life.

Under these conditions, the reinvention of ethics, our capacity to revise it, and value it, as well as our respect for moral values and principles in the communication process are the urgent needs of the present times, and a condition for surviving in this world. It is necessary to rethink the principles of human interrelations from an ethical perspective. From an axiological perspective, this could be understood as choosing to praise truth, personal dignity, authentic behaviour, frankness, honesty, mutual openness, tolerance/acceptance in inter-human communication and relations. This is the humanist perspective suggested by A. Maslow, G. Allport, C. Rogers and others.

### **The deep need for respect**

Any human being is entitled to be respected simply because he is a human being. The USA Declaration of Independence stipulates that: “the true value of a

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<sup>1</sup> Jacques Salomé, *Minuscules aperçus sur la difficulté d'enseigner*, Paris, Editions Albin Michel, 2004, p.8

human being is a gift from God and not what that person accomplishes on one's own... All human beings have an inborn value from God and inalienable rights.”<sup>2</sup>

In other words, respect cannot be demanded, cannot be won, it is a right which one must have unconditionally. This is the practical application of the Kantian fundamental principle “Always treat the others as a purpose and not as a means”. This is also a principle that could be applied in our consumption, individualistic, profit-oriented society. The exercise of self-respect, as well as of respect towards the others creates the premises for non-violent communication, and it attempts to increase the degree of social acceptance, as well as to affect the roots of the dominating culture.

Respect and esteem for the others start with respect and esteem for one. Studies show that: “those who have a good self-esteem are joyful, generous, tolerant and ready to listen to the others’ opinions. Their personality is so strong and stable that they can assume risks..., they indulge themselves in making mistakes, being criticized or even insulted because this does not significantly affect the opinion that they have about themselves, which remains untouched.”<sup>3</sup> Persons who learned to have self-esteem and to appreciate themselves find it easier to manifest respect and be more generous to the others in comparison with those who do not like themselves and are not satisfied with themselves, hence their selfishness and intolerance. In other words, persons who are self-centred do not trust themselves to a considerable extent, but, on the contrary, to a little one. A hungry ego is a mean ego; it is exclusively self-centred as long as its vanity is not satisfied.”<sup>4</sup> It needs help to learn how to find peace with oneself and even to like oneself. Unfortunately, the people around are rather careless, indifferent or even tempted to exploit such a person’s weakness. The concern to help such a person accept as he/she is, to like oneself – as an expression of a deep and genuine feeling of respect – is missing in such a person’s life. Education for respect in the so-called civilized societies is scarce and formal. Paraphrasing L. Giblin’s words, the application of the “Three As principle” (acceptance, attention/approval, appreciation) is a pre-condition for respect and success in communication. In reality, people manifest intolerance instead of acceptance, ignorance instead of attention and criticism instead of appreciation.

### **The exercise of amiability**

People say that, in order not to have an escalating rate of violence in society, we should avoid giving the others exactly what they gave us. In other words, one should avoid answering with violence to violence. We should be amiable and gentle in any situation. Stephen Jay Gould, a well-known American palaeontologist, upholds that, if in the history of mankind half of our interactions had ended in aggressive acts, we would not have survived as a species and we

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<sup>2</sup> Leslie Giblin, *Arta dezvoltării relațiilor interumane*, București, Curtea Veche, 2000, p. 37-40.

<sup>3</sup> Ibidem.

<sup>4</sup> Ibidem.

would not have created the civilization we have today.”<sup>5</sup> The conclusion one can draw from this quotation is that amiability vs. violence is the key to survival in any society so much more in the contemporary society.

In disorganized societies, where moral standards must be reinvented, amiability is an urgent need, according to the Italian psychologist and philosopher Pierro Ferrucci<sup>6</sup>. Satisfying this need is not easy to accomplish in the present society. On the one hand, society – through social media – does not encourage amiability as a dominant behaviour pattern. On the other hand, according to the above quoted scholar, for an individual to adopt a behaviour pattern, one needs to have the capacity and willingness to “integrate more essential virtues, such as: trust, sympathy, loyalty, patience, modesty, respect, gratitude.”<sup>7</sup>

Sympathy helps us understand what is going on in an angry person’s mind, not to answer in the same aggressive way. Modesty helps us listen to our collocutors, and enjoy their presence, while remaining silent as to our own successes. Patience helps us relate better with our collocutor. Generosity helps us feel pleased when offering and being with a person rather than owning. Respect makes amiability more profound. Without respect, amiability remains superficial. Allegiance, as a proof of loyalty and justice, makes one feel secured and confident in the stability of the things around us. Amiability allows us to be content of what we have without taking these things as granted. It reduces the feelings of regret and frustration while making free leeway for plenitude. In conclusion, according to Pierro Ferrucci, if we define amiability as a complex act that is determined by the symbiosis of these essential virtues, then the exercise of amiability – as a life style – is not easy to achieve nowadays.

Even if it is not easy, it appears that it is worth the effort! The advantages posed by amiability are obvious not only by society but also by the individual who cherishes them. Research in the areas of psychology and sociology bring into evidence that the first and main beneficiary of amiability is the person who promotes it. To support such a theory, Aurore Aimelet makes a synthetic presentation of the studies accomplished in the area by famous researchers: Robert Ornstein, David Sobel, M. J. Ryan, Ștefan Einhorn, Robert Emmons, Allan Luks and Serge Cicotti. These studies point out that when amiability becomes a way of life the individual has at least three benefits:

“It gives one the feeling of being successful and content (...); it is a source of joy: it increases the production of serotonin, the hormone of happiness, it produces a feeling of warmth, energy and calmness (...); it improves the capacity to memorize, study, creativity and the capacity to solve problems (...); it consolidates immunity: blood circulation is improved, which is vital for the cardio-vascular system, it increases the production of lymphocytes and thus it enhances resistance to illnesses; it relieves pain: it activates the area of the brain that is responsible for endorphin production, thus generating analgesic effects, anti-stress, more tolerance for pain (...); (...) it increases motivation for

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<sup>5</sup> Taubes, Isabelle, Gannac, Anne Lure, *Revansa celor binevoitori*, in *Psychologie Magazine*, nr.33/November, 2010, p. 77.

<sup>6</sup> Ibidem.

<sup>7</sup> Ibidem.

performance and voluntary attitudes.”<sup>8</sup> Besides these benefits, the practice of amiability – according to Pierro Ferucci – helps one get rid of frustration for it functions as a therapy and it has anti-depressing effects.

### **Comprehensive attitude: an exercise of amiability**

In the communication process, the collocutor feels that he/she is respected if, when he/she speaks, “he does not feel judged, analysed, interpreted, advised, manipulated, bothered by questions, and he/she is simply listened to.”<sup>9</sup> On the contrary, some people’s tendency to interpret, evaluate, offer advice/assistance or to systematically question the collocutor’s words reduce the latter’s possibility to express oneself and so much more, they direct his/her discourse, and make him/her feel inferior or manipulated. Such attitudes are generated by “statute differences” and unequal pairs of relations like: interpreter - interpreted, evaluator - evaluated, conciliator - conciliated, investigator-investigated; they hinder communication or make way to counter-attack and aggression<sup>10</sup>. Such attitudes are the expression of a lack of respect towards the collocutor, who is not allowed to express oneself in a genuine, sincere or open way. They do not foster positive relations between people and do not help the others express themselves or feel that they are listened to or that the others are attentive and respectful to them, and appreciate them. Such attitudes tend to generate unequal relationships, a feeling of inferiority and dependence or aggression. These attitudes favour one of the collocutors instead of the other one.

Comprehension is the only attitude that creates a feeling of respect for human dignity and which creates a climate that is beneficial for profound communication and which is favourable for the one who speaks. Showing interest in what the other one says, listening to him/her and trying to understand him/her in order not to judge, evaluate, interpret what he/she says/does is a way of showing respect for that person. Comprehensive and active participation in what one says encourages a person to express freely and it is a form of respect for the other one, while also creating the basic conditions for non-violent communication.

Non-violent communication implies that one is ready to help the collocutor, to understand him/her, to discover the meaning that he/she gives to the acts, words and events. In other words, it will require an effort to go beyond one’s own self, to forget about oneself at least for a moment and to concentrate on the other person, an act which is not easy to do.

Comprehensive attitude – according to C. Rogers – refers to our attempt to create links of communication with the others, which would allow the others share their feelings with us and make us part of their universe as they understand it. In order to do this, we must adopt a sensitive and comprehensive attitude towards the others in order to see them as they perceive themselves and in conformity with their feelings; (...) we should not intend to arrange things for those persons. We should listen to ourselves and listen to the others without intending to organize

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<sup>8</sup> Aurore Aimelet, *Sase motive sa faci bine*, Psychologie Magazine, Nr.33/November, 2010, p. 82-83.

<sup>9</sup> Abric, Jean-Claude, *Psihologia comunicării*, Iași, Editura Polirom, 2002, p. 49.

<sup>10</sup> *Ibidem*, p. 41-49.

things for them or to include individuals into categories and then direct them the way that we see fit for them.”<sup>11</sup>

Marshall B. Rosenberg, the founder of non-violent communication, recommends that we should adopt the language of the giraffe, a language of amiability, respect, which is non-judgemental/labelling, but rather the language of empathy for the profound needs of the collocutor: “Let us listen to our collocutor with the giraffe’s not the jackal’s ears. If the giraffe’s ears are big, attentive, open and able to decipher a need behind words, the jackal only hears criticism and answers to it similarly, thus generating violence. The jackal’s language is the symbol of a biased attitude, based on waiting, control and accusation.”<sup>12</sup>

The psychological and moral premises of comprehension are: accepting oneself, courage and generosity, quitting defence mechanisms by every collocutor or at least by one of them. The comprehensive attitude has a double dimension: it refers to the relation with oneself and the relation with the others. In order to be able to accept the others and develop good relations with them, one has to be frank with oneself, accept oneself as he/she is and enhance one’s qualities.

The exercise of comprehensions relies on courage and generosity: courage for not letting yourself influenced by the universe of the others, whose perspective you listen to; generosity because, in order to understand the other ones, you should forget about yourself at least to the extent which is necessary for you to dedicate to them.

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<sup>11</sup> C.R. Rogers, *Le développement de la personne*, Interedition, Paris, 2005, p. 215-221.

<sup>12</sup> Marshall B. Rosenberg, *Comunicarea nonviolenta, un limbaj al vietii*, **Elena Francisc Publishing**, [www.efpublishing.ro](http://www.efpublishing.ro)

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# YOUNG ADULTS LIVING IN COHABITATION AND MARRIAGE. SOME EMPIRICAL INSIGHTS OF A COMPARATIVE STUDY BETWEEN PORTUGAL AND SPAIN<sup>1</sup>.

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**Abstract:** *The purpose of this paper is to examine the incidence of co-residential unions (cohabitations and marriages) and to compare the socio-demographic profile of unmarried and married couples in Portugal and Spain. The analysis of the actual partnership behavior compares the factors that affect the likelihood of being in a cohabiting relationship relative to being in a marital relationship of young adults at the time of the survey. The factors that shape current partnership formation patterns are examined with logistic regression models applied separately for each country, considering relevant individual, parents and partner characteristics in the analysis. Data for both countries is drawn from the European Social Survey conducted in 2008 by the Center for Comparative Social Surveys.*

**Keywords:** *cohabitation, marriage, Spain, Portugal, young adults, European Social Survey.*

## 1. Introduction.

In the last decades, union formation patterns have undergone significant transformations in all Western societies. Some of the features that have shaped the new context of partnership are later and fewer marriages, increasing cohabitation, rising divorce and a growing proportion of children born outside the marriage institution, all of them identified as certain indicators of the Second Demographic Transition<sup>2</sup>.

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<sup>1</sup> This paper is the result of a collaboration among the Authors. Section 1 and 2 were written by Maria Carella, section 3 and section 4 were written by Thaís García Pereiro. Both Authors contributed to section 5.

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<sup>2</sup> D. J. Van de Kaa, “Europe’s Second Demographic Transition”, *Population Bulletin*, 42 (1), Washington, The Population Reference Bureau, 1987.

R. Lesthaeghe, J. Surkyn, “When History moves on: Foundations and Diffusion of a Second Demographic Transition”, In A. Thornton et al. (eds), *International Family Change: Ideational Perspectives*. 2004.

Marriage, which was once part of the expected progression into adulthood, has lost much of its centrality in structuring women's and men's adult lives. Nowadays cohabitation provides an increasingly common alternative to marriage and it is replacing marriage as the first step of couple life<sup>3</sup>.

Over the last fifty years cohabitation has gained in importance (with different tempo and levels) all over Europe, becoming more and more an option for partnering to individuals in transition to adulthood. In the 1960s, cohabitation was rare in most European countries<sup>4</sup>. Nowadays, cohabitation has become even common mostly in Northern and Central Europe, especially among the younger generations<sup>5</sup>. Still, there are also great differences in the extent and meaning of cohabitation among European countries<sup>6</sup>.

In Spain and Portugal, as well as in other Mediterranean countries (such as Italy) cohabitation has not acquired the same role that it has had in some countries of the north (Sweden, Denmark, among others). Despite the continuous descending trend of marriage rates, the corresponding rise on the proportion of women living in cohabitation has not been complementary<sup>7</sup>. Moreover, one of the most characteristic features in Southern Europe is the percentage of women that have not yet entered in a co-residential partnership, the value for 2001 (Census rounds) was 45,3% for Portugal and 62,2% for Spain, among the highest in the continent.

Nevertheless, a considerable increase in non-marital fertility has taken place in both Spain and Portugal. The proportion of non-marital births in 2009 reached 34.5% and 38.1%, in that order. The prevalence of cohabiting couples was under 7% and 9% according to the 2001 Census for Portugal and Spain, respectively. However, it is expected a considerable rise on these figures when younger adults are observed. In fact, in 2006 22% of women aged 35 were living in cohabitation in Spain a no longer marginal phenomena<sup>8</sup>.

The South European model of demographic behaviors regarding family and couple issues is characterized by the share of some general patterns like: lowest

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<sup>3</sup> K. Kiernan, "The rise of cohabitation and childbearing outside marriage in Western Europe", *International Journal of Law, Policy and Family*, 15 (1): 1-21, 2001.

P.J. Smock, W.D. Manning, "Living together unmarried in the U.S.: Demographic perspectives and implications for family policy", *Law & Policy* 26 (1): 87-117, 2004.

<sup>4</sup> H.P. Blossfeld (ed), *The New Role of Women. Family Formation in Modern Societies*, Boulder, Westview Press, 1995.

<sup>5</sup> T. Sobotka, L. Toulemon, "Changing family and partnership behavior: common trend and persistent diversity across Europe", *Demographic Research* 19 (6): 85-138, 2008.

<sup>6</sup> C. Prinz, *Cohabiting, marriage or single: Portraying, analyzing, and modeling new living arrangements in the changing societies of Europe*, England, Avebury, 1995.

K. Kiernan, *op.cit.*, pp. 1-21

<sup>7</sup> K. Wall, *Family change and family policies: Portugal*, In S. Kamerman e A. Kahn (eds.), "Family Change and Family Policies in France and Southern Europe", Oxford, Clarendon Press, 2002.

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<sup>8</sup> T.García Pereiro, "Las mujeres jóvenes y la formación de uniones en España: Factores socio-demográficos vinculados a sus relaciones de pareja", *Revista Prisma Social*, n. 6, pp. 1-36, 2012.



low fertility<sup>9</sup>, latest late transition to adulthood<sup>10</sup>, late union formation and predominance of marriage among first unions<sup>11</sup>. Portugal and Spain have experimented all the above mentioned trends<sup>12</sup>, however, it would be interesting to go deeper on the subject to corroborate (or not) if such similarities are also observed in more specific and recent demographic behaviors such as living in different types of co-residential partnerships (cohabitation and marriage).

During the past decades, Portugal and Spain have undergone an intense modernization process, characterized by large changes in the economic, political and social spheres that have brought transformations in the standard of living, life-style and attitudes of younger Spanish and Portuguese generations. Perhaps the most significant ones have been the changing role of women, as reflected in their recently achieved parity with men in education and in their rapidly increasing participation in the labor force, which has been accompanied by a significant delay in union formation and childbearing<sup>13</sup>.

Despite these changes, Southern Europe remains portrayed as “traditional” in family and union formation patterns, thus, the central aim of this paper is to explore recent developments in cohabitation in Spain and Portugal from a comparative perspective. In order to achieve this goal, the first purpose of this paper is to determine the incidence of cohabitation by gender and age groups, while the second is to examine the factors that are shaping actual union formation choices (living in cohabitation vs. marriage) and to compare the socio-demographic profile of unmarried and married couples in both countries (Spain and Portugal).

## 2. Background and hypotheses.

The prevalence of marriage as the gateway to couple life has followed a declining trend. Currently, diverse living arrangements have rapidly spread. Marriage is not longer the only possibility regarding union formation. In fact, cohabitation has gained importance, especially among young adults<sup>14</sup>.

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<sup>9</sup> H.P.; Kohler, F. Billari, J.A. Ortega, “The emergence of lowest low fertility in Europe during the 1990s”, *Population and Development Review* 28 (4): 641-681, 2002.

<sup>10</sup> F. Billari, “Becoming an adult in Europe: A macro-micro demographic perspective”, *Demographic Research*, Special Collection 3, Article 3, 2004.

<sup>11</sup> P. Baizán; A. Aassve, F. Billari, “Cohabitation, marriage and first birth: The interrelationship of family formation events in Spain”, *European Journal of Population* 19: 47-169, 2003.

<sup>12</sup> M. Bandeira, *Demografia e Modernidade. Família e Transição Demográfica*, Portugal, Imprensa Nacional-Casa da Moeda, 1996.

<sup>13</sup> A. Almeida, *Família, conjugalidade e procriação: valores e papéis*, In J. Vala, M. Villaverde Cabral e Alice Ramos (eds.), “Valores Sociais: Mudanças e Contrastes em Portugal e na Europa”, Lisboa, Instituto de Ciências Sociais, 2002.

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<sup>14</sup> S. Aboim, *Perfis de coabitação em Portugal: percursos, contextos e orientações*, Actas do Colóquio Internacional “Família, Género e Sexualidade nas Sociedades Contemporâneas” Lisboa, Associação Portuguesa de Sociologia, pp. 121-131, 2002.

Idem, *A Formação do Casal: Formas de Entrada e Percursos Conjugais*, In Karin Wall (org.), “Famílias em Portugal, Lisboa”, Imprensa das Ciências Sociais/Instituto de Ciências Sociais, pp. 85-116, 2005.

Cohabitations have experienced significant increases in recent decades in most Western countries. The explanations given by the literature have been very different. Among them, a great support has been given to ideational changes and post-modern values<sup>15</sup>.

The change in attitudes toward marriage, especially in younger generations, has been a key to the acceptance and effective incorporation of alternative forms of union. As shown by Thornton and Young-DeMarco (2001)<sup>16</sup>, young adults increasingly have fewer restrictions for remaining single or cohabit, while attribute limitations to a marital life. There is an extensive line of works that examine how attitudes differ between cohabiting and married individuals<sup>17</sup>. Differences are considered on the base of future behaviors and, in general, are encompassed within the theories regarding familistic values (more prone to marriage) vs. individualistic (more prone to cohabitation).

However, marriage is still regarded by most part of the population as an ideal environment for the couple, because marriage means stability. However, people who get married nowadays have done it certainly for different reasons and with a different timing if compared to those who married 40 years ago<sup>18</sup>.

Also related to the profound change in attitudes and values, there are also the explanations relating the entrance into cohabitation or marriage to other important factors. Union formation processes cannot be interpreted as an isolated phenomenon of individual life courses. Quite the contrary, it is directly linked to other biographical transitions and trajectories. The decision to form a co-residential union, either cohabitation or marriage, is correlated to several characteristics that involves not only the individual aspects but also the attributes of the partner and parents.

This paper presents a theoretical framework that embraces the more recent issues addressed by the literature on union dynamics. The following research hypotheses are introduced in direct relation with the variables included subsequently in the empirical analyses.

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P.Ferreira, S. Aboim, "Modernidade, laços conjugais e fecundidade: a evolução recente dos nascimentos fora do casamento", *Análise Social*, n.º 163, pp. 411-446, 2002.

<sup>15</sup> R. Rindfuss, A. VandenHeuvel, "Cohabitation: precursor to marriage or an alternative to being single". *Population and Development Review*, n.16 (4), pp. 703-726, 1990.

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<sup>16</sup> A. Thornton, L. Young Demarco, "Four Decades of Attitudes toward Family Issues in the United States: The 1960s through the 1990s", *Journal of Marriage and the Family*, n.64, pp. 100, 2001.

<sup>17</sup> L. L. Bumpass, J. A Sweet., et al., "The role of cohabitation in declining rates of marriage", *Journal of Marriage and the Family* 53: 913-927, 1991.

M. Clarkberg, R. Stolzenberg, et al., "Attitudes, Values, and Entrance into Cohabital Versus Marital Unions", *Social Forces* 74(2): 609-632, 1995.

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<sup>18</sup> T. Sobotka, L.Toulemon, *op.cit.*

Previous research has demonstrated that the diffusion of consensual unions is characterized by a strong age component, becoming a mainstream option between younger partners. In Southern Europe, the role of the youth is ever more important considering the weight of premarital unions with a transitive character.

*H1:* Also in Spain and Portugal, cohabitation will be linked to age. Thus, younger people will be more likely to live in cohabitation rather than marriage<sup>19</sup>.

With regard to the employment status, individuals who are employed have higher cohabitation rates, like those who are still enrolled in education. About the educational attainment, the results of several studies confirm a positive effect on cohabitation for the highest levels. In general, less conservative behaviors are the way of living of the more educated youth.

*H2:* It is expected a positive relationship between educational level and cohabitation (Baizán et al., 2003)<sup>20</sup> in both countries. In addition, for Spain, employed individuals and those who study will be more likely to cohabit<sup>21</sup>. While in Portugal, the economic dependence of women will be associated to non-marital unions<sup>22</sup>.

As occurred to the historical internal evolution of social and demographic transformations undergone in Spain and Portugal, family-related behaviors are also influenced by the nature of big metropolitan areas<sup>23</sup> the home of modern consensual unions' forerunners.

*H3:* In both Iberian countries living in a big city will increase the likelihood of being in cohabitation instead of marriage<sup>24</sup>.

Perhaps the most important factor affecting both pre and post union formation dynamics is the birth of a child. When considering jointly cohabitation and children, the resulting relationship between them is often negative. If a couple has children is more likely to be a married than a cohabiting one.

*H4:* For the presence of children two different results will be expected. In Spain the fertility will be lower between cohabiters than married<sup>25</sup>. Portugal is characterized by a further imperative role of out-of-wedlock births, so the association cohabitation-children could be even positive or null<sup>26</sup>.

The individual characteristics not solely constitute the determinants of union entry. Also important influences on marriage and cohabitation have been found both on parents' and partners' attributes. Regarding the first, parental actions and backgrounds have a consequence on the lives of their children. In this sense, the educational level, the labor market distribution of roles within the family, and marriage disruption are situations that have an impact on children's future perspectives and even in their life course decision and choices. Concerning

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<sup>19</sup> S. Aboim, *op.cit.*

<sup>20</sup> P. Baizán; A. Aassve, F. Billari, *op.cit.*

<sup>21</sup> T. Castro-Martin, M. Domínguez-Folgueras, *op.cit.*

<sup>22</sup> P. Ferreira, S. Aboim, *op.cit.*

<sup>23</sup> R. Lesthaeghe, K. Neels, "From the first to the second demographic transition: an interpretation of the spatial continuity of demographic innovation in France, Belgium and Switzerland", *European Journal of Population*, n. 18, 4, pp. 325-360, 2002.

<sup>24</sup> K. Wall, *op.cit.*

<sup>25</sup> P. Baizán; A. Aassve, F. Billari, *op.cit.*

<sup>26</sup> P. Ferreira, S. Aboim, *op.cit.*

partners, the combination of characteristic between both couple members can be expressed in terms of homo/heterogamy according to the degree of similarity showed. Following this assumption, cohabiting and married couples could differ based on the convergence displayed by the combination of their characteristics; i.e. age homogamy, educational heterogamy.

Was also included a variable that summarizes the employment status shared by both members of the couple. Some literature has emphasized the more egalitarian role of cohabiting couples regarding labor market distribution<sup>27</sup>.

*H5:* In both Portugal and Spain, parental divorce will represent a key variable to explain the choice between marriage and cohabitation, favoring the last.

*H6:* As found for other Mediterranean country (Italy), father's high education level will have a positive influence on the probability of living in cohabitation<sup>28</sup>.

*H7:* It is also expected that cohabiting couples will be less homogamous when considering the educational level of the couple.

### **3. Data sources and methodology.**

For both countries (Spain and Portugal) data is drawn from the European Social Survey (ESS). The ESS is an academically-driven cross-sectional social survey designed to chart and explain the interaction between Europe's changing behavior patterns of its diverse populations. The project is directed by a "Central Coordinating Team" led by Roger Jowell at the Centre for Comparative Social Surveys, City University, UK. The dataset correspond to the most recent round, conducted in 2008.

The cross-national character of the ESS allows making accurate comparisons between the countries subject of these research. The variables that will be use are part of the core model of the questionnaire which includes socio-demographic characteristics of the respondent and some concerning its parents and partner. One of its greatest advantages is that asks directly about the current legal marital status, so it is possible to distinguish among men and women who are cohabiting, married or not in union. The total sample of both countries includes 4.943 individuals, 52.1% residing in Spain.

The methodological framework chosen is divided in two parts. The first is dedicated to the study of the incidence of cohabiters by calculating the percentage distribution of the union status (married, cohabiters, not in union) by age and gender. The second deals with the study of the socio-demographic profile of cohabiting and married young adults in Spain and Portugal. Here the percentage distribution of the independent variables is analyzed in relation to the dependent variable (individuals in marriage or cohabitation at the time of the survey). The selection of variables include in the analyses corresponds to the previous findings of the research on the subject summarized in the background section. Subsequently, to evaluate the results of the descriptive analysis in a multivariate setting, were run two binary logistic regression models (one for each country) that measures the likelihood that have a young adult between 20 and 39 years old to be

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<sup>27</sup> T. Castro-Martín, M. Domínguez-Folgueras, *op.cit.*

<sup>28</sup> A. Rosina, R.Fraboni, "Its marriage losing its centrality in Italy?", *Demographic Research*, n.11, pp. 149-172, 2004.

cohabiting rather than married at the time of the survey, controlling for the eleven independent variables group within three categories: individuals', parents' and partners' characteristics (see Table 1). Within the model estimation were also calculated the standardized coefficients (Wald) in order to compare the different ratios obtained for both countries and determine which variables influence, on a greater or lesser degree, the relative probability of the variable under study.

**Table 1. Socio-demographic variables selected for the analysis of co-residential unions. Portugal and Spain, European Social Survey Data 2008 Round.**

Individual characteristics		Parental characteristics	
<b>1. Gender</b> Male Female	<b>4. Employment status</b> Working Studying Housewife/husband	<b>7. Parental divorce</b> Yes No	<b>9. Mother's employment</b> Did not work Worked
<b>2. Age (groups)</b> 35-39 20-24 25-29 30-34	<b>5. Children</b> Yes No	<b>8. Father's education</b> University Not university	
<b>3. Educational level</b> University Not university	<b>6. Place of residence</b> Big city Other	<b>Couple characteristics</b>	
		<b>10. Educational homogamy</b> Yes No	<b>11. Labor distribution</b> Both are working Just one is working

**4. Results**

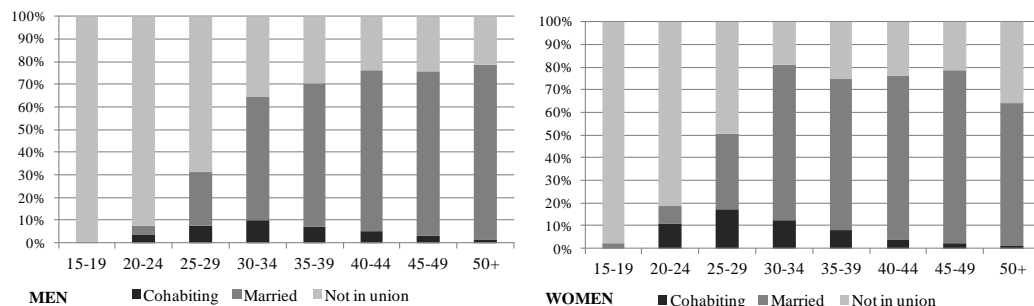
***The incidence of the co-residential phenomenon in Portugal and Spain***

In Southern European countries scholars have hypothesized about the existence of a crisis in union formation<sup>29</sup>. Changes in the union formation processes in Portugal and Spain are characterized, first, by a decrease of the intensity, a delay in the constitution and a rise of people who have not entered into any kind of union. And second, by the role of young adults as forerunners of such changes, because are their behaviors that consolidated new union formation patterns. Although Spain and Portugal have reached the level of other European countries regarding marriage timing, has not been verified yet the convergence between marital and non-marital unions. However, the incidence of cohabiting unions has increased significantly becoming a stage on the family formation process.

More specifically, the former mentioned changes are evident when studying the union status of individuals by age groups and gender both in Portugal and Spain at 2008 (Figures 1 and 2).

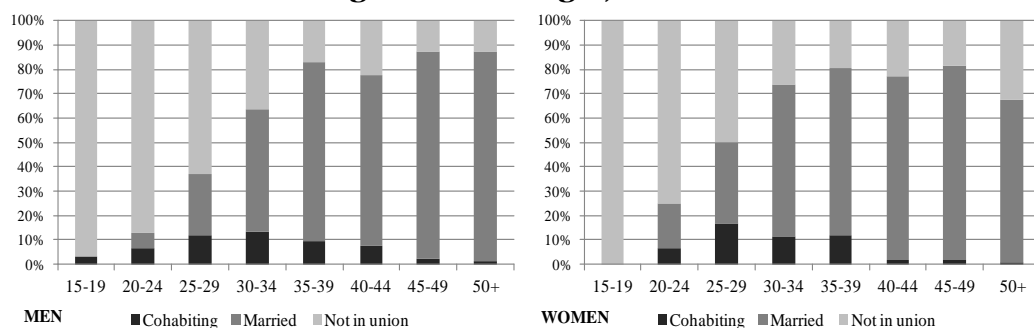
<sup>29</sup> P., Miret, A., Cabré, “Pautas recientes en la formación familiar en España: constitución de la pareja y fecundidad”, *Papeles de economía*, n. 104, pp. 17-36, 2005.

**Figure 1. Distribution of the current union status by age groups and gender. Spain, 2008.**



**Source:** ESS 2008.

**Figure 2. Distribution of the current union status by age groups and gender. Portugal, 2008.**



**Source:** ESS 2008.

The most obvious feature displayed by the figures is the elevated proportion of not partnered persons: around 35% for Portugal and four points higher for Spain (39%). Disaggregating the values by age and gender, it is observed for the Spanish case that being out of union is more prevalent among younger males than their female counterparts: for the category 25-29 years old, 70% of men were not in union, while the value for women was 50%. Portugal instead, shows a similar gender pattern for the youngest but a complete different one for individuals over 40. In this sense, the three last age categories have a superior percentage of women not in union by the time of the survey if compared to men: 33% of women enter in this category, more than twice the percentage registered by males. This finding is concordant with the gender differences found in the literature for re-partnering, distinguished by higher rates for men if compared to women.

In general, if the attention is focused on the age distribution, the figures illustrate a cross-sectional prevalence pattern in which the only category that increases its percentage weight regards married individuals. Marriage remains the mainstream for union formation in Portugal and Spain. In fact, by 2008 in both countries more than half of the respondents were already married at the age of 30-34 years old.

The age distribution of cohabiting individuals is undoubtedly young, concentrated between the second and fifth age group. This is the reason underlying the methodological choice of including only young adults (20-39 years old) in the estimated models.

In Portugal, consensual unions are more frequent for 25-29 years old females (16.7%) and 30-34 years old males (13.5%). Other interesting result is the proportion of males over 40 that were cohabiting in 2008, which is almost four times the one for women's. In Spain, cohabitating unions have also a superior prevalence among younger women, but the gender divergence is even higher than in Portugal. Indeed, in the age group 25-29 the difference between cohabiting men and women reaches 10 percentage points.

### ***Differences and similarities between the socio-demographic profile of young adults living in cohabitation and marriage***

The incidence of living in cohabitation (vs. marriage) among young adults differs significantly between Portugal and Spain, being a more widespread phenomenon in the first. In fact, when considering co-residential unions in 2008, the proportion of males and females between 20 and 39 years old living in consensual unions was 38.2% in Portugal and 28.1% in Spain. Once established the intensity, the European Social Survey allows also a direct comparison between the two countries of the socio-demographic profiles of young adults who were married or cohabiting in 2008.

Table 2 shows the percentage distribution of the socio-demographic characteristics of young adults by the co-residential type of union (either marriage or cohabitation) for Portugal and Spain at the time of the survey.

The first impact regards the gender differences observed between countries: a more balanced distribution for both married and cohabiting men and women in Portugal, and a preference among women for cohabitation in Spain (64.1%). About the differential profiles by age groups, the cohabiters show a younger profile than married individuals, concentrated on the first three age categories. In both countries, around 15% of cohabiters had 20-24 years old and only 3% in Spain and 7% in Portugal were already married.

Examining the highest educational level attained in Spain among those living in cohabiting unions there seems to be a quite similar educational profile. On the contrary, the distribution by educational level of cohabiters in Portugal shows greater centralization in the category of more educated women (20% vs. 13%).

The percentage distribution of the third variable under examination, employment status, shows a less differentiated pattern between categories, since in all cases more than 66% of the women were working at the time of the survey in both countries. However, there are certain features that deserve to be highlighted. Among them, the highest percentage of students and workers among those living in cohabitation, although the percentages are lower in Portugal with regard to Spain (67% and 87% respectively). Only valid for the Spanish case, there is a clear difference between married and cohabiting regarding household activities (19% and 17%).

For the rest of individual variables analyzed, the values show that in Spain most of cohabitants do not have children; while in Portugal the percentage of cohabitants with children is more than half (56.7%). Also draws attention the high percentage of those cohabiting who live in large cities in Portugal (45.4%).

In the parental characteristics group, both countries display a proportion over 17% of cohabiting young adults that have experienced parental divorce and around 7% whose father reached university education. The percentage of those whose mother was working in their adolescence is higher among individuals living in cohabitation, even if the value is larger in Portugal (48%) than in Spain (40%).

The mainstream on co-residential unions in both countries accounts for educational homogamy within the couples. However, heterogamy is more frequent for cohabiting couples and almost eleven points higher in Portugal if compared to Spain.

The concentration of labor market activities in both partners illustrates a clear pattern for Spain represented by 85.5% of non-married couples. In Portugal, instead, the proportion of cohabiting couples in which only one of the members is working (mostly the male) is not negligible reaching 36%. This value could be indicating a more balanced distribution of gender roles within the couple in Spain than in Portugal.

**Table 2. Distribution of the socio-demographic variables selected by type of co-residential union. Portugal and Spain, 2008.**

Socio-demographic characteristics		Portugal		Spain	
		Married %	Cohabiting %	Married %	Cohabiting %
<b>Individual characteristics</b>					
<b>Gender</b>	Male	38,0	41,3	42,8	35,9
	Female	62,0	58,7	57,2	64,1
<b>Age groups</b>	20-24	6,9	14,9	2,7	15,4
	25-29	16,6	31,2	16,3	32,2
	30-34	37,7	31,6	36,8	29,9
	35-39	38,8	22,3	44,2	22,5
<b>Educational attainment</b>	Primary or less	37,7	21,8	10,5	10,8
	Secondary	49,0	57,9	64,9	65,8
	University	13,3	20,3	24,6	23,3
<b>Employment status</b>	Working	79,3	66,6	72,2	82,0
	Studying	0,3	7,4	0,0	4,9
	Housewife/husband	11,9	12,8	19,1	6,9
	Other	8,5	13,2	8,7	6,1
<b>Children</b>	Yes	80,7	43,3	71,9	25,6
	No	19,3	56,7	28,1	74,4
<b>Place of residence</b>	Big city	30,8	45,4	26,3	27,7
	Other	69,2	54,6	73,7	72,3
<b>Parental characteristics</b>					
<b>Parental divorce</b>	Yes	2,2	18,5	2,1	17,0
	No	97,8	81,5	97,9	83,0
<b>Father's educational level</b>	Not university	96,3	92,0	91,3	89,1
	University	3,7	8,0	8,7	10,9
<b>Mother's employment status</b>	Working	34,9	47,9	21,6	39,5
	Not working	65,1	52,1	78,4	60,5
<b>Couple's characteristics</b>					
<b>Educational homogamy</b>	Same level	67,6	57,8	79,9	68,4
	Diverse level	32,4	42,2	20,1	31,6
<b>Employment status combination (within the couple)</b>	Both working	80,0	64,1	63,4	85,5
	Just one working	20,0	35,9	36,6	14,5
<b>N</b>		546	148	782	183

Source: European Social Survey 2008.

Since the differences in socio-demographic profiles of young adults in co-residential unions described here may be conditioned by its particular age



structure (among others influences), it is essential to test their statistical significance in a multivariate setting.

The analysis carried out compares the factors affecting the probability of being cohabiting rather than married at the time of the survey (2008). Among the factors associated with the current type of co-residential union in Portugal and Spain are considered as independent variables: gender, age (four groups), educational level, employment status, having children, place of residence, parental divorce, father's educational level, mother's employment status, educational homogamy and labor market distribution activities within the couple.

Table 3 presents the results of the binary logistic regression models according to the type of co-residential union of young adults in Portugal and Spain at the time of the survey. Here are represented the effects of the covariates considered in the odds ratio (relative risks) of being cohabiting instead of married and the respective Wald coefficients.

The direction (positive or negative) of the effects of independent variables on the dependent relative is pretty much similar for both countries with the exceptions of variables regarding gender, children and couple's labor market distribution. In Portugal, gender differences are neutral, while in Spain females have a probability 1.9 times higher to be cohabiting rather than being married if compared to males. For the other two covariates, the relation observed between countries is exactly the opposite.

While for Spain having children is negatively associated with cohabiting, in Portugal the probability of being in a marital or a non-marital union for those who have children is basically the same.

This result could be illustrating the important divergence on the incidence of out-of wedlock births between these Iberian countries, reflecting the higher rates always registered in Portugal. The distribution of labor market activities within the couple shows that if both are working it is more likely to be married than cohabiting in Portugal, when for Spain the probability of living in a consensual union duplicates in the same situation.

When examining the effect of age, it is showed how, in general, the likelihood of living in cohabitation compared to marriage decreases significantly as age advance. Cohabitants' young adults are even younger than married. These results support the hypothesis of the importance of the behavior adopted by younger generations on the increase in cohabitation.

It is more likely for a young adult to be cohabiting rather than married if had reached university studies, relative to those with only primary education. The findings presented here support what reported recently in the literature: the most educated prioritize professional activity in detriment of family life, postponing marriage or establishing a different living arrangement.

As for the results of the covariate employment status, the statistical significance found only allows statements regarding the unpaid domestic work in the Spanish case. And, as expected, the probability of being in a consensual union vs. being married is lower for housework. Logically, the unpaid domestic labor is strongly associated with marriage.

Regarding parental characteristics, the coefficients show that the probability of being cohabiting instead of married increases for young adults who experienced parental divorce. Only significant for Spain, the relative risks for being in a consensual union undergo a 50% decrease if the father did not reach the highest educational level and also if the mother was not working when the respondent had 14 years.

The obtained results demonstrate that cohabiting couples are more likely to be heterogamous with regard to education, with a probability which is more than twice the one for homogamous couples.

Finally, the values of the Wald coefficients allow classifying the independent variables according to their influence on the dependent variable: the higher the value, the more significant is the variable considered as a determinant of the probability of being unmarried. In this sense, building a ranking for the top 3 covariates, find that the most important are: children, parental divorce and educational level for Spain; and age, living in a big city and parental divorce for Portugal.

**Table 3. Results (odds ratio) of the binary logistic regression models by type of co-residential union. Men and women 20-39 years old. Portugal and Spain, 2008.**

	Covariates	Portugal			Spain		
		Exp(B)	Wald	Sig.	Exp(B)	Wald	Sig.
Individual characteristics	<b>Gender</b>						
	(Male)	1,00			1,00		
	Female	1,01	0,00		1,89	3,23	**
	<b>Age (groups)</b>						
	(35-39)	1,00			1,00		
	20-24	3,56	5,19	***	4,65	5,01	***
	25-29	3,24	4,76	***	2,13	3,65	***
	30-34	2,77	3,63	***	1,67	2,40	***
	<b>Educational level</b>						
	University	1,35	2,66	*	2,71	6,34	*
	(Not university)	1,00			1,00		
	<b>Employment status</b>						
	(Working)	1,00			1,00	1,57	
	Studying	1,52	0,71		1,43	0,06	
	Housewife/husband	1,20	1,07		0,57	1,54	*
	Other	0,51	0,13		0,69	0,17	
Parental characteristics	<b>Children</b>						
	Yes	1,09	1,36	**	0,16	6,64	***
	(No)	1,00			1,00		
	<b>Place of residence</b>						
	Big city	2,27	5,13	***	0,58	1,87	
	(Other)	1,00			1,00		
	<b>Parental divorce</b>						
	Yes	2,19	4,44	***	2,75	5,31	***
	(No)	1,00			1,00		
	<b>Father's education</b>						
Couple's characteristics	Not university	0,75	0,82		0,41	2,81	*
	(University)	1,00			1,00		
	<b>Mother's employment</b>						
	Did not work	0,80	0,39		0,50	3,12	*
	(Worked)	1,00			1,00		
	<b>Educational homogeneity</b>						
	(Yes)	1,00			1,00		
	No	2,05	4,11	**	2,27	4,86	**
	<b>Labor distribution</b>						
	Both are working	0,88	3,21	**	2,17	1,86	*
	(Just one is working)	1,00			1,00		
N			612			904	
Log likelihood			231,83			264,18	
R2 Nagelkerke			0,28			0,37	

\*\*\*p>=0,001 \*\*p<=0,01 \*p<=0,05

## 5. Concluding remarks

In this article have been analyzed the cross-sectional patterns of co-residential union formation and have been demonstrated the peculiarities of the Portuguese and Spanish cases. In both countries, family formation and fertility contexts are characterized by a delay on the age at union formation, and the decrease in both marriage and fertility rates.

Within this framework, the review of the current union status reveals important findings that should be highlighted. For the year 2008 in Portugal and Spain, at least 83% of young adults between 20 and 39 years old were still out of union. Such value could be considered clear evidence in favor of the argument of a crisis in union formation posed by Miret and Cabré (2005)<sup>30</sup>. This crisis could be due more to the particular socio-economic situation experienced by young people in both countries than to the traditional character of these societies<sup>31</sup>. The difficulties to enter the labor market and its precarious nature, together with the costs of the residential market and the lack of public policies that favor the transition to adulthood, constitute the main barriers to the independence and economic stability necessary to form a union.

However, cohabitation is no longer a negligible phenomenon in Southern Europe. There has also been proved the role of cohabitation between young adults, a behavior more frequently adopted in Portugal than in Spain. The percentages of union status by age have shown a cohabitation pattern much younger than marriage in both countries and a gender balance regarding its frequency in Portugal.

About the socio-demographic profile by type of living arrangement, the results show remarkable differences and specific implications. Cohabitation among young adults (both Portugal and Spain) is established as a union with a different character than marriage. In Spain, the cohabiting profile corresponds to a young-young adult, female, that do not have children and with the highest level of education. Moreover, it is more likely that its parents were divorced, the father reached university education and had a working mother in the adolescence. The couple formed is heterogamous from the educational point of view.

In Portugal, instead, is more likely for cohabiters to be young, male or female independently, with divorced parents, living in a large urban center and that probably have a child and a college education. The type of couple formed is heterogamous from the educational point of view and only one of them works, typically the male partner.

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<sup>30</sup> P. Miret, A. Cabré, *op.cit.*

<sup>31</sup> D. S. Reher, *Family Ties in Western Europe. In Strong Family and Low Fertility: A Paradox?*. In G. Dalla Zuanna and G. A. Micheli (eds.). Dordrecht, Boston, London: Kluwer Academic Publishers, 2004.

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# INTERNAL MIGRATION IN ROMANIA AFTER THE DECLINE OF COMMUNIST REGIME<sup>1</sup>.

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**Abstract:** *The aim of this paper is to analyze the internal migration in Romania between 1991 and 2010 in order to observe the dynamic of this phenomenon. This kind of analysis allow to note which class of population, in term of age, move from rural and urban areas. The data used in this paper are collected by the Institute of Statistics of Romania.*

**Keywords:** *internal mobility, economic indicators, Romania.*

## **1. Introduction.**

Since the fall of communism, Romania has seen a considerable increase in migration flows both outward and within national borders. Regarding the internal mobility, you can distinguish two different trends: until 1997 the largest number of displacements took place from rural to urban areas; from 1997 onwards, there is a reversal of the previous trend, in fact the urban areas are turned into departure areas, while the rural areas into destination of these flows.

In the first part of this work will provide a brief overview of major scientific contributions from the economic literature about these migration patterns. Then the attention will focus on the analysis of the evolution of flows over time (from 1991 to 2007) to identify the major drivers. Finally, we will conduct a study on the structural characteristics of these migrants with the intent to obtain information on the rationale behind the migration process.

## **2. Theoretical framework.**

The first models that attempted to explain the migration patterns were significantly influenced by gravity patterns made famous by Ravenstein and Newton. According to these models, migration between a designated place and another are positively affected by repulsive factors and attractive forces and

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<sup>1</sup> This paper is the result of a collaboration among the Authors. Section 1, 2 and 3 were written by Antonella Biscione, section 4 and section 5 were written by Roberta Pace.

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negatively influenced by the distance between the two places.

Stouffer<sup>2</sup>, has extended these models, arguing that migration on a given distance is directly proportional to the number of opportunities for that distance and inversely proportional to the number of other possible alternative destinations between  $i$  and  $j$ .

The gravity models are simple to estimate, but the two components that consider the distance between the places and people, are inadequate to explain the migratory behavior. At this regards, up to Lee<sup>3</sup> both departure place and destination have peculiarities that can attract or repel migrants. Obviously the perception of the features already mentioned above, differs depending on the types of migrants that we want to consider.

From 1950 onwards, are mainly economic models to provide an explanation of migration. The model of Lewis<sup>4</sup>, among others, is a model that analyzes the development of an economy in which there are two segment, a traditional agricultural sector, characterized by wages at the subsistence level, labor surplus and low productivity; and a modern industrial sector characterized (initially) by higher wages than the agricultural one, with higher marginal productivity and an insufficient labor supply. In this model the mobility from traditional to modern sector shows a redistributive dynamic, since such movements could be considered the only way to cover the shortage of labor that characterizes the industry.

We can say, therefore, that migration can assimilate the so-called "job application" that comes from industry, instead of being determined by wage differentials between the two sectors, given the assumption – up to the model mentioned above – that the wage would not be changed.

To conclude the theoretical framework is necessary to mention the model proposed by Harris and Todaro<sup>5</sup>, which, in our view, seems to call into question the assertions made years earlier by Lewis. In fact, according to these authors, the process of migration from the countryside to cities persists in spite of high levels of unemployment. This model postulates, in fact, that an individual decides to leave the country if and only if he can expect material advantage by his transfer.

Obviously, those who decide to migrate do so after considering the various job opportunities offered by the market, both in urban and rural, and choose the job opportunities that maximize the expected gains. The latter are equal to the difference between real incomes obtained by urban and rural employment and depends mainly on the chance of the migrant to obtain employment in urban centers.

This pattern, however, does not fit seem to be applicable to developing countries since they are characterized by still high unemployment rates. In these situations, an individual who decides to migrate to an urban center cannot be

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<sup>2</sup> S.A. Stouffer, "Interventing Opportunities: A Theory Relating to Mobility and Distance". *American Sociological Review*, p. 840, 1940.

<sup>3</sup> E.S. Lee, "A Theory of Migration". *Demography* 3, pp. 47-57, 1966.

<sup>4</sup> A. W. Lewis, "Economic Development with Unlimited Supplies of Labour". *The Manchester School*, vol. 22, no. 2, pp. 139-191, 1954.

<sup>5</sup> J.R. Harris, M.P. Todaro, "Migration, Unemployment and Development: A Two Sector Analysis", *The American Economic Review*, vol. 60, no. 1, pp. 126-142, 1970.



certain to get quickly a better paid job, and he, in fact, compare on one hand the opportunities and risks of becoming unemployed or underemployed for a certain period of time and on the other hand the real wage gap between urban wages and rural wages.

So, is possible to define rational the decision to emigrate if the expected urban income is expected to be higher than rural incomes. As postulated by Todaro<sup>6</sup>, the rural-urban migration does not seem to match the urban and rural wages - a situation, this, found in a competitive model - on the contrary should be considered an equilibrating force that equals the expected urban and rural incomes in the presence of unemployment.

We conclude that the Todaro model relates to the internal mobility is characterized by the following features:

- Migration is primarily determined by economic considerations based on a comparison of costs and benefits either financial and psychological;
- The decision to migrate depends on the expected wage differential that arises from the interaction of two variables, the current differential between urban wages and agricultural income and employment opportunities in the urban sector;
- The probability of obtaining an urban job is positively correlated with the rate of urban employment.

### **3. Economic Indicators.**

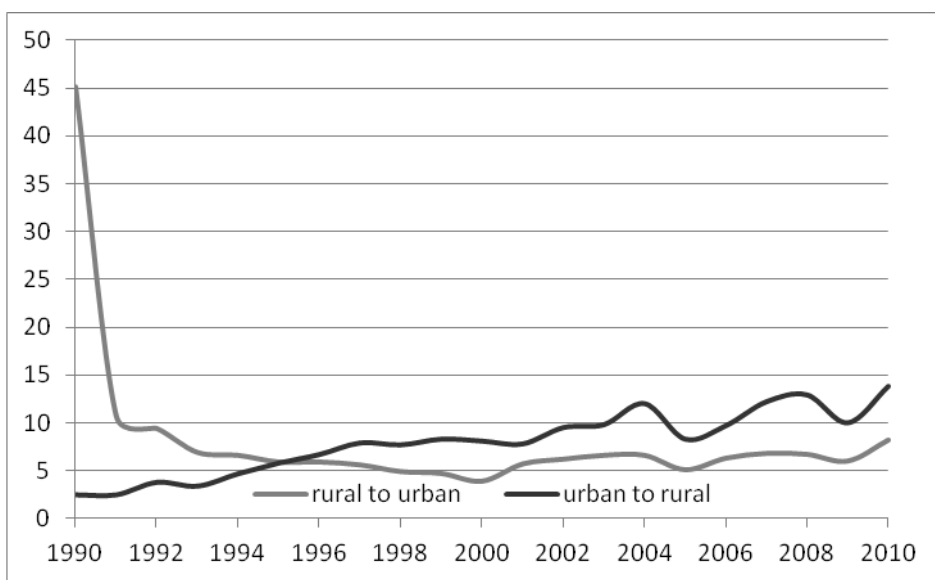
Internal mobility in Romania has always existed even though over the years two different dynamics were added and intertwined two very. The early nineties were dominated by the presence of migration from rural areas whose final destination is urban; from 1997 onwards, the director changes because urban areas attending a mass exodus of the population toward rural areas. This reversal of trend is so clearly evident looking at the figure one, which shows that the mobility versus the city has suffered a sharp fall in a very limited period of time, from 45% to less than 6% .

On the contrary, mobility versus rural - almost non-existent in the early years of transition - has grown gradually to match up the other type of flow (making zero balance), and then overcome it and keep for the following years an upward trend.

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<sup>6</sup> M.P. Todaro. M.P., A Model of Labor Migration and Urban Unemployment in Less Developed Countries, *American Economic Review*, 59, I, 138-48, 1969.

**Fig. 1 – Evolution of internal mobility in Romania: 1990-2010**



**Source: personal data processing from INSS database.**

The increase of internal mobility is almost surely be blamed for several effects arising from political and socio-economic changes involving the entire nation after the implosion of the Ceausescu regime that has governed uninterruptedly for nearly fifty years. Policy reforms needed to establish a free and democratic state, but especially economic, essential for the transition from Soviet-style planned economy to a free market, caused the collapse of all productive sectors of national economy. Moreover, it should be noted that the internal mobility of the population has continued even after the entry of the country into the European Union, in fact, from 2007 to 2010 these migrations were not arrested, rather than to the rural areas have values that exceed 10%.

**Tab. 1 – Economic indicators: 1991-1999\* and 2000-2007\*\***

Years	GDP (billion of lei)	GDP Index Numbers	GDP per capita (thousand of lei)	GDP per capita Index Numbers	Inflation (in %)	Unemployment Rate (in %)
1991	2.203,90	87,1	95,1	87,2	270,2	3
1992	6.029,20	79,4	264,6	80,9	310,4	8,2
1993	20.035,70	80,6	880,5	82,3	356,1	10,4
1994	49.773,20	83,8	2.189,7	85,6	236,7	10,9
1995	72.135,50	89,8	3.180,4	91,9	132,3	9,5

1996	108.919,60	93,4	4.817,8	95,8	138,8	6,6
1997	252.925,70	87,7	11.218,2	90,2	254,8	8,9
1998	371.193,80	83,5	16.495,4	86,1	159,1	10,4
1999	545.730,20	98,8	24.300,0	99,0	145,8	11,8
2000	800.308,10	101,0	35.672,0	101,3	145,7	10,5
2001	116.768,70	105,7	5.210,9	105,9	134,5	8,8
2002	152.017,00	111,2	6.974,9	114,4	122,5	8,4
2003	197.427,60	105,2	9.084,0	105,5	115,3	7,4
2004	247.368,00	114,2	11.413,5	114,8	111,9	6,3
2005	288.954,60	118,9	13.362,8	119,9	109	5,9
2006	344.650,60	128,3	15.967,6	129,5	106,56	5,2
2007	412.761,50	136,3	19.164,7	137,9	104,84	4,0
2008	514.700,00	107,3	23.934,60	107,5	107,85	4,4
2009	501.139,40	93,4	23.341,40	93,6	105,59	7,8
2010	522.256,10	98,4	24.383,10	98,5	106,09	7

\*From 1991 to 1999 has been use Methodology SEC 1979. About I.N. has been used the following parameters:

1990=100 for the period 1991-'98; 1998=100 for the period 1999-2000; 2000=100 for the period 2001-'02; 2002=100 for the period 2003-'07.

\*From 2000 to 2007 has been use Methodology SEC 1995. About I.N. has been used the following parameters: 1990=100 for the period 1991-'98; 1998=100 for the period 1999-2000; 2000=100 for the period 2001-'02; 2002=100 for the period 2003-'07.

\* From 2008-2010 has been used the following parameter: the previous year=100

**Source: personal data processing from INSS database.**

The data in this table highlights the evolution of key economic indicators, in particular, show how they have suffered because of political changes, social and finally economic.

After the collapse of the communist regime, both nationally and per capita GDP have been an obvious stop. This decrease was slowly passed since, very quickly, the GDP is growing again, suffering a small in 2009. Obviously, the data for the past three years should be considered very carefully because in 2007, Romania joined the European Union and are affected, albeit marginally, by the effects of the economic crisis that are hit most occidental countries. A major cause for concern but also curiosities are: the unemployment rate and the inflation. Regarding the former, it should be noted that until the early nineties had a level equal to that defined natural or full employment. The unemployment rate from 1992 until 1999, when it reached its maximum point, has grown showing a trend

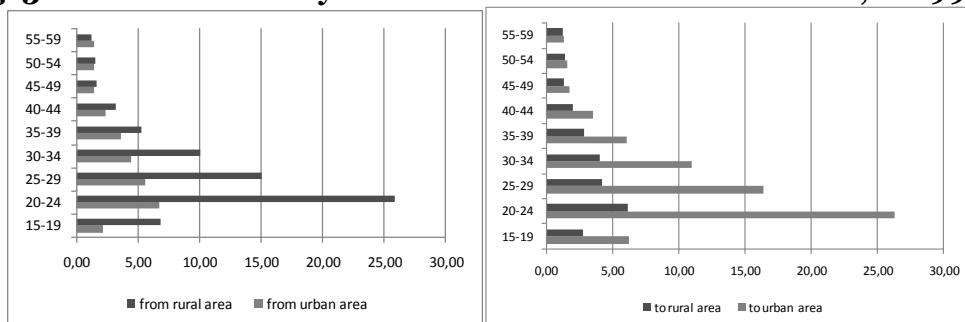
almost constant. From 1999 onwards, although still alarming levels of unemployment, the situation has gradually improved since the portion of the unemployed population decreased prominently, although in the last two years, the unemployment rate has almost doubled compared to 2007.

Finally, as regards the trend of inflation rates recorded in the time frame being analyzed, we can say that in the early years of transition, the general price level was very high, in fact, in 1991 stood at 270.2 %, and growth continued uninterrupted until 1993, reaching even the 356.1% and then fall, after many oscillations, in the period from 1994 to 2010 with a value of 106.09%. Obviously these high rates of inflation, together with the problem of unemployment have done nothing but cause further erosion of the purchasing power of the Romanian population that is facing a state of extreme distress despite the innumerable efforts of implementing new policies deemed necessary to revive a country whose economic and social policies are still just adequate.

### 3. The structural characteristics of migrants.

The change in mobility flows - noted above - is even more interesting if we look at the detail of the age groups<sup>7</sup> in order to understand differences in behavior. This analysis is even more interesting if we compare three years that seems to be crucial for understanding the dynamics that have affected these populations.

**Fig. 3 – Internal mobility to and from urban and rural areas, in 1991.**

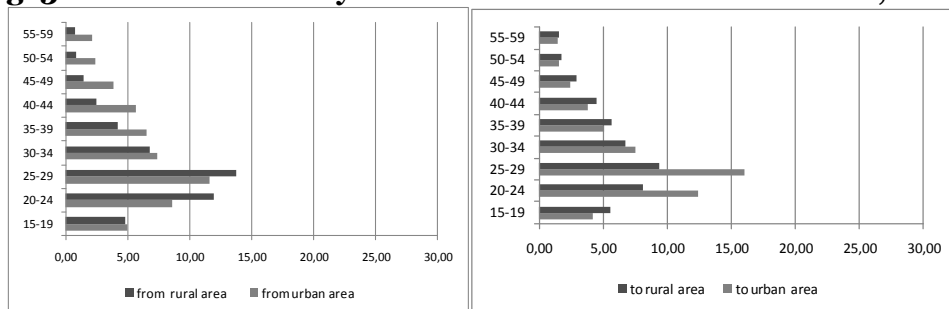


**Source: personal data processing from INSS database.**

By focusing on 1990, when flows - mainly from rural areas - with urban expressway are still substantial (despite the problems that emerged following the collapse of the regime) you can observe how are just the age groups taken into account having a considerable impact on internal mobility. However, most weight is concentrated in the range of 20-39 years, in our view, for various reasons: they are those most at risk because they have a higher propensity to move; have higher chances of finding a job; have a great capacity for adaptation to what are the needs of the labor market.

<sup>7</sup> We would like to stress that the age groups taken into account are the individuals of working age between 15 and 59 years.

**Fig. 3 – Internal mobility to and from urban and rural areas, in 1997.**



**Source: personal data processing from INSS database.**

The year 1997 represents the turning of internal migration, where it can highlight the first major change that have occurred since 1995.

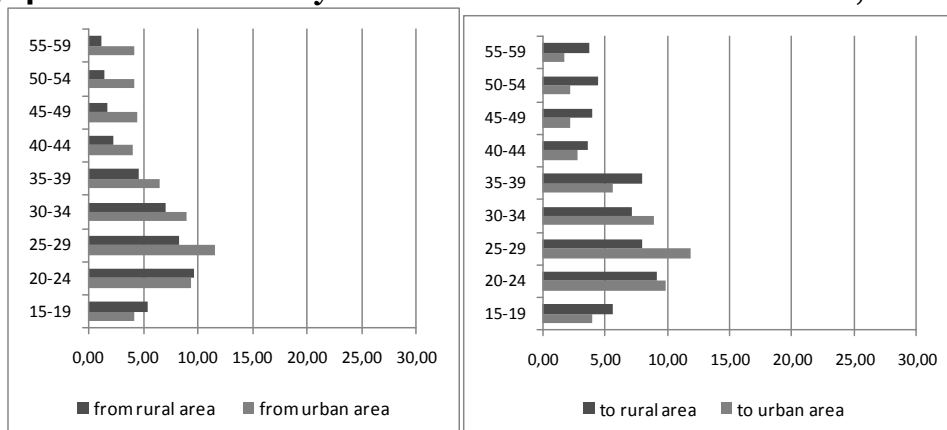
As can be seen from the graph for all age groups there is an initial tendency to shift toward rural areas. The result of this exodus can be addressed to several factors, especially socio-economic, that affected the Romanian society as a whole after the year 1989. These factors are: the deterioration of living conditions in urban areas; the emergence and spread of unemployment (a phenomenon which until 1990 had a rate of 3%); low wage levels; the erosion of purchasing power caused by runaway inflation and difficult to control and, finally, the explosion of prices for the real estate market<sup>8</sup>.

The categories most affected by this type of change are those who had initially moved to urban areas as a result of massive industrialization and suffered the first effects of the collapse of the same process of industrialization. In addition, the group considered includes those who have had to go to cities because of the collectivization process implemented by the regime - for the establishment of agricultural cooperatives - which resulted into the loss of property rights on land; they, as a result of the implementation of Land Reform (18/1991) which has disrupted agricultural cooperatives features of the Soviet-style planned economy could regain land stolen.

Looking at the details of the age groups we can say that, overall, those who show a greater tendency to migrate are, again, young people in the age group 20-39 years, but unlike 1990, where the propensity to migrate was much more pronounced with a single and predominant rural-urban direction, in 1997 mobility is smaller and the flows in both directions nearly cancel each other. It remains, however, more pronounced the destination of rural areas, for the reasons stated above.

<sup>8</sup> V. Ghetau, *Migrations et incidence sur la répartition spatiale de la population en Roumanie au niveau national et régional*, Colloque International Migrations, Crises et Conflits Récents dans les Balkans, 27-29 octobre 2005, Belgrade, 2005.

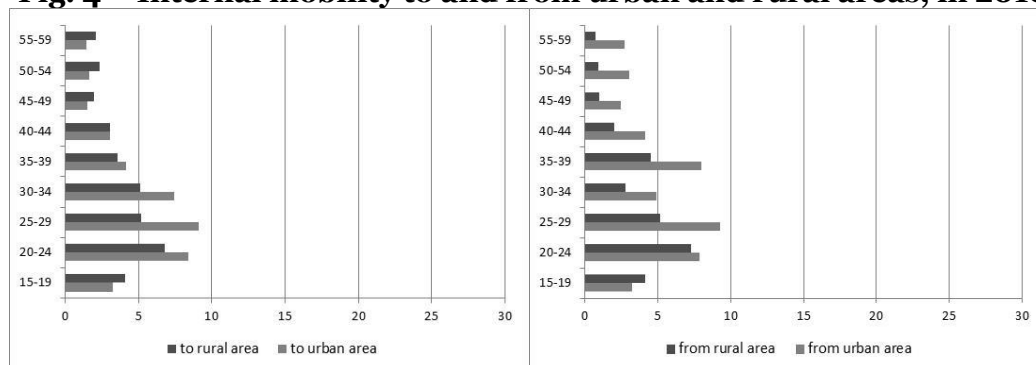
**Fig. 4 – Internal mobility to and from urban and rural areas, in 2007.**



**Source: personal data processing from INSS database.**

In 2007 the situation of internal mobility has a dual character as either the both the urban-rural direction and the opposite dominate the Romanian context. Young people (20-39) seem keep to prefer the urban destinations, while for the age groups from 40 years the situation is different, even compared to the past. The latter prefer to go to the countryside (see Fig.4) and it is clear that we could define it as a process of counter-urbanization typical of more developed countries to which Romania seems to have approached, particularly since the beginning of convergence required for entry into the European Union.

**Fig. 4 – Internal mobility to and from urban and rural areas, in 2010.**



**Source: personal data processing from INSS database.**

Considering the figures of 2010, three years after the entry of the country in the European Union, we can observe that the situation is considerably changed compared to 2007.

The internal mobility affect especially the population that belongs to the central age groups, is to say that part of the population that is willing to move in order to improve their living conditions.

#### 4. Concluding remarks

Romania, as EU member state from 2007 receives a number of economic support whose primary objective is to foster improved conditions for growth (not strictly economic sense) and employment. The really recent Cohesion Policy<sup>9</sup> of the European Union (2014–2020), within which Romania will get 7.25 billion euro, provides for the establishment of three goals within which financial resources are allocated. The Regulation of the cohesion fund includes the statement that member states eligible for financing are those whose gross domestic product per capita is less than 90% of the community average, so Romania is included among the countries that will benefit from this fund.

Obviously, convergence is not intended only at a national level - differences between individual regions - but also with a view of approaching development standards of other EU countries.

In relation to internal mobility observed in recent years, one could contemplate that a determinant role is also due to policies implemented by the European Union and provision of resources "cascade" resulting from the Structural Funds, which are aimed development of rural and agricultural area. Such incentives seems to give to these areas an increasingly important role - depriving them of the simplistic sense that until recently was assigned to them - becoming progressively engine of economic development for the entire nation.

The question we ask is if the internal mobility, drained by EU funding, is limited to this period of "convergence" or is doomed to remain in the medium-long term. If so, in the near future one could observe a further rise of urban-rural flows, to benefit the overall development of a nation still in transition, like Romania, that has all the requirements to reach or even exceed, levels of economic growth of the countries of Western Europe. Where, however, these flows were determined solely by the progressive deterioration of living standards in urban and metropolitan, so the EU policies may be considered as being inadequate.

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<sup>9</sup> Which follows the Cohesion Policy for the period 2007-2013.

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# SOCIAL POLICIES IN THE WORLD AND IN ROMANIA

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**Abstract:** *Social policies were developed in response to social needs. Modern states leaders have understood that it is the duty of the strong to help the weak if they want to have a functional society. If poverty rises the crime rate will also rise, so it is the duty of the leaders to find solutions for this problem.*

**Keywords:** *Social policy, Welfare state, Romania.*

## 1. The concept of social policies

Social policy is part of the broader public policy and it is a set of measures that try to solve social problems.<sup>1</sup>

Adrian Miroiu defines public policy as: "A policy is a network of interrelated decisions regarding the choice of objectives, the means and the resources allocated to achieve them in specific situations." Public policy is a subfield of political science, and their methodological approach is interdisciplinary meeting economy, administrative sciences, management, decision theory and sociology.<sup>2</sup>

In public policy, social policy is a sector policy with economic, fiscal, labor, environment policies. But there is an approach that considers all policies to be equally social, whether economic or not. Anything related to government or public sphere is social and a social issue once defined action is needed to solve it.<sup>3</sup>

There are two main guidelines for the definition of social policies: the first focuses on the political orientation of social measures, and the second on their social character.<sup>4</sup>

One of the definitions that is oriented on political specificity is found in the Oxford English Dictionary: "The action being taken and followed by a government, political party, legislator, politician, any action being taken and deemed advantageous or effective."<sup>5</sup>

Schorr and Baumheier define social policies based on social and distributive character "guiding principles and procedures under any measure or action that has to do with individuals and their relationships with society. It is designed as an intervention and a rule within the social system. Social policy is an action that takes into account social phenomena that govern social relations resulting

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<sup>1</sup> Preoteasa Ana Maria, 2009, *Cercetarea politicilor sociale Aspecte metodologice*, Iași, Ed. Lumen, p. 15.

<sup>2</sup> Idem.

<sup>3</sup> Idem.

<sup>4</sup> Ibidem., p. 16.

<sup>5</sup> Idem.

distribution of resources in society."<sup>6</sup>

Cătălin Zamfir and Elena Zamfir define social policy as "state intervention in shaping social processes characteristic of a particular community in order to change their direction to a direction which is considered to be desirable by political actors."<sup>7</sup>

Social policies have certain goals and act as the solution to social problems, be they general or of vulnerable groups. These policies appear as an element of balance in respecting social rights defined at the political level.<sup>8</sup>

Social policies have as main objective the development of society in general, increasing individual and social welfare. So social policies appear as a result of social and political mechanisms guided by certain social and economic goals, but always regulated by certain principles and values.<sup>9</sup>

Freeman distinguishes three categories of definitions that were used to discern the meaning of the concept of social policy:

- Philosophical concept - is a principle by which resources are redistributed to solve social problems;
- Social policies as a product - contains measures taken by policy makers to address the social problems of the community, they can be a law or other legislative act;
- Social policies as a process - refers to the approach of those who create policies and may include several stages until the completion of a policy.<sup>10</sup>

Ioan Mărginean defines social policies by taking into account the functions they fulfill in society: "economic development, social integration and social inclusion, supporting disadvantaged population groups, improving living conditions, and on a more general level of quality of life."<sup>11</sup>

Social policies include:

- Social Security;
- Basic social services;
- Social policies or social programs.<sup>12</sup>

Social Security provides:

a) Social insurance is a form of support that is given only to those who have contributed to that fund and the level of support is determined by the size of the contribution. For example: pension, unemployment insurance, sickness insurance, birth insurance.

b) Social assistance includes non - contributory benefits. These are categorical or universal benefits determined by detecting simple needs: child benefit for mothers with many children, people with disabilities, war invalids. Here there is a category focused on means-tested benefits where support is given

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<sup>6</sup> Idem.

<sup>7</sup> Zamfir Elena, Zamfir Cătălin (coord.), 1995, *Politici sociale. România în context european*, București, Editura Alternative, p. 22.

<sup>8</sup> Preoteasa Ana Maria, *op. cit.*, p. 16.

<sup>9</sup> Idem.

<sup>10</sup> Ibidem., p.p. 16-17.

<sup>11</sup> Ibidem., p. 17.

<sup>12</sup> Bulgaru Maria, 2003, *Aspecte teoretice și practice ale asistenței sociale (suport de curs)*, Chișinău, Centrul Ed. poligr. al USM, p. 40.

only to those who are actually in need.<sup>13</sup>

Basic social services includes:

- education;
- health;
- system of social services (social work itself, social care services, volunteering, etc).<sup>14</sup>

Social policies and social programs are a collective activity oriented to obtain a change of social status. For example: child abandonment prevention, promotion of gender equality, the promotion of housing construction in urban areas.<sup>15</sup>

## 2. The history of social policies

In Greece and in ancient Rome were put the first foundations of early systems of social protection. The best known examples of social measures are the promises of the great Athenian general Pericles to take care of orphans after the Peloponnesian War and Emperor Trajan's efforts in ancient Rome to provide grain to the poor. But Greek and Roman philosophers were against rewarding the poor for begging.<sup>16</sup>

A major influence in shaping social policies have had the great religions of the world, as they exhorted their practitioners to help the needy.<sup>17</sup>

In Judaism through Torah Jews are advised to deliberately leave a small part of the crop unharvested for the poor to be able to enjoy it.<sup>18</sup>

The sacred book of Islam, the Qur'an urges believers to give part of their wealth to needy persons, persons with disabilities, orphans and widows.<sup>19</sup>

In Buddhism people are taught to be good, to feel compassion and help those who have a hard life because in doing so in their next life they will be reincarnated into a prosperous and wise being. Since ancient times Buddhist monks were helping people and families from poor communities situated around various monasteries with food and alms to give an example of desirable behavior.<sup>20</sup>

Native American religions focus on helping thy neighbor. The social structure of Native American groups often reflect a collective approach in the use of the tribe's resources. Sharing different things with the neighbors was a necessity to ensure the survival of the tribe. Chiefs took care of widows, orphans, the elderly and any other member who could not care for himself and had no friends to help him.<sup>21</sup>

Native Americans as well as other ancient cultures have realized that the ability to work together as a group offers a huge advantage in the battle for survival. The care that the group members manifested for each other strengthened

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<sup>13</sup> Ibidem., p.p. 40-41.

<sup>14</sup> Ibidem., p. 41.

<sup>15</sup> Idem.

<sup>16</sup> Chapin Rosemary K., 2011, *Social Policy for Effective Practice: A Strengths Approach*, Taylor & Francis, p. 28.

<sup>17</sup> Ibidem., p. 26.

<sup>18</sup> Idem.

<sup>19</sup> Ibidem., p.p. 26-27.

<sup>20</sup> Ibidem., p. 27.

<sup>21</sup> Idem.

the desire to work together as a group.<sup>22</sup>

In Christianity the teachings that focus on the fact that people serve God through the love they feel for each other have a particular importance. In the parable of the entry into the Kingdom of Heaven, Jesus teaches us to feed the hungry and give water to the thirsty as we would give him. Biblical teachings reveal the importance of charity and the fact that poor people are just as valuable as the rich, and sometimes are even worthier to enter the Kingdom of God.<sup>23</sup>

Poor Law "Poor Law Act" elaborated in the United Kingdom in 1601, during Queen Elizabeth, is another milestone in the history of social policy. This legislation provided aid to the poor in exchange for the provision of community service. Those who could not work - the elderly, the sick, lived in "charities", a sort of shelters of today. In case of the refusal to work, those who could work were punished to live in a kind of prison, called "house of correction".<sup>24</sup>

In 1834 the Poor Law is amended, the aid is limited, eligibility criteria becomes more stringent, and the living conditions are much harsher.<sup>25</sup>

Only in the late nineteenth century the French Revolution generated ideologic changes which became visible. Schools were maintained through the charities of the churches or other initiatives, the State makes its presence felt at the end of the century, when, through The Elementary Education Act from 1870 is recognized the right of every child to a form of schooling. After 1880 the primary school is compulsory and free.<sup>26</sup>

### **3. Types of social policies**

From the second half of the nineteenth century until the 1930's we can distinguish two models of social policy:

- The first model is characteristic for liberal regimes in Anglo-Saxon countries, and one of the theorists who laid the foundations of this model is the british economist W.H. Beveridge (1879-1963). Social policies in this category aimed traditional systems to combat poverty and encourage private insurance solutions. This approach was in line with the ideas of classical liberal political economy. Social policies main tools were livelihoods verification systems and public benefits geared only towards the needs which can be proven that they are not covered and not affecting essentially the public budget;

- The second model, set in continental Europe was based on social insurance launched by Otto von Bismarck, Chancellor of Germany in 1880. This model is focused on a strong and direct role of the state, promoting the development of social insurance programs on occupational principles, direct status and autonomous management.<sup>27</sup>

Social policies have evolved in a rapid pace, especially after the Second World

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<sup>22</sup> Idem.

<sup>23</sup> Ibidem., p.p. 27-28.

<sup>24</sup> Hothersall Steve, Hothersall Steve J., Bolger Janine, 2010, *Social Policy for Social Work, Social Care and the Caring Professions: Scottish Perspectives*, Ashgate Publishing, p. 35.

<sup>25</sup> Ibidem, p. 36.

<sup>26</sup> Jarvis Pam, George Jane , Holland Wendy, 2009, *The Early Years Professional's Complete Companion*, Pearson Education, p. 70.

<sup>27</sup> Bulgaru Maria, *op. cit.*, p.p. 41-42.

War. Strong economic growth in the 50's – 60's allowed the development and implementation of important social programs, which cover all social issues obviously with features and accents that vary from country to country.<sup>28</sup>

Social policies were based on their construction and operation on different political views, generally social democratic or liberal, but did not developed in these pure forms. On the one hand we can see many commonalities in all key areas of social policy in different countries. For instance eradication of poverty and a high level of employment have become targets of governments in all countries.<sup>29</sup>

On the other hand, we find significant differences between countries or groups of countries on some major characteristics of social policies. In France and Sweden the protection programs for families with children have taken a special scale, while in the U.S.<sup>30</sup> and other countries more attached to liberal doctrine such programs are not significant.<sup>31</sup>

In the literature have been launched over the years several models of social policies classifications. They have seen changes from one author to another, as determined by several important factors such as: culture of that country, the political orientation of the ruling parties, economic status, etc.<sup>32</sup>

In 1990 Gosta Esping - Andersen classifies social policies after the three welfare state regimes<sup>33</sup>:

- liberal welfare state, heavily focused on market mechanisms, here we have examples of countries such as U.S.A., Canada, Australia;
- conservative - corporatist welfare state, the liberal concern for market efficiency is not important, characterized simultaneously by the principle of subsidiarity, which stipulates that the state only intervenes for the provision of those services that "intermediate" institutions and the market, the family, the Church, are incapable to provide. In this category, there are the following countries: France, Germany, Austria, Italy;
- social - democratic welfare state with its main feature - the universalism of social services, the state is the main "supplier" of social welfare and is concerned with maintaining "total" employment, to limit total dependence on social services. The countries that have adopted this model are the Nordic countries: Norway, Sweden.<sup>34</sup>

The divergence of views on social policies classification allows to be distinguished the following social policy models:

- Countries that have reformed only marginally the social assistance model of liberal tradition, sometimes called "residual welfare state". Best known exponent of this model is the U.S., where it is primarily aimed at fighting poverty, state intervention in the social field is characterized as being residual and much

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<sup>28</sup> Ibidem., p. 42.

<sup>29</sup> Idem.

<sup>30</sup> United States of America

<sup>31</sup> Bulgaru Maria, *op. cit.*, p.p. 42-43.

<sup>32</sup> Ibidem., p. 43.

<sup>33</sup> Gosta Esping-Andersen defined welfare state as "a state in which the government promotes social welfare by collecting resources and distribution of goods and services to its citizens."

<sup>34</sup> Bulgaru Maria, *op. cit.*, p. 43.

reduced compared to the European model, especially the Northern European. The implemented social programs are centered on the poor, the benefits are granted on a drastic income verification. Accessibility to these social benefits is defined by need or the ability to pay. As a result, they have a reduced process of redistribution and a greater inequality in income distribution compared to Western European models;

- Scandinavian countries with the admirable example of Sweden. Social policies have evolved here under the influence of social democratic concepts and tended to extend to the entire population, whether or not they manifested the need. The main objectives were: eradicating poverty, achieving social solidarity, equity in social policy. This concept promotes a policy of guaranteed basic income in a wide range of social benefits, of which the most important are: universal child benefits, pensions, basic health care, etc. Social policy objectives are achieved mainly through redistributive transfers and taxes system;

- The Western European countries whose social policies are of bismarkian inspiration are represented mostly by Germany and Austria. This model of social policy is set between the liberal and the social - democrat. The model was set up by the reform of the traditional social security and through establishing a strong system of protection for groups who can not protect themselves. The German model of social policy is recognized today as well integrated into the market economy requirements, and literature is using for the German economy the term "social market economy". The aim is that the development of social programs must not be uncomfortable for the functioning of the market, which does not mean limiting the development of social policies;

- The Japanese model - the paternalistic type differs in many respects from the models found in Western Europe and in the U.S., it is a model that is based on combining traditional elements of caring in the family with state intervention and involves substantial aid from the employers in solving social problems;

- Welfare state characteristic to Southeast Asia (Confucian welfare state) is found in the following countries: Hong Kong, Singapore, South Korea and Taiwan. Catherine Jones presents the characteristics of this model as determined by tradition and common culture, centered around the precepts of Confucian thought that in this part of Asia are a way of life for centuries. "Household economy" created a different model from the Western European one, it is characterized by a big influence of the family and the community who have left to the state very few problems to solve. Family and community today assume major responsibility for care of the elderly, the disabled, etc. Families also invest heavily in the education of children who will then career to help other family members.<sup>35</sup>

Bob Deacon launched in 1993 a classification of welfare regimes in the former communist countries. Based on the three types of welfare state identified by Esping - Andersen, Deacon tries to characterize social policy regimes in Eastern European countries.<sup>36</sup>

While recognizing that Esping - Andersen's analysis can not be applied to the

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<sup>35</sup> Ibidem., p.p. 43-45.

<sup>36</sup> Preda Marian, 2002, *Politica socială românească între sărăcie și globalizare*, Iași, Polirom, p. 50.

former communist countries due to their specificity and the impossibility of collecting the necessary data, Deacon outed some of these variables, and introduced two additional variables chosen in an "intuitive" way – the nature of the revolutionary processes and the transnational impact assessed in the light of foreign debt - and thus improvise a set of criteria by which to reach the following classification:

- Hungary and Yugoslavia (or, at least, Slovenia and Croatia as part of it) with reduced mobilization of the working class, with large external debt and low involvement of the church will become liberal welfare regimes;

- Czechoslovakia (or, at least, the Czech Republic) will develop a social democratic regime based on longer democratic experience and the "mass" character of their revolution;

- In the case of Bulgaria, Romania, the former Soviet Union (or parts of it) and Serbia, Deacon predicts new models, perhaps with an intermediate form of conservative corporatism;

- For Poland he did not make any prediction.<sup>37</sup>

Although it has some merit, Deacon's attempt to classify welfare regimes in Eastern European countries can not be taken as such for scientific analysis.<sup>38</sup>

If we consider only the case of Romania, the criticism would be the following:

- Mobilization of the working class, considered as "high" because of the labor movements of the early years after the revolution, is now very low, mainly due to high unemployment and "recruitment" by the power of union leaders;

- Transnational impact characterized as "low" was actually very high, evidenced by the very character of "social welfare law" developed under the influence of the American model through the IMF and World Bank and the major involvement of these institutions in determining the economic objectives of the past governments;

- Deacon's used variables are not sufficient to work with the models of Esping - Andersen. In Romania, the church's influence on social policies is not high and the influence of the Catholic Church is even smaller, the differentiation of the sexes in the labor market is not as high as in Germany, for example, many women are present in our labor market and with equal pay on equal work with men, and subsidiarity (if any) is not institutionalized.<sup>39</sup>

- The only element of the conservative - corporate model that exists in Romania is the important role of the family in providing social protection, but it has other determinants, it is not only due to the conservatism of the church.<sup>40</sup>

Despite these drawbacks, Deacon's effort has the merit of somewhat differentiating the former communist states. He resumed a review of social policy in Eastern Europe in his work from 1997, *Global Social Policy*, focusing on the analysis of the models promoted by the international institutions that had influence on these countries, but Romania is no longer mentioned this time. He

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<sup>37</sup> Deacon Bob, 1993, *Developments in East European Social Policy*, in Jones Catherine (ed.), *New perspectives on the welfare state in Europe*, London, Routledge, p.p. 196-197.

<sup>38</sup> Preda Marian, *op. cit.*, p. 50.

<sup>39</sup> Ibidem., p.p. 50-51.

<sup>40</sup> Ibidem., p. 51.

outlined the objectives promoted by influential international institutions, which are not always converging and resulting in promotion, in fact, different social policy models.<sup>41</sup>

#### **4. Social Policies in Romania**

In any society we will find poor people afflicted or oppressed by old age. The situation in the Romanian countries in the eighteenth century is similar in this respect to that of its neighboring countries.

Where the old village communities retained their privileges, they could continue their actions of support and help the needy. Of course, unwritten, based on oral traditions, they were actually providing aid, each in turn may require the support of others if needed.<sup>42</sup>

In the Romanian regions this system of mutual aid that binds the members of village communities to deal with the disadvantaged existed only in a few isolated regions of Transylvania, where it was imposed by the administration of the Austrian Empire.<sup>43</sup>

Such rules of procedure, called "little article of the neighborhood" were found during the investigations in Drăguș in Olt Country. They provide the measures to be taken in different circumstances in the village: obligation to help the sick, to intervene in the important moments of human life (birth, marriage, funeral), people knew exactly what it needs to be done by each "neighbor". Therefore, the regulation states not only employment generated situations, but also those related to family life.<sup>44</sup>

Spontaneous relief forms operating in villages (the work performed on the land of widows, or for a more humane distribution of taxes that burdened each household in part) were numerous, but they did not respond to the whole issue.<sup>45</sup>

In the eighteenth century on Romanian territory appear the first relatively coherent initiatives to assist poverty through organized institutions. The establishment of the first settlements of aid (hospitals for the sick poor, poor box, Orfanotrofia) is contemporary with the first attempts to ban begging and vagrancy, on behalf of the modern principle of compulsory labor within their community for any person fit to work.<sup>46</sup>

Relatively organized assistance for the poor is essentially a fact of urban life and therefore lacks an effective social impact in a rural world par excellence, as the Romanian world was at that time.<sup>47</sup>

Princely alms, the secular version of the ecclesiastical ones, just as traditional as them, are one of the first forms of institutionalization of secular assistance.<sup>48</sup>

In the middle of the eighteenth century the ideas of the Enlightenment

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<sup>41</sup> Idem.

<sup>42</sup> Livadă-Cadeschi Ligia, 2002, *Sărăcie și Asistență Socială în Spațiul Românesc (Sec. XVIII-XX)*, Colegiul Noua Europă, p. 5.

<sup>43</sup> Ibidem., p. 6.

<sup>44</sup> Idem.

<sup>45</sup> Ibidem., p. 7.

<sup>46</sup> Ibidem., p.p. 11-12.

<sup>47</sup> Ibidem., p. 14.

<sup>48</sup> Ibidem., p. 20.



movement insisted on the obligation of public authorities to deal with this kind of assistance. In fact, the reality preceded ideology, since private and ecclesiastical means were insufficient, hospitals appear before all as the instruments of maintaining order.<sup>49</sup>

Throughout the eighteenth century and the beginning of the next, caring for the poor, from the perspective of the ruling authority, does not mean yet the care for the poor. In the Romanian countries the gesture of assistance ordered and organized doesn't concern the poverty as a whole. It follows the social hierarchy. The great favorite in the race to obtain material aid is the representative of impoverished social classes, that were usually very rich, and who doesn't display in public his poverty.<sup>50</sup>

In the rhetoric of the fanariot royal documents, mercy, charity and the love for the people and for the community are clearly present. But in the social realities the results are certainly modest.<sup>51</sup>

The first piece of legislation that will try to organize a consistent, unitary and legal based assistance to the poor and guarding public health standards will be the Organic Regulation (1831-1832).<sup>52</sup>

Hospitals, public schools, the homes that do good and community homes fall under the Organic Regulation of Wallachia, in the responsibility of the Minister of the Interior, but from 1831 they were transferred under the authority of the Church. In Moldova, however, they form the subject of the appendix on public houses.<sup>53</sup>

As mentioned above, the foundations of the social assistance system were laid from 1800 until 1920. The overwhelming majority of the initiatives of organizing the social institutions of this period are of private (philanthropic) origin.<sup>54</sup>

From 1920 to 1945 occurs the institutional diversification and maturation of social assistance. This period is marked by an increase in state involvement in the organization of social services, and efforts to professionalize the field. The first attempts to legislate specific activities of this kind occur in the Organic Regulations.<sup>55</sup>

But the first clear laws in this area are related to the establishment of the Ministry of Public Health, Labor and Social Welfare in 1920, in which worked the Social Assistance Department, and the adoption of the first package of specific legislation in 1930 (the law of social services laid the foundation for creating a regionalised network of social services, of the community type). Also in the interwar period was established the Higher School of Social Work "Princess Ileana" (1929), with a very modern curriculum and syllabus.<sup>56</sup>

In the period 1945-1989 occurs the decline of the welfare system. A first explanation for this decline is a politico-ideological conviction. Official ideology

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<sup>49</sup> Ibidem., p. 21.

<sup>50</sup> Ibidem., p.p. 22-23.

<sup>51</sup> Ibidem., p. 23.

<sup>52</sup> Ibidem., p. 47.

<sup>53</sup> Idem.

<sup>54</sup> Ibidem., p.p. 61-62.

<sup>55</sup> Idem.

<sup>56</sup> Idem.

rejected the idea of social assistance for a very simple reason: the existence of individuals and groups in need was contradicted by the principle of equality and welfare provided by the communist system. In such a society could not exist poor people or groups with such problems.<sup>57</sup>

We are dealing with an ideological intolerance incompatible with the development or maintenance of a comprehensive system of social assistance. In such circumstances the system worked in inertia until the 70's. This aspect is especially important as the 1959-1970 period is marked by the systematic work of destruction of the principles of existence of social assistance institutions in Romania.<sup>58</sup>

Between 1989 and 2000 occurs the restructuring and the modernization of the social assistance system. After 1989, the social assistance system is reborn in the terms of a double reform. On the one hand, there is a reform in the legislation, dominated by its legal framework redevelopment and renewal, on the other hand, there is a management reform, which tried to modernize the ways of "doing" social assistance, the modernization of rules and procedures, the professionalization of the people working in the field, rethinking the duties and the powers of the State.<sup>59</sup>

The legacy of the communist regime and the new social realities of the transition have changed this welfare reform into an urgency. GD 962 of 11 August 1990 reorganized the Ministry of Labour and Social Protection, and under its authority worked the Social Assistance Department. This Department has a specific role in the system decentralization by developing methodological norms for Social Assistance Offices, which operates within the Directorates of Labour and Social Protection in the territory.<sup>60</sup>

On January 1st 1991 the State Secretariat for the Handicapped takes from the Ministry of Labor and Social Protection (established by GD 1161 in November 1990) the duties and powers of the management services for people with disabilities. The entire decade of transition of the social assistance system was marked by decentralization and the reconstruction of the territorial networks, with the modernization of the type of services offered.<sup>61</sup>

Also in 1990 was re-established specialized education, initially in the form of college, later (in 1992) as higher education.<sup>62</sup>

Non-governmental organizations of social assistance have also developed, increasing greatly the number of public-private partnerships in managing specific problems.<sup>63</sup>

The realities of the transition decade require imperatively a practical and effective social assistance system, with a clear strategy and clearly defined powers. In other words, to meet the growing demand for social assistance in this reform

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<sup>57</sup> Ibidem., p.p. 62-63.

<sup>58</sup> Ibidem., p. 63.

<sup>59</sup> Idem.

<sup>60</sup> Idem.

<sup>61</sup> Idem.

<sup>62</sup> Ibidem., p.p. 63-64.

<sup>63</sup> Ibidem., p. 64.

period which is characterized by high social costs, we need an effective institutional structure and a good management system, a strategy and administrative performance.<sup>64</sup>

## 5. Conclusions

A country like Romania, whose population is largely poor, has to adopt a similar model to the existing social policies in the Scandinavian countries.

These social policies should focus on protecting citizens from poverty by providing decent minimum income, building a strong middle class that will spend its new resources will help the national economy out of crisis.

The reductions and cuts in the income of citizens will deepen this crisis and lead to insecurity and social disorder. We urgently need to create jobs.

Social policies should prevail in the public policy system that will be implemented. Health and education should take priority in Romania because a healthy and educated population is fit to work.

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<sup>64</sup> Idem.

# THE ITALIAN POLITICAL SYSTEM

## CASE STUDY: BERLUSCONI - THE INVENTION OF A POLITICAL MAN

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**Abstract:** *In this study, the author aims to make an incursion into the Italian political system in order to analyse the causes and the conditions which underlay Silvio Berlusconi's appearance and his invention as a political man. To this purpose, this contribution proposes a brief analysis of the Italian political system set up after World War II, a theoretical analysis of the concept of "particracy"; it produces a radiograph of the Italian political regime after the fall of communism in Eastern Europe, and it ends with a presentation of the 1994 parliamentary election campaign, which allowed for the appearance of the political "phenomenon" called Berlusconi.*

**Keywords:** *political regime, social rifts, political marketing, theory of democracy.*

### Introduction

The Italian political system set up after the end of World War II developed mainly as a result of the social and geographical rifts that existed there ever since the formation of the modern state. The fact that, during the period 1944-1948, political parties were structured based on ideological criteria had a defining impact on the years that followed. From 1949 to 1991, the most important political parties were: the Christian-Democratic Party (DC), the Italian Communist Party (PCI), the Italian Socialist Party (PSI) and the Italian Socialist Movement (MSI)

Between 1944 and 1947 the country was ruled by several national unity governments that included all the relevant political forces of that time. The span of cross-section alliances ended when the communists were removed from power, in 1947, by Alcide de Gasperi, the leader of the DC.

Throughout the 1950s, de Gasperi was one of the most important Christian-Democratic leaders in Europe, and he promoted the concept of a United Europe alongside Konrad Adenauer, Robert Schuman, or Jean Monnet.<sup>1</sup>

This rupture, which took place on the Italian political scene along with the emergence of the republican regime (1948), produced a massive rift in the population. This phenomenon was strongly influenced by the interests of the superpowers that would form the future bipolar system: the USA and the USSR.

The campaign for the 1948 general election made the Italian citizens' options

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<sup>1</sup> Oana Albescu, "Rădăcini creștin-democrate ale construcției europene", in *Sfera Politicii*, nr.157, (2011), p.23.

become clearer, according to ideological criteria, and it also marked the entrance of the Catholic Church into the political arena. Even though during the inter-war period the Catholic movement had managed to take shape by the establishment of a political party (the People's Party), led by Luigi Sturzo, when the war ended, the former Catholic militants adhered to the DC. The Catholic Church stepped down into the public market, declaring openly its opposition to the People's Democratic Front, which was made up of communists and socialists. High-ranking members of the Catholic Church pleaded, both in the church and in the public market, in favour of the Christian-Democratic values supported by the DC.

The outcome of the general elections imposed the DC's primacy over any other political force in the peninsula, and mainly over the PCI, a primacy which lasted till the fall of the Berlin Wall (1989) and the dismemberment of the USSR (1991). The DC received 12,700,000 votes (48,5%) while only 8,000,000 voters (31%) cast their ballot for the People's Democratic Front.<sup>2</sup>

The events of 1948 did not mark only the emergence of some rifts within the peninsular political arena, which are still visible today. Another effect of those events was the fact that the entire political scene was seized by political parties, which led to the development of the so-called *particracy*.

### **The Italian political system, a theoretical approach**

The Italian political system caught the specialists' attention because between 1948 and 1989 it developed a type of government in which the parties became not only the main political stake-holders but also the most important social or economic actors.

LaPalombara considers that, in Italy, political parties assumed the role of main negotiators in all kinds of conflicts.<sup>3</sup>

Pasquino believes that, although, insofar as the relationship between the state and the citizen was concerned, there was a collective social contract, political parties were "abnormally, excessively, and suffocatingly present both in the places where interests became articulated (so, within the civil society) and where decisions were made (by expropriating state institutions).<sup>4</sup>

For Sartori, Italy was, during that time, a "party Parliament"<sup>5</sup>, which transformed Italy into a "party Republic"<sup>6</sup>, in which parties had hegemony over the State, as a result of a complete overlapping between the Party and Institutions.<sup>7</sup>

The relationship between the party and the institutions of the Italian state are

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<sup>2</sup> Sabin Drăgulin, "Conflicte și convergențe politice în societatea italiană în a II-a jumătate a secolului XX", in *Sfera Politicii*, nr.139, (2009), p. 58.

<sup>3</sup> Joseph LaPalombara, *Democrazia all'italiana*, Mondadori, Milano, 1987, p.217.

<sup>4</sup> Gianfranco Pasquino, "Unregulated Regulators: Parties and Party Government", in P. Lange, M. Regini (eds.), *State, Market and Social Regulation: New Perspectives on Italy*, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge, 1989, p.34.

<sup>5</sup> Giovanni Sartori, *Seconda Repubblica? Sì, ma bene*, Rizzoli, Milano, 1992, p.42.

<sup>6</sup> Pietro Scoppola, *La Repubblica dei Partiti: Profilo storico della democrazia in Italia*, il Mulino, Bologna, 1991.

<sup>7</sup> F. Vitrani, "L'Italie, un état de « souveraineté limitée »", in *Le Monde diplomatique*, décembre 1990, p.3.

not a new, absolute theme, discovered and theorized only after the fall of communist regimes in Eastern Europe. As early as the inter-war period, an Italian Marxist thinker, Antonio Gramsci, while analysing the relationship established between three concepts that are fundamental in his theories: *hegemony*, *dominant class*, and *power*, theorized that *hegemony* is imposed by a *dominant class*. And this *domination* cannot be separated from the issue of *power*.<sup>8</sup>

The *dominant class* has its own "ideological structure", more precisely, a type of "...material organisation whose aim is to maintain, defend and develop the theoretical and ideological «front». The most dynamic part is represented by the press in general, by publishing houses (which, implicitly or explicitly, have a program and support a particular trend), political newspapers, all kinds of journals, scientific, literary, philological, general, periodical, and even parish magazines".<sup>9</sup>

Thus, we see that this issue of the relationship between party and state was also of interest for the Italian left. The difference was that Gramsci studied this relationship using for reference the interweaving between party and state during the Fascist years. Nevertheless, as history has shown us, the "Mani Pulite" case revealed that this privileged relationship between party and state lingered till the end of the Cold War. Some theorists believe that the "abnormal"<sup>10</sup> relationships established between party and state during the development of the post-1948 democratic regime were caused by the type of interventionist policies applied in the economy. Thus, the economic and social policies enforced by the governments that followed after end of World War II manifested in the introduction of the welfare state model. As a representative of the political centre, DC knew how to take over one of the most important themes of that age, which was recognisable both in the Fascist ideology and in the communist one: the state's interventionist approach to the economy, with the purpose of tutoring the poorest social categories and ensuring basic services for the entire population.

Calise explained this phenomenon by the fact that "socializing the means of production was a programme of the left, upgraded by the right and quickly managed by the centre".<sup>11</sup> Thus, in the years that followed World War II, communist ideology, fascist corporatism, and Christian-democratic pragmatism became interlaced in order to transform the public sector of the economy into a "machine capable of involving a great part of the electorate in economic management, as it did in political life".<sup>12</sup> But this phenomenon could not have happened if there had been no overlapping between party and state. For this reason, *particracy*, as Calise shows, is a form of government in which a party

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<sup>8</sup> Ioana Cristea (Drăgulin), "Antonio Gramsci's Concept of Ideology", in *South-East European Journal of Political Science*, vol I, No. 3, (2013), p. 177.

<sup>9</sup> Michele Filippini, "Tra scienza e senso comune. Dell'ideologia in Gramsci", in *Scienza & Politica*, vol. XXV, no. 47, p.332.

<sup>10</sup> Vittorio Bufacchi, Simon Burges, *L'Italia contesa. Dieci anni di lotta politica da Mani pulite a Berlusconi*, Carocci editore, Roma, 2004, p.17.

<sup>11</sup> Mauro Calise, "The Italian Particracy: Beyond President and Parliament", in *Political Science Quarterly*, Special Issue, Vol. 109., No. 3, (1994), p.454.

<sup>12</sup> Ibidem.

exercises a monopolist type of control over decision-making processes.<sup>13</sup>

While analysing the phenomenon of participacy in Italy, Pasquino, in turn, identified three fundamental conditions for its existence:

1) All important governmental decisions must be made by people chosen by the party or by individuals appointed by people who are part of this system, so that, subsequently, the former could be held liable by the latter;

2) Policies must be decided upon within the party that is in government or, as a result of negotiations, by the parties which form the governing coalition;

3) The main political subjects (ministers or the prime-minister) must be elected from within their own political parties and they must answer for their actions before the electorate only by means of the party.<sup>14</sup>

The Italian political system, seen as a participacy by present-day theorists, was able to maintain itself and developed throughout the entire period under analysis (1948-1989) for two main reasons: the first is the external factor, which made so that the peculiarities of the geopolitical relationships developed during the Cold War between the USSR and the USA allowed for it to happen; the second factor is an internal one and is underlain by the balances established between various groups or categories in the Italian society.

### **The Italian political system after the 1990s; the Berlusconi age**

**a) The stage of passage from "old politics" to "new politics"**

The moment of passage to the "Berlusconi age" can be easily identified in the late 1980s and the early 1990s. The main factor which allowed for this phenomenon to emerge was an external one, and it was caused by the fall of the USSR and the invalidation of the communist-based model of government.

For four decades, the main argument used in order to maintain institutional stability was that, since 1948, the DC had been a stabilizing factor in a country in which leftist or far left movements had been the most numerous in the west-European area. This argument was recognized officially by all North-American administrations during the post-war age. Starting from this reality, during those four decades, the political life of the peninsula developed through the lens of a majority party that was also in government (DC) and a minority party that was always in opposition (PCI).<sup>15</sup>

The disappearance of Cold War realities brought a change in the electorate's opinions, who, for a long time, had been forced accept a political class which "conquered" the state by means of its parties, using its institutions for private interests. We could say that the main source of legitimacy of the political regime represented by the DC decreased significantly.

An important phenomenon, which manifested in the 1980s and had an important role in the concretion of movements that involved large masses of people, was the emergence, in the northern part of Italy, of a series of movements which focused on debates that discussed the reform of the state, taxation or the

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<sup>13</sup> Ibidem, p.444.

<sup>14</sup> Gianfranco Pasquino, "Unregulated Regulators: Parties and Party Government", op.cit., pp.29-50.

<sup>15</sup> [http://it.wikipedia.org/wiki/Partito\\_Comunista\\_Italiano](http://it.wikipedia.org/wiki/Partito_Comunista_Italiano)

relationship between North and South, in a southern key. Initially, this phenomenon seemed to be quite unusual, because it did not develop according to the rules of "old politics", represented both by the Christian-Democrats and the communists.<sup>16</sup>

#### **b) Tangentopoli; the end of an age**

In 1992, a legal investigation conducted in Milan revealed an act of corruption which, before long, produced a major upheaval on the Italian political arena and led to the invalidation of the entire political system built after World War II.

The investigation launched by the prosecutor's office of Milan demonstrated that at the local (Milan), regional (Lombardy) and national level (Italy) there was a universal system that provided illegal funds to the party system. The investigation and the following trials showed that the parties had become incapable of supporting the massive expenses of their own apparatus. As a result, in time, various networks developed at the local and national level, which provided politicians with large amounts of money from private persons or companies in exchange of contracts with the state.

This way of attributing public contracts had a deep impact on the rules of the free market and disturbed them. More precisely, competition between economic entities, a fundamental element in any capitalist society, was replaced by false competition, based on large amounts of money being offered as bribe to politicians and parties.

The prosecutor-in-chief who was in charge of this case, Antonio Di Pietro, had managed to understand how the system worked as early as in the late 1980s. During the first stages of his investigation he was assisted by Gherardo Colombo, the prosecutor who, in 1981, had revealed the illegal activities carried out by the Propaganda Due Masonic lodge.

However, the investigators were taken by surprise by the "snowball" effect of these investigations. More precisely, when people who had offered bribes were arrested, they not only refused to collaborate with the investigators but also offered, in turn, lists with other people who were involved in illegal activities. The exponential increase in the number of people involved was mainly caused by the fact that many businesspeople went spontaneously to the prosecutor's office to make statements in which they confessed having paid various sums of money as bribe to various politicians in order to get contracts with the state.<sup>17</sup>

As a result, the DC, the PSI and the MSI, the main political parties which had been in government in the past decades, by themselves or in various alliances, were very affected by the scandals of corruption at the local or national level, and soon after they dissolved. The least affected was the Democratic Party of the Left (PDS), the political descendant of the PCI, which was dissolved in 1991 because the main sources of income of the former communist militants had come either

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<sup>16</sup> Antonio Gibelli, *Berlusconi pasato alla storia. L'Italianell'adella democrazia autoritaria*, Donzelli editore, Roma, 2010, pp.22,23.

<sup>17</sup> G. Nepi Modona, "Tangenti e Mani Pulite dopo le indagini i processi", in P. Ginsborg (a cura di), *Stato dell'Italia*, Il Saggiatore-Mondadori, Milano 1994, pp.527-528.



from the fees paid by their millions of members or from the financial help provided by the USSR.<sup>18</sup>

### **A businessman in politics; Berlusconi**

On the background of the dissolution of the former party system, on 23 November 1993, Silvio Berlusconi, a young businessman from Milan, made public his intention to enter political life. At that moment, his family owned a group of companies, *Fininvest*, which developed various activities, but the most important of them were the *Mondadori* publishing group and the *Mediaset* TV consortium.

In the field of television, Berlusconi managed to overturn the monopoly of RAI public TV stations. This informational revolution was possible owing to the political support that he received from the socialist prime-minister Benito Craxi. In 1990, the Craxi government adopted a law, promoted by the minister of telecommunications of that time, Oscar Mammi, which allowed for the *Mediaset* television empire to develop.<sup>19</sup>

At the political level, Berlusconi founded his own political party, named *Forza Italia* (December 1993). It was organised according to the principles of a company, benefiting from all the marketing means available in the mass-media. The party leaned on the television power of his mass-media groups and it imposed Berlusconi as a leader capable of leading and attracting votes.<sup>20</sup>

An analysis of *Forza Italia* shows quite easily that it is an unusual political party, because it emerged and gained legitimacy as the creation of one person with the support of a group of companies, and we may characterize it as a personal party. Berlusconi's ingenuity, when he started to create a political platform and his own image, was that he detached himself from the narrow and less comfortable character of a businessman who had decided to enter politics knowing nothing about its "inner workings". The image he created for himself was that of a politician who does not live on the benefits of politics but who has the expertise and the power needed to lead a political party. Before voters, he put himself forward as a young politician who had decided to join politics in order to change its manners.<sup>21</sup>

Thus, the leader of the *Forza Italia* party introduced himself, on the one hand, as a champion of anti-politics, and, on the other, as a moderate who wished to maintain the Italian political regime within the limits of the moderate liberalism that the former DC had promoted for almost half a century. Another trait of Berlusconi the politician is his claim of being the unifier of the Italian right because he attracted on his side, as we have already said, the traditional centre-right electorate of the DC by accepting to collaborate with the post-Fascists led by Gianfranco Fini and organised in *Alleanza Nazionale* (AN) and by securing a close alliance with the separatist party from northern Italy, known under the name of *Lega Nord* (LN), led by Umberto Bossi.

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<sup>18</sup> Antonio Gibelli, *Berlusconi pasato alla storia*, op.cit., p.25.

<sup>19</sup> Marc Lazar, *Democrazia alla prova. L'Italiadopo Berlusconi*, Editori Laterza, Roma-Bari, 2007, p.11.

<sup>20</sup> Antonio Gibelli, *Berlusconi pasato allastoria*, op.cit., p.29.

<sup>21</sup> Marc Lazar, *Democrazia alla prova*, op.cit., p.14.

Berlusconi's political programme also included the anti-taxation criticism promoted by Bossi and by regionalists and Padan independentists.<sup>22</sup> As a "unifier" of the right he introduced himself before his supporters and opponents as a convinced anti-communist.

### **The elections of March 1994; the birth of Berlusconi the politician**

#### **a) Institutional realities**

On 16 January 1994, the President of the Italian Republic, Oscar Luigi Scalfaro, announced that the new general elections would be organised on 27 March. There were three main motivations which underlain president Scalfaro's decision to dissolve the two chambers of Parliament and organise new elections:

1) In April 1993, there had been a referendum which had changed the voting system;

2) The local elections for positions within the administration, organised in June and November 1993, had demonstrated that the forces represented in Parliament were no longer supported by the electorate;

3) The investigations launched by the prosecutor's office of Milan had revealed that a large number of politicians were involved in the phenomenon of party bribes, and this accrued popular pressure;<sup>23</sup>

#### **b) Electoral legislation**

Senators and deputies were elected by a one-round majority system for 75% of the seats available in Parliament while the 25% remaining seats were filled by a proportional election system which selected the candidates who had received the largest number of votes, decreasingly, through a spin-off mechanism and with a 4% threshold. This system introduced for the first time in the history of the Republic three different ways of distributing seats: a majority quota for the Chamber of Deputies and the Senate, a proportional system for a number of seats in the Chamber of Deputies, and a vote recovery based on a proportional model in the Senate.<sup>24</sup>

#### **c) Electoral alliances;**

The brief electoral campaign forced all political forces to organise into a system of alliances. The 1994 elections produced a definitive split in the DC, which resulted in two main movements: a minority adhered to the Christian-Democratic Centre (CCD) and allied with the LN while the largest faction created the Italian People's Party (PPI).

In the first months of 1994, a political alliance formed on the left side of the political arena; it comprised several wings of the former PCI, namely, the Democratic Party of the Left (PDS), Rifondazione Comunista, the Greens, the Democratic Alliance and the new Italian Socialist Party (PSI).

In response, Berlusconi requested that all moderate and right-wing forces

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<sup>22</sup> Antonio Gibelli, *Berlusconi pasato alla storia*, p.31.

<sup>23</sup> M.C.Decamps, "Les elections legislatives devraient avoir lieu le 27 mars", in *Le Monde*, 18 January 1994, p.7.

<sup>24</sup> [http://it.wikipedia.org/wiki/Legge\\_Mattarella](http://it.wikipedia.org/wiki/Legge_Mattarella)

rally under his leadership in order to counteract the left-wing political forces. Thus, in northern Italy, he allied with the LN, while in the centre and south he allied with the AN, creating the *Polo della Libertà*; as a result, he managed to propose candidates all over the national territory. This strategy was a master stroke because, from a political viewpoint, the LN and the AN had refused to collaborate but now they became part of the same alliance, with *Forza Italia* and Berlusconi as binding agents. De facto, Berlusconi became the leader of the Italian centre-right political arena.<sup>25</sup>

d) Electoral campaign elements;

The 1994 electoral campaign developed on several levels:

a) The main campaigning theme was "change". This topic was obviously an advantage for Berlusconi, who ran for the first time in the general elections. Throughout the campaign, the great majority of candidates tried to detach themselves from the "heavy legacy" of the first Republic and of the system promoted by "old politics".<sup>26</sup>

b) For the first time in Italian history, the messages, speeches, and television appearances of *Polo della Libertà* candidates were delivered to the electorate as products of political marketing. Berlusconi's decision to run for election was presented in a video at the same time on all the TV stations that he owned and on those which supported him. Of course, this technique was a media innovation in electoral campaigning. In the Italian republican tradition only the President of the Republic had enjoyed the privilege of appearing at the same time on several local or central TV stations in order to send various messages to the nation;<sup>27</sup>

c) Another important element was the large scale negative campaign launched, by the means of his own party or personal television stations or media establishments, against all the candidates who posed a threat in various constituencies, accusing them of being communists, former communists or post-communists;<sup>28</sup>

d) Commercial marketing was used in order to conduct large scale opinion polls, at the regional or local level, in order to allow candidates to launch political messages that targeted precisely the particularities and the specificities of each community in part;

e) Another technique used by Berlusconi meant that he used the aesthetic element in order to create the image of a man that was very energetic, lively, manly, healthy, handsome, etc. In order to impose this picture of himself he used various aesthetic solutions (plastic surgery, hair implants, fake tan, etc.). Thus, he created a system of values based on the ostentatious display of one's own physical qualities, a system that he used in his political battles in order to attack his

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<sup>25</sup> Vittorio Bufacchi, Simon Burges, *L'Italia contesa*, op.cit., p.174.

<sup>26</sup> Ibidem, p.179.

<sup>27</sup> Marc Lazar, *Democrazia alla prova*, op.cit., p.12.

<sup>28</sup> Gianfranco Pasquino, "The Birth of the «Second republic»", in *The Journal of Democracy*, vol. 5, No.3, (1994), p.109.

political opponents, to ridicule them and to make them risible, picturing them as "old" and "out-of-date".<sup>29</sup>

f) Explaining the success of a political leader needs more than taking into account only rational factors.<sup>30</sup> Almost always, or, rather, always, a leader imposes himself in the eyes of the public opinion when he manages to use mechanisms that are psychological in nature and are able to reach the deepest layers of the collective sub-consciousness.<sup>31</sup> Berlusconi managed to attain this goal by using the following communication techniques: idealization of one's own personality<sup>32</sup>, projective identification<sup>33</sup>, and projectivity.<sup>34</sup>

g) In his public discourse he also used the concept of a "successful man", projected as a modern "fairytale". For instance, on several occasions he told the story of his own experiences by using the techniques specific to the American dream, but moved into the Italian society: a man who started from scratch and who, by tremendous efforts, fighting against uncertainties and inherent issues, managed to become a millionaire.<sup>35</sup>

### Conclusions:

Two major explanations have stemmed from the analysis of the events that took place in 1994. The first is theoretical in nature and relates to Schumpeter's view on the "classical theory of democracy" while the second emphasizes the innovations that Berlusconi introduced into the Italian voting system.

In a work which has become a classic, published in 1954, Schumpeter challenged the so called "classical theory of democracy", according to which "it is the people who has a clear and reasoned view over each issue, which it entrusts - where there is a democratic regime - to its own representatives to solve". The author puts forth an alternative form of democracy, according to which "the democratic method is the outcome of an institutional agreement, needed in order to reach a political decision, and the people, through the voting process, bestows the right to make decisions upon those who managed to muster the greatest consensus."<sup>36</sup>

The main difference between the two approaches to democracy resides in the

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<sup>29</sup>Antonio Gibelli, *Berlusconi pasato allastoria*, p.39.

<sup>30</sup> Francesco Alberoni, *Innamoramento e amore*, Garzanti, Milano, 1979.

<sup>31</sup> Giampaolo Fabris, *Sociologia della comunicazione di massa*, Angeli, Milano, 1992.

<sup>32</sup> In Alessandro Amadori's view, "the idealization of one's own personality" refers to the process whereby an individual managed to exploit as well as possible the levers of communication techniques in order to create, in his own eyes and in the eyes of the audience, a perfect, ideal, and narcissistic version of himself.

<sup>33</sup> It is also Amadori who considers that "projective identification" is a much more subtler mechanism whereby the individual tries to arrive to a point where he can identify with the leader by using some language techniques such as: "But I'm just like you", "I represent you!", "I'm the perfect version of you or of what you hope to become".

<sup>34</sup> According to Amadori, "projectivity" is the mechanism whereby an individual agrees to detach all negative or critical elements away from his own personality and to project them onto other people.

<sup>35</sup> Alessandro Amadori, *Mi consenta. Metafore. Messaggi e simboli. Come Silvio Berlusconi ha conquistato il consenso degli italiani*, Libri Scheiwiller, Milano, 2002, p.35.

<sup>36</sup> J. Schumpeter, *Capitalism, Socialism and Democracy*, Unwin, London, 1954, p.269.

fact that the former emphasizes the needs that politics needs to meet (it focuses on the electorate's role) while the latter stresses the offer that politics makes to the electorate (having to do with the competition between political actors).

Retrospectively, the case of the 1994 elections seems to confirm the latter situation. By the media assault conducted by Berlusconi and his means of information, the political "agenda" no longer came from the citizen to politicians. The topics of debate, the objectives, demands, and complaints were "confiscated" by politicians and delivered to the electorate. In practical terms, rather than taking over the voters' "agenda", politicians imposed an agenda to voters. However, this phenomenon cannot be generalized because, as we have shown in this study, some opinion polls were nevertheless used in the attempt to take over the people's "agenda". Yet, at the macro-level, the predominant phenomenon involved the creation of an agenda.

1994 represented an innovation in what regards the means used to influence public opinion, as the methods specific to the mass-media were used on a large scale during the electoral campaign. This type of campaign was run in a country in which the electorate was very confused owing to a major political crisis.

The objective pursued by the political forces gathered around Berlusconi was to attract the entire part of the electorate who had anti-communist views or all the people who had voted for the moderate left.

The type of campaign promoted by Berlusconi and his collaborators from Fininvest proved to be extremely efficient, allowing him to secure a lightning-fast victory. An element which facilitated his electoral success was the fact that the proportional system had been replaced by a complex voting system, which favoured the emergence of a bipolar configuration. 86% of the citizens who had the right to vote cast their ballot in these elections. The results showed that the right-wing alliance won 366 out of the 630 seats available in the Chamber of Deputies and 155 out of 315 seats available in the Senate. In percentages, the alliance won 42.9% of votes at the national level. The electorate who voted for *Forza Italia* consisted mainly of women, young people, and free-lancers.<sup>37</sup> The passage from a purely proportional system to a preponderantly majority system created a very strong distortion, because, inevitably, it advantaged the main parties or coalitions. Political stakeholders legitimized the use of this voting system by their desire to secure governmental stability while reducing the number of parties which could enter Parliament.<sup>38</sup>

Berlusconi himself played the most important part in this success. Ever since his first appearances on television or meetings with voters he had proved to be a "great communicator". The extraordinary results that he managed to achieve after only a few months of campaigning were obviously due to the support that he received from friendly mass-media, but this factor was not enough. Berlusconi, or "il cavaliere", as he would be called later on, managed to impose in the public/political arena, a new type of language and a new way of doing politics. The language used by Berlusconi set him apart in the voters' eyes but also in the eyes of

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<sup>37</sup> G. Calvi, A. Vannucci, *L'Elettore sconosciuto: Analisi socioculturale e segmentazione degli orientamenti politici nel 1994*, il Mulino, Bologna, 1995.

<sup>38</sup> Vittorio Bufacchi, Simon Burges, *L'Italia contesa*, op.cit., p.177.

the other members of the political establishment. This helped him maintain a communication bond with the citizens, which allowed him to be the protagonist of the Italian political stage for over two decades.

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On-line Resources

[http://it.wikipedia.org/wiki/Legge\\_Mattarella](http://it.wikipedia.org/wiki/Legge_Mattarella)

[http://it.wikipedia.org/wiki/Partito\\_Comunista\\_Italiano](http://it.wikipedia.org/wiki/Partito_Comunista_Italiano)

# WHICH GAINS FROM EUROMED PTAS?<sup>1</sup>

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**Abstract:** *In the last couple of decades, the European Union has been actively involved in supporting integration with its neighbours as part of what is commonly known as the European Neighbourhood policy. In particular, the Barcelona Process in 1995 set the stage for the Euro-Mediterranean Partnership (EUROMED) and the creation of a free trade area involving the EU and the rest of the Mediterranean countries. We focus on the Preferential Trade Agreements (PTAs) resulting from this policy and test whether they were successful in fostering trade links in the area. We find that the marginal effect of a EUROMED PTA on trade flows is to increase them by almost 20% EU exports to the area and by about 50% EU imports.*

**Keywords:** *EUROMED; Trade; PTAs; Trade diversion.*

## Introduction

In the last couple of decades, the European Union has been actively involved in supporting integration with its neighbours as part of what is commonly known as the European Neighbourhood policy. This policy resulted in a number of treaties and agreements aimed at fostering economic and political links through a process of integration mirroring the one followed by the EU Member States in the early years of the Union, which also started as merely economic and then evolved into a more political entity.

The economic integration of the two sides of the Mediterranean basin is expected to benefit all the peoples involved through the development of deeper and more efficient markets, thus promoting technological progress and productive efficiency, which are then expected to result in higher salaries, product quality and variety. The guidelines of this process have been designed during in the context of the Barcelona Process in 1995, which set the stage for the Euro-Mediterranean Partnership (EUROMED), whose most concrete project in

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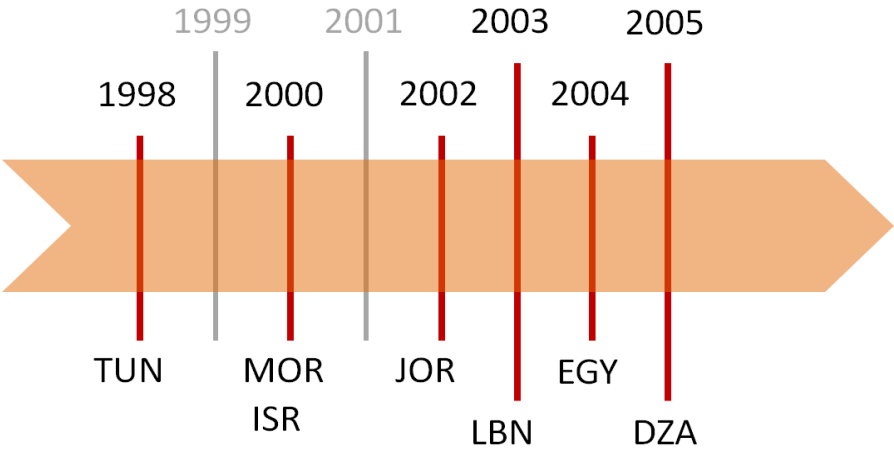
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\*\*\***Gianluca Orefice:** CEPII (Paris).



economic terms is the creation of a free trade area involving the EU and virtually all the countries along the Mediterranean coast through the gradual suppression of existing barriers to trade.

The pursued graduality of the integration process yields at least two advantages, one in the institutional and the other in the scientific domain. First, it allows countries to adapt their institutions and regulations at their own pace and will, thus allowing them to reap most benefits from integration. Second, it allows researchers and policy makers to identify the effects of the agreements on the creation and diversion of commercial flows among the countries involved, hence allowing for a more precise policy evaluation to the benefit of decision makers. To give an idea of the graduality of the process (see Figure 1), it is sufficient to note that while Tunisia signed a Preferential Trade Agreement with the EU in 1998, just three years after the Barcelona Declaration, Morocco and Israel joined in 2000, Jordan in 2002, Lebanon in 2003, Egypt in 2004 and Algeria only in 2005.



**Figure 1. Time profile of EUROMED-related PTA proliferation.**

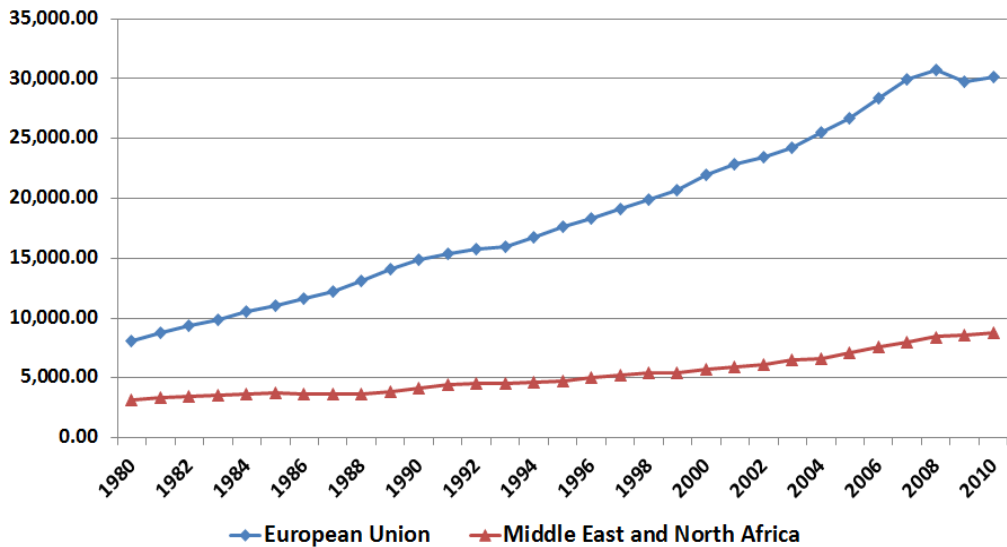
In this paper, we first show the general trends in the evolution of trade flow in the Euro-Mediterranean area. Then, we perform a preliminary exploratory analysis of how trade flows among EUROMED countries seem to have been affected by the adoption of the Preferential Trade Agreements (PTAs), as opposed to the evolution of trade with the rest of the world. Finally, we test econometrically the hypothesis that the EUROMED-related Preferential Trade Agreements have actually stimulated trade among the signatories, checking whether the additional trade flows stemmed from genuine trade creation or rather from trade diversion from other sources.

**2 Trade flows in the Euro-Mediterranean Region**

In this section we provide a preliminary exploratory look at income differences and trade flows in the Euro-Mediterranean area.

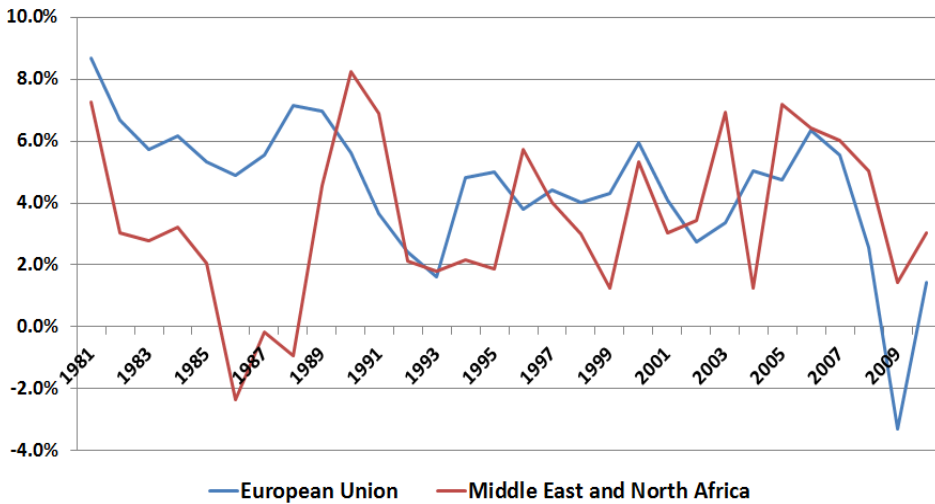
### **2.1 Per capita GDP in the EU and in the rest of the Mediterranean Region**

Of course, the two sides of the Mediterranean Basin enjoy considerably different standards of living and economic welfare. Even though a slow process of convergence has been taking place in the last few years, it came about at a much slower pace than in other parts of the world and has been disrupted by political instability. In Figure 2 we report the evolution of average per capita income in purchasing power parity in the European Union (EU, dashed blue line) and Middle Eastern and North African (MENA, solid red line) countries. It can be noticed that in the '80s and '90s no real process of convergence took place and the gap between the EU and the MENA widened rather than closing. However, in the later years of the first decade of the century there appear to be some positive secular developments.



**Figure 2. GDP per capita (PPP), Current International Dollars.**  
**Source: IMF WEO, 2011.**

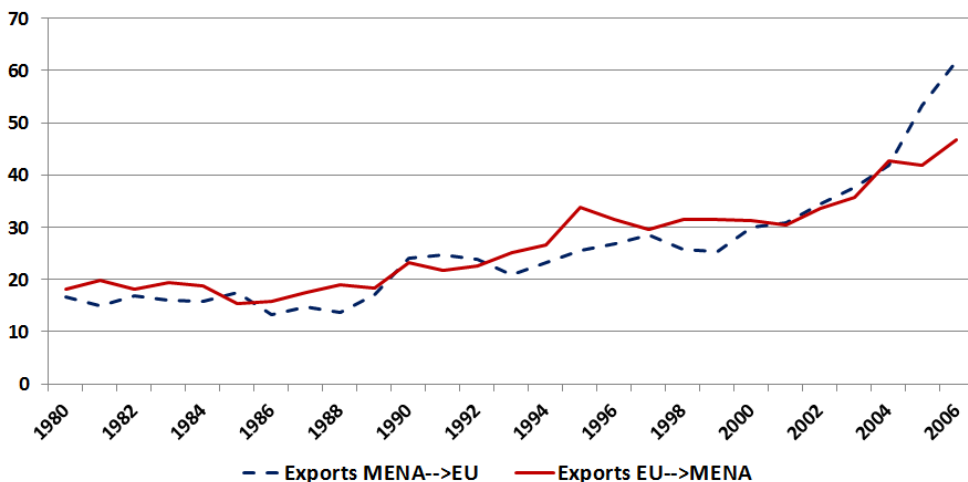
In Figure 3, we show the growth rates of per capita GDP in the two regions. This figure highlights even more starkly the fragility and volatility of the convergence process.



**Figure 3. GDP per capita (PPP), percentage growth. Source: IMF WEO, 2011.**

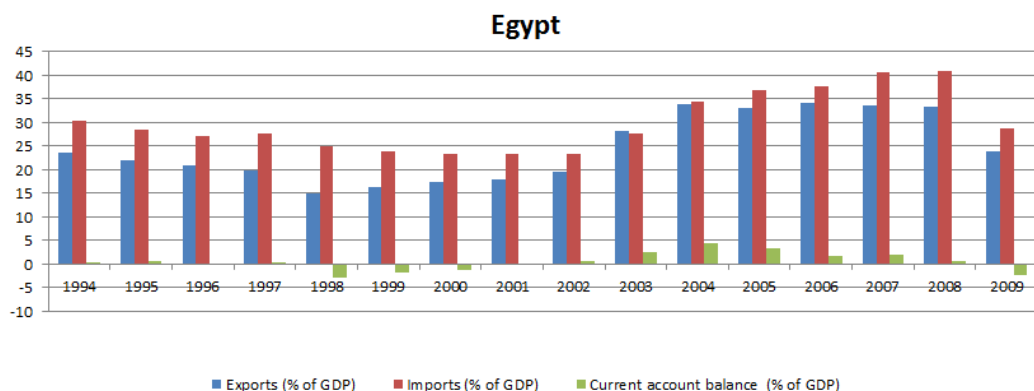
## 2.2 The evolution of trade flows in the Euro-Mediterranean Region

As for the evolution of trade flows within and between the EU and MENA regions, it can be remarked that the entire Euro-mediterranean region follows the global trend of steady growth, with a noticeable increase in the last decade both in within and between the regions. This latter trend is shown in Figure 4, which focuses on the flows from the EU to the MENA region (dashed blue line) and vice versa (solid red line), showing the substantial equilibrium in trade balance between the two regions.



**Figure 4. EU-MENA bilateral trade flows, billion dollars. Source: UN COMTRADE.**

A similar trend is evident also in the flows within the two regions, as shown in Figure 5, although the volume of exchanges is enormously higher within the EU (solid red line, left-hand scale) than in the MENA region (dashed blue line, right-hand scale).

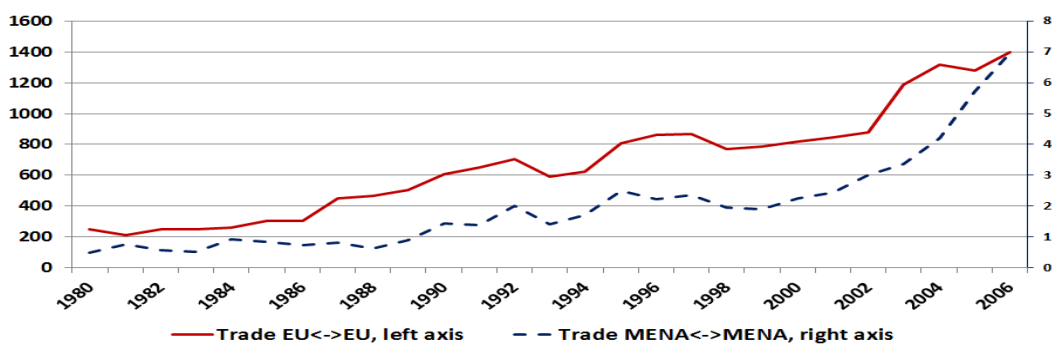


**Figure 5. EU-MENA internal trade flows, billion dollars. Source: UN COMTRADE.**

### ***2.3 Trade and current account balances in the MENA region***

Based on the September 2011 International Monetary Fund World Economic Outlook (IMF WEO, 2011) data, we display in this section the trade and current account balances of the MENA countries (because of lack of reliable data, Algeria and Lebanon have been excluded from this analysis). As usual in the MENA region, there is wide cross-country heterogeneity in the economic performance and external balances. For example, as far as the trade and current account balances are concerned, only Egypt and Israel display fairly balanced accounts, the other countries being characterised by structural deficits or surpluses.

In Figure 6 we show Egypt's level of exports (in blue), imports (in dashed red) and current account balance (in dotted green) as a share of total GDP.



**Figure 6. Egypt's trade and current account balances. Source: IMF WEO, 2011.**

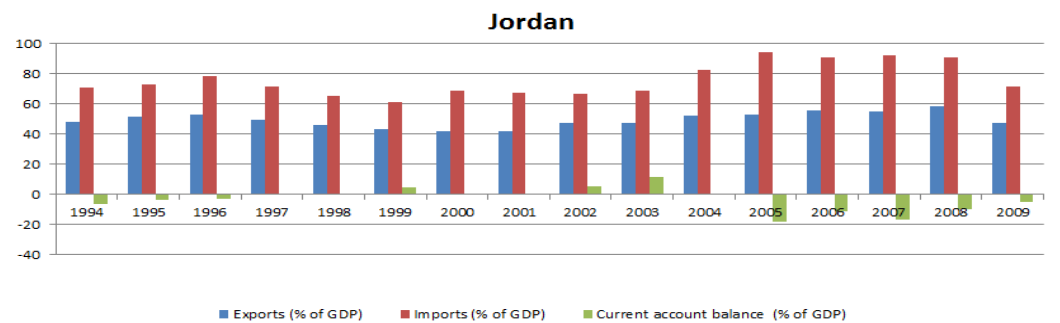
In Figure 7 we show Israel's level of exports (in blue), imports (in dashed red) and current account balance (in dotted green) as a share of total GDP.



**Figure 7. Israel's trade and current account balances. Source: IMF WEO, 2011.**

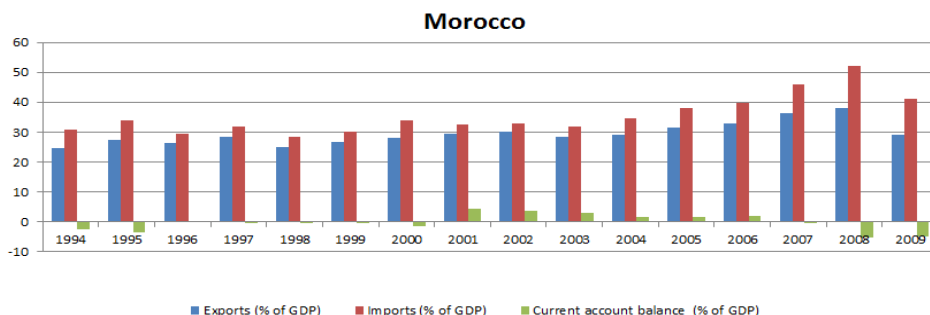
Notice indeed that the trade balance is a key component of the current account, but not the only one, as remittances, international development aid and interests and dividends on foreign investments have to be added or subtracted.

Turning to the countries more structurally in deficit, we show the same statistics for Jordan, Morocco and Tunisia. In Figure 8 we show Jordan's level of exports (in blue), imports (in dashed red) and current account balance (in dotted green) as a share of total GDP.



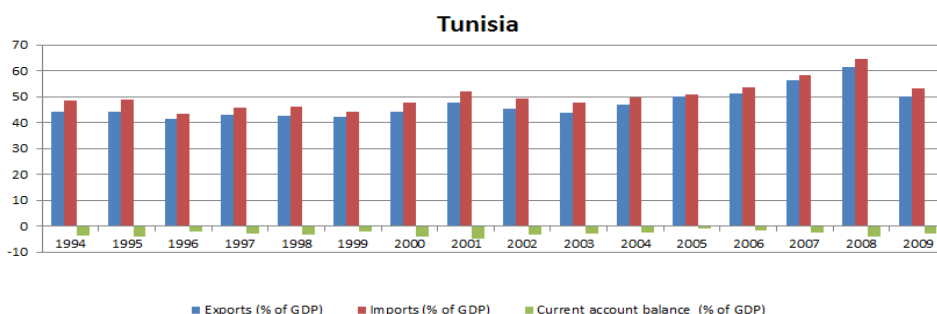
**Figure 8. Jordan's trade and current account balances. Source: IMF WEO, 2011.**

In Figure 9 we show Morocco's level of exports (in blue), imports (in dashed red) and current account balance (in dotted green) as a share of total GDP.



**Figure 9. Morocco's trade and current account balances. Source: IMF WEO, 2011.**

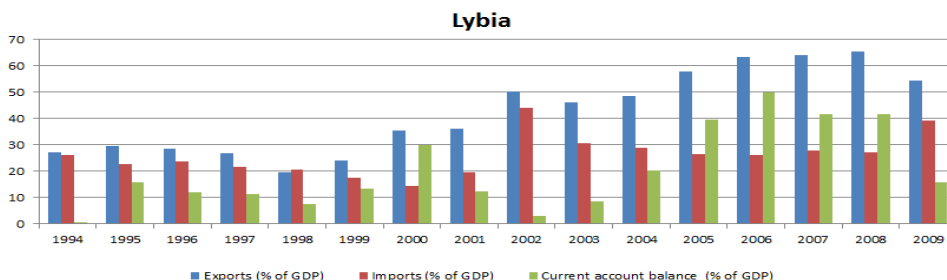
In Figure 10 we show Tunisia's level of exports (in blue), imports (in dashed red) and current account balance (in dotted green) as a share of total GDP.



**Figure 10. Tunisia's trade and current account balances. Source: IMF WEO, 2011.**

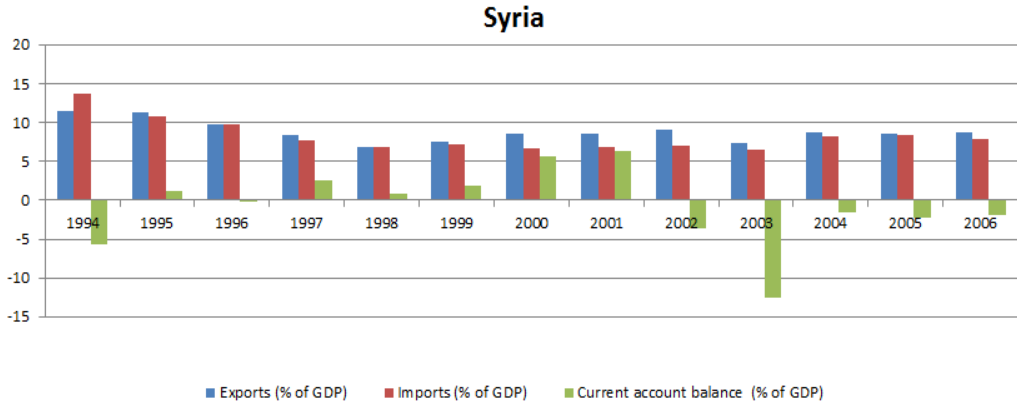
Finally, turning to the countries generally in surplus, we show the same statistics for Libya and Syria. It should be however noticed that while the significant trade surpluses in Libya (mainly due to the great availability of raw materials) resulted in a positive current account balance up to 2009, this is not true of Syria, whose current account balance has recently turned negative for financial outflows notwithstanding a positive trade balance.

In Figure 11 we show Libya's level of exports (in blue), imports (in dashed red) and current account balance (in dotted green) as a share of total GDP.



**Figure 11. Libya's trade and current account balances. Source: IMF WEO, 2011.**

In Figure 12 we show Syria's level of exports (in blue), imports (in dashed red) and current account balance (in dotted green) as a share of total GDP.

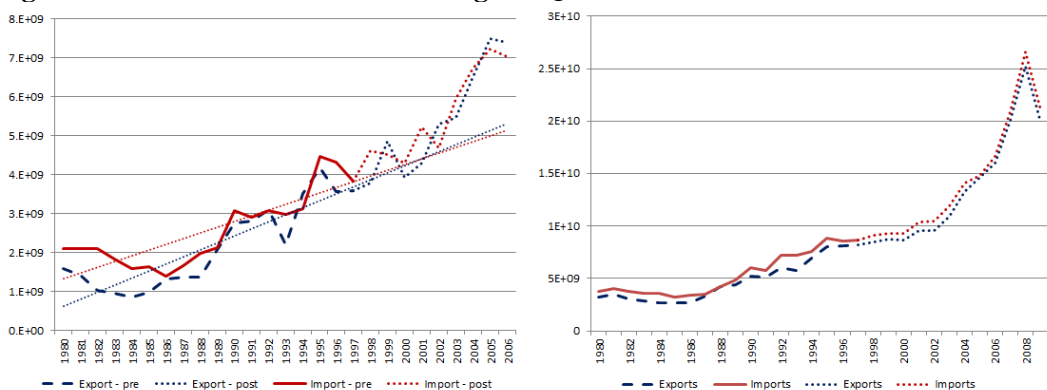


**Figure 12. Syria's trade and current account balances. Source: IMF WEO, 2011.**

### 3. Evolution of trade flows in MENA countries with EUROMED PTAs

After having provided a general overview of the trade evolution and balances of the MENA countries involved in the Barcelona process, we can analyse how the resulting PTAs with the EU have affected trade flows within the Euro-mediterranean region. Before performing an econometric analysis, though, we find it useful to give an idea of the underlying dynamics by showing the evolution of trade flows first between the MENA countries and the EU and then between these countries and the rest of the world (RoW).

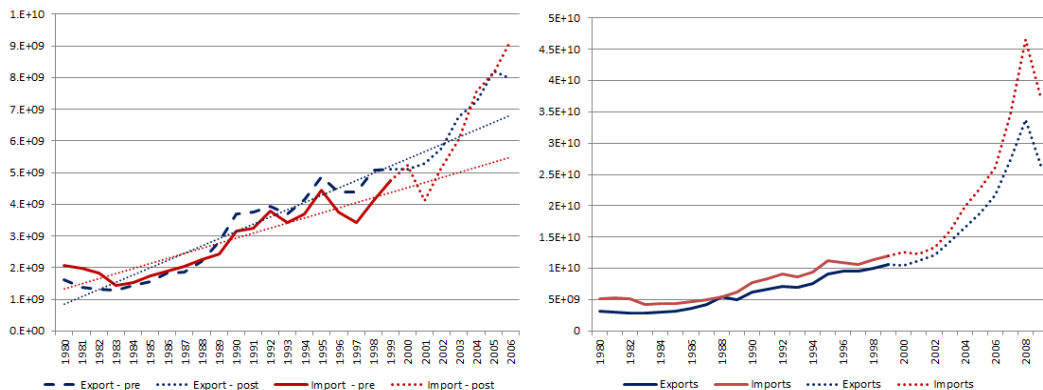
In all the figures, the dashed blue lines capture exports and the solid red lines represent imports. After signing the PTA with the EU, the import and export lines turn into dotted lines. On the background of the figures with the bilateral EU-MENA trade, the thinly dotted lines capture the pre-PTA trend in imports (red) and exports (blue). The countries are sorted according to the year of the signature of the PTA. Therefore in Figure 13 is shown Tunisia.



**Figure 13. Tunisia's trade flows with the EU (left pane) and the rest of**

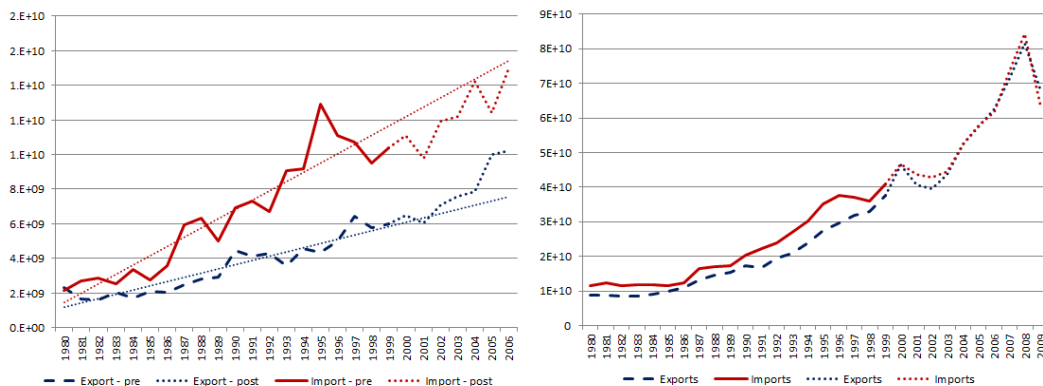
the world (RoW, right pane), US dollars. Source: UN COMTRADE for EU-MENA bilateral trade and IMF WEO, 2011 for MENA flows vis-à-vis RoW.

Then follows Morocco in Figure 14.



**Figure 14. Morocco's trade flows with the EU (left pane) and the rest of the world (RoW, right pane), US dollars. Source: UN COMTRADE for EU-MENA bilateral trade and IMF WEO, 2011 for MENA flows vis-à-vis RoW.**

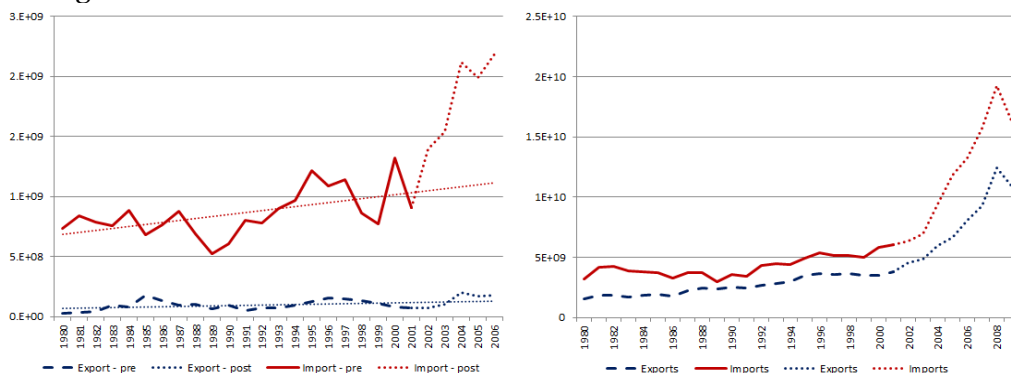
Then Figure 15 shows the statistics on Israel.



**Figure 15. Israel's trade flows with the EU (left pane) and the rest of the world (RoW, right pane), US dollars. Source: UN COMTRADE for EU-MENA bilateral trade and IMF WEO, 2011 for MENA flows vis-à-vis RoW.**

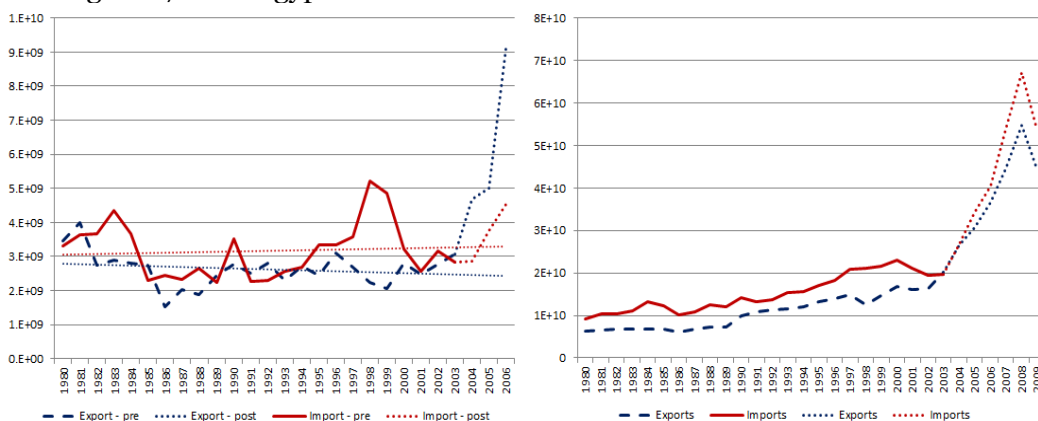


Figure 16 is on Jordan.



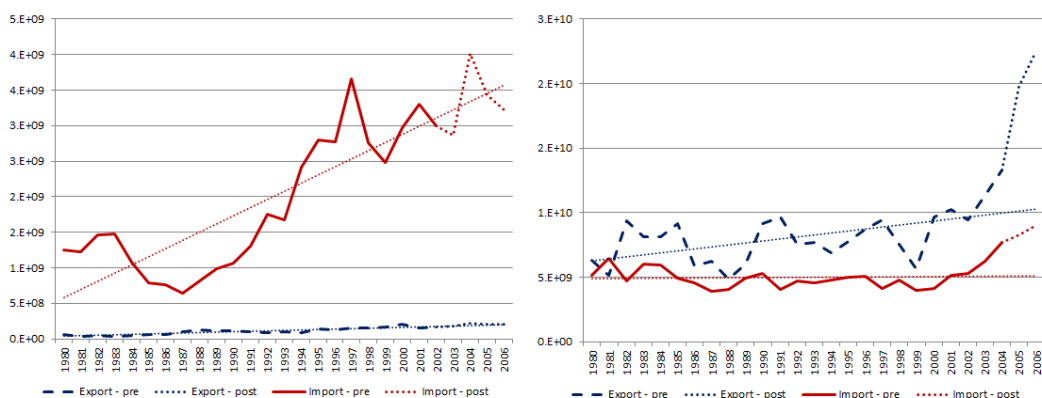
**Figure 16. Jordan's trade flows with the EU (left pane) and the rest of the world (RoW, right pane), US dollars. Source: UN COMTRADE for EU-MENA bilateral trade and IMF WEO, 2011 for MENA flows vis-à-vis RoW.**

Figure 17 is on Egypt.



**Figure 17. Egypt's trade flows with the EU (left pane) and the rest of the world (RoW, right pane), US dollars. Source: UN COMTRADE for EU-MENA bilateral trade and IMF WEO, 2011 for MENA flows vis-à-vis RoW.**

And finally Lebanon and Algeria in Figure 18, for which only flows to and from the EU are reported for lack of reliable data towards the rest of the world.



**Figure 18. Lebanon's trade flows with the EU (left pane) and the rest of the world (RoW, right pane), US dollars. Source: UN COMTRADE.**

It can be observed that there doesn't appear to be a systematic change of trend from this casual observation: some countries seem to benefit much from the PTA (e.g., Egypt and Morocco) while others don't appear to be very affected (such as Israel). There are also countries that only appear to increase imports after the agreement (see Jordan), not really in line with the expectations on the effects of a PTA.

The lack of a clear trend in all the series explains why an econometric analysis is needed to identify the effects of the PTAs on trade flows, both from the EU to the MENA countries and from the MENA countries to the EU. Several factors may indeed be at work at the same time and interfere with our intuitive perception of the data. To make a clear example, if a PTA is signed during a global recession, the fall in trade could not be fully imputed to the agreement, as the impact of recession has to be taken into account. At the same time, if two PTAs are signed during the same year and the trade diversion effects are shown to be significant, then the overall effect of the PTA on the bilateral trade can be weakened by two marginal effects going in opposite directions.

#### **4. Econometric test: which gains from EUROMED PTAs?**

The organisation of the last part of the paper is as follows. We first describe the econometric analysis deployed to quantify the marginal effect of a PTA on the bilateral exchanges among EUROMED countries. Then, we describe the data used and finally show and comment the results.

##### **4.1 Empirical strategy**

The dependent variable of our analysis is the value of exports from country  $i$  to country  $j$  at time  $t$  (in log). Among the explanatory variables, the most relevant for our analysis is the dummy  $PTA$ , which is equal to one if the two countries have a PTA in force at time  $t$  and zero otherwise. An increase in trade after a PTA would then result in a positive value for the coefficient of this dummy. In addition, we want to test the hypothesis that the signature of a PTA between two EUROMED countries may result in a loss of trade between these countries and a third

EUROMED country (phenomenon generally known as *trade diversion*). The idea is that the signature of a PTA, by easing the market access between PTA's members, could make trade with a third country less profitable if capacity is constrained or the supply curve is upward sloping. We thus introduce a dummy called *Diversions* equal to one if at least one of the two countries involved in the PTA has already a PTA with at least one of the other countries in our sample (Gosh and Ymarik, 2004). A negative coefficient for this dummy implies that there is actually some trade diversion, i.e. PTAs with third countries would reduce the trade between any pair of countries. Our empirical model is then the following:

$$\ln(Exports)_{i,j,t} = \eta_t + \eta_{ij} + \beta_1(PTA)_{i,j,t} + \beta_2(Diversions)_{i,j,t} + \beta_3(X)_{i,j,t} + \epsilon_{i,j,t} \quad (1)$$

where  $i$  and  $j$  capture respectively the exporting and the importing country and  $t$  refers to the year. The vector  $X_{i,j,t}$  is composed of the control variables used in the estimation of (1): (I) population in country  $i$  and  $j$ ; (II) per capita GDP (in log) in country  $i$  and  $j$ ; (III) a dummy variable equal to one if both countries are members of the WTO. The error term is captured by  $\epsilon_{i,j,t}$ .

The main empirical issue underlined in the literature regarding this kind of estimation is the problem of endogeneity deriving from omitted variables or reverse causality between PTAs and exports (it could be the case indeed that is it exactly the high amount of trade between two countries that pushes them to sign a PTA). As shown by Baier and Bergstrand (2007), both issues can be solved by introducing fixed effects at the level of country pairs ( $\eta_{i,j}$ ). These fixed effects allow us to control for all the pair-specific time-invariant characteristics and hence isolate the effect of the PTA and avoid any omitted variable issue (such as, for example, distance, common language, common border, which are all features that promote trade exchanges between countries and are captured by the fixed effects). The introduction of fixed effects also tackles the reverse causality problem by controlling for the *natural propensity to trade* between the two countries (for more information on the issue, see Baier and Bergstrand, 2007). In our estimations we also include time fixed effects ( $\eta_t$ ) to account for the effect of global trends in trade which are independent of the bilateral trade characteristics. The introduction of these two types of fixed effects grants a consistent and robust estimate of the marginal effect associated with the dummies *PTA* and *Diversions*.

The model (1) has been tested on three different samples. In the first, all the EUROMED countries have been included both as importers and exporters. In this way we can have an overall idea of the effect of a PTA on the trade flows in the region. However, this sample doesn't allow us to differentiate the effects of the PTA on a particular direction of trade. Hence, in the second sample we only consider EU countries' exports towards the MENA countries; finally, in the third sample we consider only MENA countries' exports towards the EU. This distinction allows us to highlight whether the marginal effect of a PTA on trade varies by direction of trade flows.

## 4.2 Data

The empirical analysis is performed on UN COMTRADE data for the period 1980 - 2006. Our first sample covers the 43 countries signing the

EUROMED-related PTAs, i.e. the 27 EU member states plus Algeria, Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Croatia, Egypt, Jordan, Israel, Lebanon, Morocco, Mauritania, Montenegro, Monaco, Palestine, Syria, Tunisia, and Turkey. Only final goods' trade has been considered in order to get rid of changes in oil prices or other raw materials. The *PTA* dummy has been created based on the list of existing PTAs provided by the WTO. As a control we used the data on population of per capita GDP provided by the World Bank (in the World Development Indicators). Finally, the WTO dummy was created based on the list of WTO members.

### 4.3. Results

In Table 1 are reported the results from the estimation of model (1). Columns (1) to (3) show the estimated referring to the largest sample, where all the EUROMED countries are considered as both importers and exporters. In Column (1) we report the results of the most parsimonious model in which only the *PTA* dummy and the fixed effects are used to explain the exports from  $i$  to  $j$ . The coefficient of the *PTA* dummy has a positive and statistically significant sign. In Column (2) we added the control variables  $X_{i,j,t}$  and the *PTA* coefficient is still positive and highly significant. Therefore we can conclude that the presence of a PTA between two countries fosters their bilateral trade flows by a hefty 19% (resulting from  $e^{0.180} - 1$ ). In Column (3) we also added the *Diversion* dummy to control for the presence of trade diversion after a PTA. The coefficient is negative (thus potentially in line with the hypothesis of trade diversion), but not statistically significant.

The same estimates are repeated in Columns (4) to (6) and (7) to (9) with different samples. In Columns (4) to (6) we restricted the sample to EU member states as exporters towards the MENA countries. Again, the sign associated with the coefficient of the *PTA* dummy is positive and significant, with an intensity of 20%, as shown on Column (5). There is in addition evidence of some trade diversion, given the negative and statistically significant coefficient associated with the dummy *Diversion*. Thus, when an EU country signs a PTA with a third country, this reduces its exports towards country  $j$ .

Finally, in Column (7) to (9) the sample has been restricted to MENA countries' exports to the EU. The coefficient associated with *PTA* is still positive and significant in the three specifications. In particular, column (8) shows that having a PTA with a EU country increases exports by 50%. In addition, we don't find any evidence of a trade diversion effect. Therefore, from our estimates we can conclude that EUROMED PTAs affected positively trade flows between the countries involved and especially in the direction of trade going from MENA countries to the EU. As for trade diversion, we find evidence of it only as far as EU countries' exports to MENA countries are involved, but not otherwise.

Finally, our estimates also show that being part of the WTO has a positive and significant effect on trade flows when EU exports towards MENA countries are considered (by a factor of 17%), but not otherwise. A possible explanation of this asymmetry may suggest that the guarantee provided by WTO membership is more relevant when it covers an importer with weaker institutions and less relevant

when exporting to the EU, but this hypothesis would require further investigation and is out of the scope of the current paper.

## 5 Conclusions

Summing up, the process of economic integration among EUROMED countries appears today in slow but steady development, with PTAs playing decisive role in boosting trade flows in the region. However, the wide economic gap between the two regions and the significant heterogeneity in the trade and current account balances in the MENA countries suggest that there is still significant room for improvement.

The economic integration resulting from lowering trade barriers and transport costs is expected to improve the welfare of citizens and entrepreneurs of both regions by increasing the availability and variety of goods in their markets, but are these benefits actually materialising? In this article we provide a first answer to this question in the trade domain, both qualitatively and quantitatively. In qualitative terms, we showed that bilateral trade between the EU and the MENA regions increased dramatically in the last decades, in particular starting from the last decade of the twentieth century, which is exactly when the first MENA countries signed PTAs with the EU. Countries such as Jordan, Egypt and Morocco, for example, displayed big increases in bilateral trade after the PTAs both towards the EU and the rest of the world. However, the core of our analysis lies in the quantitative econometric analysis of the phenomenon, which shows that the marginal effect of a EUROMED PTA on trade flows is to increase them by almost 20% from the EU to the MENA countries and by about 50% from the MENA to the EU countries.

Our analysis thus appears to confirm the success of the EUROMED integration policy in creating stronger trade ties around the Mediterranean basin and the proliferation of PTAs played a central role in this process. However PTAs can provide just a one-off boost to exports, further integration will require more targeted interventions in reducing non-tariff barriers and trade costs, which are likely to require much more time and energy to be delivered.

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Table 1: OLS Results

	EUROMED Countries			EU27 exporters, EUROMED Importers			EUROMED exporters, EU27 importers		
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)	(8)	(9)
PTA <sub>ij</sub>	0.223*** (0.0351)	0.180*** (0.0322)	0.186*** (0.0327)	0.181** (0.0868)	0.185*** (0.0661)	0.178*** (0.0668)	0.601*** (0.103)	0.406*** (0.0836)	0.402*** (0.0820)
Exporter pc GDP (ln)		1.611*** (0.184)	1.612*** (0.185)		1.271*** (0.308)	1.271*** (0.309)		3.008*** (0.380)	3.012*** (0.381)
Importer pc GDP (ln)		1.267*** (0.186)	1.271*** (0.186)		2.019*** (0.358)	2.045*** (0.358)		1.751*** (0.416)	1.750*** (0.416)
Exporter Pop (ln)		0.218 (0.286)	0.218 (0.286)		-1.912*** (0.560)	-1.937*** (0.556)		1.315 (1.522)	1.264 (1.535)
Importer Pop (ln)		0.941*** (0.325)	0.938*** (0.325)		0.876 (1.105)	0.706 (1.107)		3.137*** (0.781)	3.123*** (0.781)
WTO <sub>ij</sub>		0.0864 (0.0547)	0.0912* (0.0548)		0.156* (0.0934)	0.161* (0.0933)		0.0845 (0.114)	0.0870 (0.115)
Diversion			-0.0722 (0.0513)			-0.138* (0.0832)			-0.0647 (0.113)
Observations	24,198	22,920	22,920	5,775	5,508	5,508	5,685	5,428	5,428
R-squared	0.323	0.356	0.356	0.254	0.354	0.355	0.162	0.245	0.246
Number of id	1,181	1,181	1,181	270	270	270	269	269	269

Robust standard errors in parentheses. \*\*\*  $p < 0,01$ ; \*\*  $p < 0,05$ ; \*  $p < 0,1$ .

# A NON-COMPENSATORY COMPOSITE INDEX FOR MEASURING WELL-BEING OVER TIME

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**Abstract:** *In the last decades, there has been a growing consensus among specialists and researcher that GDP per capita cannot alone explain the well-being in a geographical area. Several have been the attempts to construct alternative, non-monetary, indices of well-being by aggregating a set of individual indicators that represent different dimensions of well-being. The most famous, in Italy, are the Index of Regional Quality of Development and the “Il Sole 24 Ore” Quality of Life Index. An issue often not solved, from a methodological point of view, concerns the comparability of the data over time. In this work, we propose a variant of the Mazziotta-Pareto Index (MPI) which allows time comparisons of the level of well-being across geographical areas to be made.*

**Keywords:** *composite index, ranking, well-being*

**Introduction.** In the recent years, many have been the attempts of different institutions (universities, statistics offices, international organizations) to construct composite indices of well-being, sustainable development or societal progress<sup>1,2</sup>.

In Italy, two interesting examples of this type are the Index of Regional Quality of Development (QUARS) proposed by the campaign “Sbilanciamoci!”<sup>3</sup> and the Quality of Life Index published by the economic newspaper “Il Sole 24 Ore”<sup>4</sup>.

Moreover, since 2010, the National Institute of Statistics (Istat) and the National Council for Economy and Labour (Cnel) have launched a series of studies

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<sup>1</sup> Booyesen, F., ‘An Overview and Evaluation of Composite Indices of Development’, in *Social Indicators Research*, nr. 59, 2002, pp. 115-151.

<sup>2</sup> Bandura, R., *A Survey of Composite Indices Measuring Country Performance: 2008 Update*, UNDP/ODS, Working Paper, New York, 2008.

<sup>3</sup> Gnesi, C., Segre, E., Villa, A., *Come si vive in Italia? Rapporto QUARS 2010 – Indice di qualità regionale dello sviluppo*, 2010, [www.sbilanciamoci.org](http://www.sbilanciamoci.org).

<sup>4</sup> Lun, G., Holzer, D., Tappeiner, G., Tappeiner, U., ‘The stability of rankings derived from composite indicators: analysis of the “Il Sole 24 ore” quality of life report’, in *Social Indicators Research*, nr. 77, 2006, pp. 307-331.

for measuring equitable and sustainable well-being in Italy. The aim of the project, called BES (Benessere Equo Sostenibile), is to construct a set of measures of the various dimensions of well-being, at regional level, combining GDP with other indicators closely related to material standards of life and concerning issues of sustainability and social cohesion<sup>5</sup>.

One of the main problems in constructing composite indices is the choice of a method that allows to assess changes over time<sup>6</sup>. Comparisons over time may be absolute or relative. We say that a time comparison is 'relative' when the composite index values, at time  $t$ , depend on one or more endogenous parameters (e.g., mean and variance of the individual indicators at time  $t$ ). Similarly, we say that a time comparison is 'absolute' when the composite index values, at time  $t$ , depend on one or more exogenous parameters (e.g., minimum and maximum of the individual indicators fixed by the researcher).

As is known, there are several procedures for the normalization of the data, most of which use endogenous parameters (e.g., mean and variance, minimum or maximum in the reference year). These parameters affect both the QUARS, which is based on z-scores, and the "Il Sole 24 Ore" Quality of Life Index, that transforms the data by a 'distance from the best performer' or indicization. So, the above indices allow only for relative comparisons since they are based exclusively on values of the individual indicators at the time of reference.

In this paper, we propose a variant of the Mazziotta-Pareto Index<sup>7</sup>, namely adjusted MPI, that allows to make absolute comparisons over time, in a not full compensatory perspective. An application to indicators of well-being in the Italian regions is also presented.

**Why a composite index?** A composite index is a mathematical combination (or aggregation as it is termed) of a set of individual indicators (or variables) that represent the different components of a multidimensional concept to be measured (e.g., development, quality of life, well-being, etc). Therefore, the composite indices are used for measuring concepts that cannot be captured by a single indicator<sup>8</sup>.

Ideally, a composite index should be based on a theoretical framework which allows individual indicators to be selected, combined and weighted in a manner which reflects the dimensions or structure of the phenomenon being measured. However, its construction is not straightforward and often requires a number of

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<sup>5</sup> Giovannini, E., Rondinella, T., 'Measuring Equitable and Sustainable Well-Being in Italy', in Maggino F. & Nuvolati G. (eds), *Quality of Life in Italy: Research and Reflections*, New York, Springer, 2012.

<sup>6</sup> Tarantola, S., *European Innovation Scoreboard: strategies to measure country progress over time*, JRC Scientific and Technical Reports, EUR 23526 EN, Luxembourg, 2008.

<sup>7</sup> Mazziotta, M., Pareto, A., 'Un indice sintetico non compensativo per la misura della dotazione infrastrutturale: un'applicazione in ambito sanitario', in *Rivista di Statistica Ufficiale*, nr. 1, 2011, pp. 63-79.

<sup>8</sup> Saisana, M., Tarantola, S., *State-of-the-art report on current methodologies and practices for composite indicator development*, European Commission-JRC, EUR 20408 EN, Ispra, 2002.



decisions/choices (methodological or not) to be taken<sup>9</sup>.

The consolidated methodology<sup>10,11</sup> for constructing a composite index has the following main steps<sup>12</sup>:

1. *defining the phenomenon to be measured*. The definition of the concept should give a clear sense of what is being measured by the composite index. It should refer to a theoretical framework, linking various sub-groups and underlying indicators.

2. *selecting a group of individual indicators*. The strengths and weaknesses of a composite index reflect the quality of the underlying individual indicators. The indicators should be selected according to their relevance, analytical soundness, timeliness, accessibility, etc.

3. *normalizing the individual indicators*. Normalization aims to make the individual indicators comparable as they often have different measurement units. Therefore, it is necessary to bring the indicators to the same standard, by transforming them into pure, dimensionless, numbers. There are various methods of normalization, such as ranking, re-scaling, standardization (or z-score) and indicization.

4. *aggregating the normalized indicators*. It is the combination of all the components to form a composite index (mathematical function). Different aggregation methods are possible. The most used are additive methods that range from summing up unit ranking in each indicator to aggregating weighted transformations of the original indicators. Multivariate techniques as Principal Component Analysis<sup>13</sup> are also often used.

No universal method exists for composite indices construction. In each case their construction is much determined by the particular application, including both formal and heuristic elements, and incorporate some expert knowledge on the phenomenon to be measured<sup>14</sup>.

Composite indices may send misleading messages, if poorly constructed or misinterpreted and can lead to simplistic conclusions, if not used in combination with the individual indicators. Nevertheless, the advantages of composite indices are clear, and they can be summarized in unidimensional measurement of complex phenomena, easy interpretation with respect to a battery of many separate indicators (or 'dashboard') and simplification of the data analysis (particularly, ranking geographical units and comparing their performance over time).

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<sup>9</sup> Saltelli, A, 'Composite Indicators between analysis and advocacy', in *Social Indicators Research*, nr. 81, 2007, pp. 65-77.

<sup>10</sup> Salzman, J., *Methodological Choices Encountered in the Construction of Composite Indices of Economic and Social Well-Being*, Center for the Study of Living Standards, Technical Report, Ottawa, 2003.

<sup>11</sup> OECD, *Handbook on Constructing Composite Indicators. Methodology and user guide*, Paris, OECD Publications, 2008.

<sup>12</sup> Note that the theoretical part (definition of the phenomenon and selection of the indicators) is not separate from the statistical/methodological part (normalization and aggregation). In particular, the choice of the individual indicators is not independent of the choice of the aggregation method.

<sup>13</sup> Dunteman, G. H., *Principal Components Analysis*, Newbury Park, Sage Publications, 1989.

<sup>14</sup> Tangian, A. S., *A composite indicator of working conditions in the EU-15 for policy monitoring and analytical purposes*, WSI-Diskussionspapiere, 135, Düsseldorf, 2005.

**Compensability or non-compensability?** Among the many open questions in the construction of composite indices there is the degree of compensability or substitutability of the indicators<sup>15</sup>. The components of a composite index are called ‘substitutable’ if a deficit in one component may be compensated by a surplus in another (e.g., a low value of “People who have participated in religious or spiritual activities” can be offset by a high value of “People who have participated in meetings of cultural or recreational associations” and vice versa). Similarly, the components of a composite index are called ‘non-substitutable’ if a compensation among them is not allowed (e.g., a low value of “Hospital beds per 1,000 inhabitants” cannot be offset by a high value of “Medical doctors per 1,000 inhabitants” and vice versa). Thus we can define an aggregation approach compensatory or non-compensatory depending on whether it permits compensability or not<sup>16</sup>.

Compensability is closely related with the concept of unbalance, i.e., a disequilibrium among the indicators that are used for constructing the composite index. In any composite index each dimension is introduced to represent a relevant aspect of the phenomenon considered, therefore a measure of unbalance among dimensions may help the overall knowledge. In a non-compensatory approach, all the dimensions of the phenomenon must be balanced and an aggregation function that takes unbalance into account, in terms of penalization, is often used.

A compensatory approach (perfect substitutability) involves the use of additive methods, such as the arithmetic mean, which ignore unbalances. A partially compensatory approach (imperfect substitutability) generally requires non-linear methods or Unbalance-Adjusted Functions, such as the geometric mean, the MPI and the Concave Average<sup>17</sup>. Finally, if a non-compensatory approach (non-substitutability) is followed, a Multi-Criteria Analysis or MCA<sup>18</sup> can be applied. However, the MCA provides results in terms of ranks, and not of an index, so the researcher can only follow the unit rankings through time.

**A variant of the Mazziotta-Pareto Index.** The Mazziotta-Pareto Index (MPI) is a non-compensatory composite index which can be used for measuring multidimensional phenomena, such as development and poverty<sup>19</sup>. It is based on a standardization of the individual indicators, at the reference time, that makes the indicators independent of the variability (normalized indicators have a mean of 100 and standard deviation of 10). Therefore, all the individual indicators are

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<sup>15</sup> OECD, *Handbook on Constructing Composite Indicators. Methodology and user guide*, Paris, OECD Publications, 2008.

<sup>16</sup> Casadio Tarabusi, E., Guarini, G., ‘An Unbalance Adjustment Method for Development Indicators’, in *Social Indicators Research*, 2012, doi: 10.1007/s11205-012-0070-4.

<sup>17</sup> Casadio Tarabusi, E., Palazzi, P., ‘An index for sustainable development’, in *BNL Quarterly Review*, nr. 229, 2004, pp. 185-206.

<sup>18</sup> Munda, G., Nardo, M., ‘Non-compensatory/non-linear composite indicators for ranking countries: A defensible setting’, in *Applied Economics*, nr. 41, 2009, pp. 1513-1523.

<sup>19</sup> De Muro, P., Mazziotta, M., Pareto, A., ‘Composite Indices of Development and Poverty: An Application to MDGs’, in *Social Indicators Research*, nr. 104, 2011, pp. 1-18.

assigned equal weights, but only relative time comparisons are allowed<sup>20</sup>.

In order to perform absolute comparison over time, we propose a different procedure of normalization of data with a re-scaling of the individual indicators according to two 'goalposts', i.e., a minimum and a maximum value which represent the possible range of each variable for all time periods and for all units.<sup>21</sup>

The steps for computing the variant of the MPI for absolute time comparisons, namely adjusted MPI, are given below.

Given the matrix  $X=\{x_{ij}\}$  with  $n$  rows (units) and  $m$  columns (indicators), we calculate the normalized matrix  $R=\{r_{ij}\}$  as follow:

$$r_{ij} = \frac{(x_{ij} - \text{Min}_{x_j})}{(\text{Max}_{x_j} - \text{Min}_{x_j})} 60 + 70 \quad (1)$$

where  $x_{ij}$  is the value of the indicator  $j$  for the unit  $i$  and  $\text{Min}_{x_j}$  and  $\text{Max}_{x_j}$  are the 'goalposts' for the indicator  $j$ . If the indicator  $j$  has negative polarity<sup>22</sup>, the complement of (1) with respect to 200 is computed. In both cases, the range of the normalized values is (70; 130).

Denoting with  $M_{r_i}$  and  $S_{r_i}$ , respectively, the mean and the standard deviation of the normalized values of the unit  $i$ , the generalized form<sup>23</sup> of the adjusted MPI is given by:

$$\text{MPI}_i^{+/-} = M_{r_i} \pm S_{r_i} \text{cv}_i$$

where  $\text{cv}_i = S_{r_i} / M_{r_i}$  is the coefficient of variation of the unit  $i$  and the sign  $\pm$  depends on the kind of phenomenon to be measured.

If the composite index is 'increasing' or 'positive', i.e., increasing values of the index correspond to positive variations of the phenomenon (e.g., the well-being), then  $\text{MPI}^-$  is used. Vice versa, if the composite index is 'decreasing' or 'negative', i.e., increasing values of the index correspond to negative variations of the phenomenon (e.g., the poverty), then  $\text{MPI}^+$  is used<sup>24</sup>.

This approach is characterized by the use of a function (the product  $S_{r_i} \text{cv}_i$ ) to penalize the units with unbalanced values of the normalized indicators. The 'penalty' is based on the coefficient of variation and is zero if all the values are equal. The purpose is to favour the units that, mean being equal, have a greater balance among the different indicators.

<sup>20</sup> Mazziotta, M., Pareto, A., 'A Non-compensatory Approach for the Measurement of the Quality of Life', in Maggino F. & Nuvolati G. (eds), *Quality of Life in Italy: Research and Reflections*, New York, Springer, 2012.

<sup>21</sup> This technique is used to normalize the variables in many indices, such as the Human Development Index (HDI) produced by the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP, 2011).

<sup>22</sup> The 'polarity' of an indicator is the sign of the relation between the indicator and the phenomenon to be measured (+ if the individual indicator represents a dimension considered positive and - if it represents a dimension considered negative).

<sup>23</sup> It is a generalized form since it includes 'two indices in one'.

<sup>24</sup> De Muro, P., Mazziotta, M., Pareto, A., 'Composite Indices of Development and Poverty: An Application to MDGs', in *Social Indicators Research*, nr. 104, 2011, pp. 1-18.

Therefore, the adjusted MPI is characterized by the combination of a ‘mean effect’ ( $M_{r_i}$ ) and a ‘penalty effect’ ( $S_{r_i} cv_i$ ) but, differently from the classic MPI, shows where each unit stands in relation to the ‘goalposts’.

**An application to the Italian regions.** In order to provide an example of calculation and interpretation of the adjusted MPI, we consider a set of indicators of well-being in the Italian regions in 2005 and 2009. The variables used are the following:

1. Sporting activities (percentage of people aged 3 and over who participate in sporting activities);
2. Close to supermarkets (percentage of households with easy access to supermarkets);
3. Green space ( $m^2$  of urban parks and gardens per inhabitant);
4. Public transport (urban public transport networks per 100  $km^2$  of surface);
5. Parking provision (parking spaces per 1,000 cars);
6. Children’s services (percentage of municipalities with infancy day-care services);
7. Elderly home care (percentage of people aged 65 and over who benefit from integrated home assistance services).

The adjusted MPI- is used, since the composite index is ‘positive’, i.e., increasing values of the index correspond to positive variations of well-being. The ‘goalposts’ are the observed minimum and maximum values of each indicator, in the period under consideration. The data matrix is reported in Table 1. Note that all the individual indicators have positive polarity as high values of the variables are considered ‘good’ with respect to overall well-being.

Table 2 shows the final scores (value) and the rankings (rank) of the Italian regions for 2005 ( $MPI_{05}$ ) and 2009 ( $MPI_{09}$ ) and the variation over time ( $\Delta MPI_{05-09}$ ).

As we can see from the results, not necessarily each absolute increase (difference of value) corresponds to an relative one (difference of rank) and vice versa. For example, from 2005 to 2009, Trentino-Alto Adige shows a rise of the level of well-being (difference of value=+0.98), but it drops from position 1 down to position 5 (difference of rank=-4), because of a greater increase of the performances of the other regions in 2009.

Overall, the region where it is possible to record the highest increase of the well-being indicators, over the five years, is Abruzzo (difference of value=+12.99) that rises from position 14 up to position 6 (difference of rank=+8). From the point of view of the reduction of well-being, instead, the results are conflicting: the only absolute decrease, in fact, is for Lazio (difference of value=-0.31); while the largest relative decrease is observed in Trentino-Alto Adige.

Table 1. Individual indicators of well-being in the Italian regions - Years 2005, 2009

Region	2005							2009						
	Sporting activities	supermarkets	Green space	Public transport	Parking provision	Children's services	Elderly home care	Sporting activities	supermarkets	Green space	Public transport	Parking provision	Children's services	Elderly home care
Piemonte	34.1	60.3	42.0	189.8	12.5	28.6	1.8	34.1	69.0	42.5	199.3	17.1	37.1	2.3
Valle d'Aosta	33.9	52.7	23.2	544.0	5.3	100.0	0.1	46.3	58.6	26.2	580.0	8.4	78.4	0.4
Lombardia	37.7	69.9	27.6	230.1	20.0	54.6	3.2	36.5	68.9	28.6	227.7	24.1	62.5	4.1
Trentino-Alto Adige	53.1	72.2	71.2	190.7	28.6	75.8	0.6	48.2	71.9	70.3	192.9	34.5	83.8	0.8
Veneto	39.4	65.8	58.7	122.5	39.8	42.7	5.0	39.6	70.1	62.3	124.4	42.2	70.2	4.8
Friuli-Venezia Giulia	36.7	72.7	21.8	257.4	11.9	53.0	7.9	37.5	74.6	22.1	258.1	12.0	83.6	7.7
Liguria	26.6	67.9	35.3	312.5	23.1	75.3	3.1	27.6	70.6	35.4	311.0	22.3	64.3	3.4
Emilia-Romagna	32.4	71.1	158.5	81.0	24.4	78.0	5.4	36.8	69.3	157.7	83.0	24.0	88.0	8.3
Toscana	30.4	68.7	152.5	106.0	18.6	78.0	2.1	33.1	64.3	152.1	108.4	20.9	74.6	2.2
Umbria	31.2	65.9	192.1	162.4	27.4	51.1	4.1	32.3	73.7	187.6	162.8	26.9	63.0	7.6
Marche	31.4	76.0	185.8	157.2	9.2	45.9	3.3	32.2	67.4	186.1	157.7	15.3	55.7	3.6
Lazio	33.7	74.3	127.4	124.5	6.5	30.4	3.3	29.4	74.7	121.0	132.3	7.0	30.7	4.0
Abruzzo	28.9	55.5	714.5	93.5	5.3	26.2	1.8	31.0	63.0	710.0	93.5	21.1	52.1	4.8
Molise	23.2	52.1	18.3	177.2	1.3	2.9	6.1	22.0	58.7	18.5	177.2	1.2	7.4	2.4
Campania	22.3	59.3	24.8	227.3	7.3	39.2	1.4	21.1	60.0	25.9	218.0	5.9	50.5	1.9
Puglia	25.8	70.3	7.8	114.3	7.3	27.5	2.0	23.8	69.6	8.1	122.0	8.2	44.2	2.0
Basilicata	24.4	55.5	547.9	84.9	2.4	32.8	3.9	27.1	65.2	545.6	87.4	2.3	21.4	5.1
Calabria	24.5	55.1	19.7	159.6	20.3	7.8	1.6	24.8	56.4	20.8	172.8	19.5	15.6	2.5
Sicilia	21.5	63.6	71.5	72.2	3.4	33.3	0.8	22.5	68.6	73.3	75.7	6.5	34.6	1.1
Sardegna	31.1	75.9	86.4	55.7	16.8	17.2	1.1	28.2	78.3	85.9	56.6	16.9	20.4	2.3
<b>Italia</b>	<b>31.3</b>	<b>67.1</b>	<b>93.5</b>	<b>118.8</b>	<b>14.4</b>	<b>42.8</b>	<b>2.9</b>	<b>31.1</b>	<b>68.5</b>	<b>93.6</b>	<b>122.1</b>	<b>16.2</b>	<b>51.7</b>	<b>3.6</b>

Source: <http://www3.istat.it/ambiente/contesto/infoterr/assi/asseV.xls>

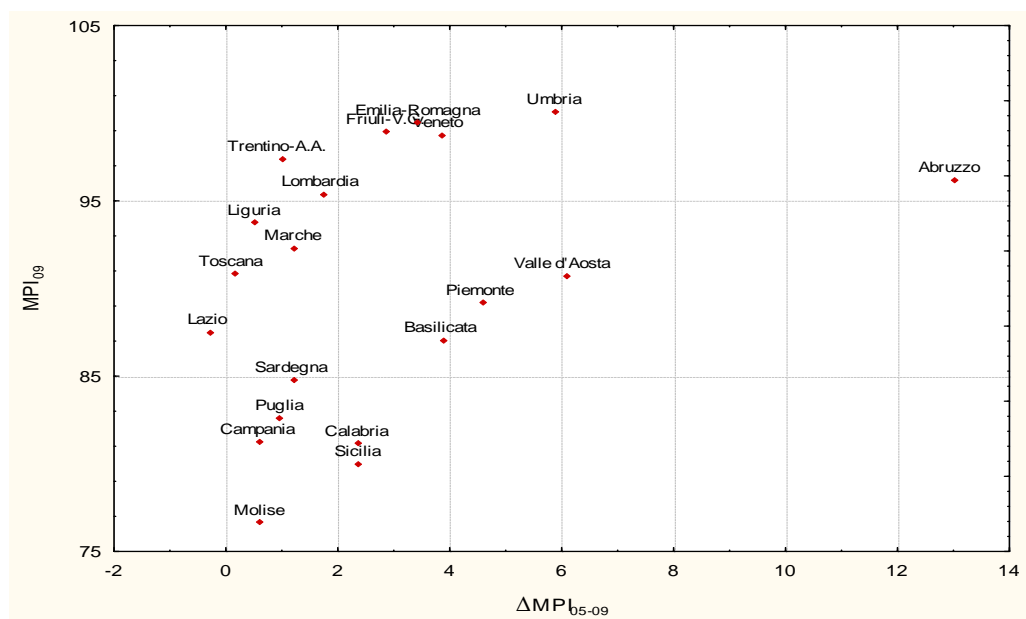
Table 2. Well-being levels and variation - Years 2005, 2009

Region	MPI <sub>05</sub>		MPI <sub>09</sub>		$\Delta$ MPI <sub>05-09</sub>	
	Value	Rank	Value	Rank	Value	Rank
Piemonte	84.68	11	89.25	12	4.56	-1
Valle d'Aosta	84.67	12	90.76	11	6.08	1
Lombardia	93.70	6	95.43	7	1.73	-1
Trentino-Alto Adige	96.47	1	97.46	5	0.98	-4
Veneto	94.96	4	98.80	4	3.84	0
Friuli-Venezia Giulia	96.13	2	98.98	3	2.85	-1
Liguria	93.31	7	93.81	8	0.50	-1
Emilia-Romagna	96.09	3	99.50	2	3.41	1
Toscana	90.76	9	90.89	10	0.13	-1
Umbria	94.27	5	100.13	1	5.86	4
Marche	91.15	8	92.36	9	1.21	-1
Lazio	87.87	10	87.56	13	-0.31	-3
Abruzzo	83.26	14	96.26	6	12.99	8
Molise	76.11	20	76.69	20	0.59	0
Campania	80.70	17	81.29	17	0.59	0
Puglia	81.75	16	82.68	16	0.93	0
Basilicata	83.25	15	87.11	14	3.86	1
Calabria	78.85	18	81.20	18	2.34	0
Sicilia	77.67	19	80.01	19	2.34	0
Sardegna	83.62	13	84.83	15	1.21	-2
<b>Italia</b>	<b>87.99</b>		<b>90.07</b>		<b>2.08</b>	

A scatterplot of MPI<sub>09</sub> against  $\Delta$ MPI<sub>05-09</sub> is shown in Figure 1. Note that the MPI<sub>09</sub> may be viewed as the 'speed' of a region, in terms of well-being, in 2009 and the  $\Delta$ MPI<sub>05-09</sub> as its 'acceleration' from 2005 to 2009. In this perspective, we may identify some group of regions by combining different bands of 'speed' and 'acceleration'.

So, for example, Trentino-Alto Adige and Lombardia have high 'speed' and low 'acceleration'; whereas Abruzzo has both high 'speed' and high 'acceleration'. Vice versa, Molise and Campania have both low 'speed' and low 'acceleration', but no region has low 'speed' and high 'acceleration'.

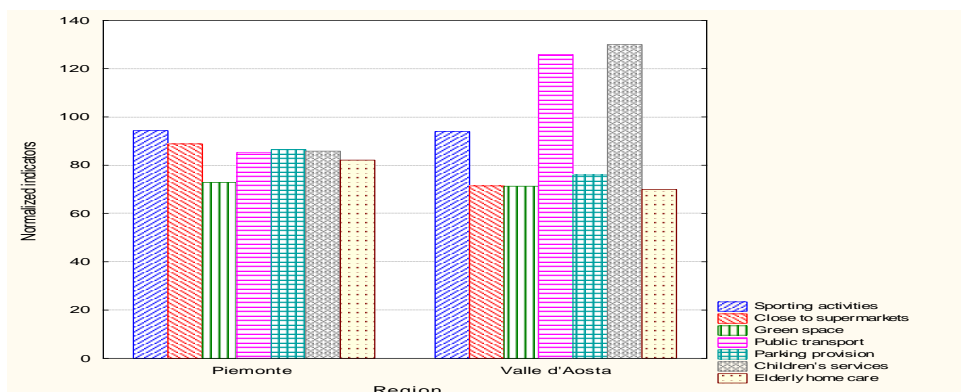
Figure 1. Comparing well-being level and variation



Finally, in order to show how the penalty of the MPI works, a comparison between the distributions of the normalized individual indicators of Piemonte and Valle d'Aosta in 2005 is displayed in Figure 2.

Piemonte has a mean value of the normalized indicators ( $M_{r_i}=85.12$ ) less than Valle d'Aosta ( $M_{r_i}=91.22$ ). Nevertheless, it has a quite balanced distribution of the values and then a very low 'penalty effect' ( $S_{r_i}cv_i=0.43$ ). On the contrary, Valle d'Aosta has an uneven well-being level across the different dimensions, resulting in a very large 'penalty effect' ( $S_{r_i}cv_i=6.55$ ). In fact, the variables "Public transport" and "Children's services" have very high values, whereas the variables "Close to supermarkets", "Green space" and "Elderly home care" have low values. Therefore, Piemonte ( $MPI=84.68$ ) gets ahead of Valle d'Aosta ( $MPI=84.67$ ), that is penalized by the MPI.

Figure 2. Comparing Piemonte and Valle d'Aosta – Year 2005



## Conclusions

Most of the socio-economic phenomena such as development, quality of life and well-being have a multidimensional nature and require the definition of a set of individual indicators in order to be properly assessed.

Often, individual indicators are summarized and a composite index is created. Producing a single composite index has advantages, such as simplicity, although a set of individual indicators might be preferable for other reasons, such as completeness of the information. However, the procedure for constructing a composite index is very far from being aseptic and requires a number of subjective decisions to be taken.

One of the main problems in order to construct composite indices is the choice of a method that allows comparisons over time.

In this paper, we propose a variant of the MPI that allows time comparisons, in a not full compensatory perspective. The new index, called adjusted MPI, is based on a re-scaling of the individual indicators in the range (70; 130), where 100 represents the 'midpoint' of the two 'goalposts' of each indicator. To assess absolute changes in performance over time, the minimum and maximum values, for each indicator, have to be found across all the considered years or alternatively may be exogenously fixed by the researcher.

The 'price' to pay for having final scores comparable in time is that individual indicators with different variability are aggregated, in contrast to the classic MPI where all the normalized indicators have a standard deviation of 10. However, normalized indicators in an identical range have much more similar variability than original ones.

The adjusted MPI may be applied to different domains without loss of comparability. For example, it is possible to compute the indices for gender and compare the values obtained with others domains.

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# STATE MANAGEMENT. AN OVERREVIEW APROACH

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**Abstract:** *It is highly common the fact that political parties in charge should decide in the name of a nation the economic and social aspects. How can the decisional process be oriented towards ensuring a consensus in order to guarantee the population's welfare? How can the politicians look beyond the party's interests or the purely electoral interests? Why should politicians want the common good of the nations that they rule, even if for a determined period? A possible answer to these questions is the induction among the politicians from the top of the state's hierarchy the idea of national managerial team, with a determinist role for economic policies' national orientations.*

**Keywords:** *governance, economy, economic growth.*

## Introduction

In order to have a sustainable economic development, it is necessary a common effort between the public and private environment, with the goal of separating the economic growth from the excessive use of resources, having as main target the increase of life quality together with the decrease of environmental risks and social deficit. The transition towards a sustainable economy implies practicing an economy that is based on policies and investments that could, in their turn, make the connection between economic development, biodiversity, ecosystem, climatic changes and the population's health and welfare on a medium and long term. These premises must be interconnected in order to obtain durable development – considered the basis of repeating the economic growth at a global level.

Adam Przeworski, a well-known professor of political science at the University of New York, appreciates that currently, democracies are facing challenges<sup>1</sup> which start from the issue of food providing and reach the problem of the answer to the population's discontent in what regards the socio-economic state, which imply the necessity of a strategy that would generate equality in the socio-economic field, make the people feel that their participation to the political life is efficacious, ensure the fact that governments do what they are supposed to do, generate an equilibrium between following the rules and the non-interference in the justice act.

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<sup>1</sup> Adam Przeworski, 2010, "Democracy and the Limits of Self-Government", Cambridge University Press, <http://voices.washingtonpost.com/political> [3] Rădulescu D.M., Rădulescu, V., Cetină, I., 2009, *Legal and ethical principles in establishing the prices of the goods and services*, Revista Metalurgia Internațional XIV, vol. XIV, nr. 3, ISSN 1582- 2214

## MATERIALS AND METHODS

In essence, the “country management” collocation derives from the rational approach of public goods, from the politicians’ election on the basis of performance criteria and civic spirit, from implementing measures of sustainable and organic economic growth. I will try to define the concept of country management from two perspectives: that of economic strategy of governance and that of political parties and doctrines.

The basic strategy resides in identifying those aspects of material, cultural and institutional situations that could influence the decision regarding who needs to be involved in a certain situation, what actions can they undergo and their costs, the results they can obtain, which is the relation between actions and results, what information must be shared, how much control the individuals can exercise, the rewards that have to be aimed at and for what combinations of actions and results<sup>2</sup>.

This strategy will have to classify that precise type of societal issues according to the origin and manner of solving: institutional issues – specific to certain governance – or structural issues, which imply the implementation of some reformation programs that would lead to the sustainable development of economy. In this regard, the most stable institutions are those that are negotiated by the various political forces, eventually leading to stability. This fact is established in a consensual manner: democracy should give equal competition chances, and the institutions should produce functioning rules that would offer stability and the possibility of ensuring welfare for all the citizens.

In this sense, I propose a dynamic model for the management (as the opposite of the governance’s structural model), that would provide the frame for understanding the nature of conflicts and the methods of solving them. Therefore, we can specify four more or less conventional frames, usually used in understanding the management process:

1. Considering a balance between legitimacy and efficiency;
2. Achieving the equality between the theory of leadership and research;
3. Considering the organizations as both formal structures and informal processes;
4. Considering the differences between the bureaucratic and the professional differences.

## RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

In order to ensure the maximization of the citizens’ welfare there is the need to assume a certain consensus towards the act of redistributing the public incomes. First of all, which is the modality by means of which one can assure that these public incomes grow? We need her to define an objective of the governance: the establishment of a stimulating fiscal policy for the business environment that would encourage labor and acknowledge the necessity of assuming social responsibility by each citizen.

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<sup>2</sup> Elinor Ostrom, 2007, *Guvernarea bunurilor comune. Evoluția instituțiilor pentru acțiunea colectivă*, Ed. Polirom, Iași

Therefore, if we would understand economies as potential “growth mechanisms”<sup>3</sup> that need fuel in order to function, but also the agreement of both parts or primary components, so that it would promote in the most efficient manner entrepreneurship, innovation and economic growth, we could consider that the role of country management would be precisely the identification of the path by means of which the fruit of these economies would translate into welfare for all of us, provided the condition that the flux of incomes reaching the state through the taxation system is correct and equitably managed.

The “fuel” of an economy is represented by the right set of macroeconomic policies: mainly prudent fiscal and monetary policies, in order to maintain the low and relatively stable inflation and for preventing the long term diminishing of the economic activity to affect the economic growth<sup>4</sup>. In order to achieve these goals, it is required an institutional support by means of which economy would become sustainable and generate welfare:

- Public institutions must reward the entrepreneurial activity with social value, hence we cannot expect that individuals would risk their money and time in affairs that could end badly;
- Governmental institutions must discourage those activities that tend to divide the economic area, rather than extend it, through proliferating some disloyal and even illegal economic practices;
- Governmental institutions must be sure that both the successful entrepreneurs and the big companies continue to have stimuli for innovation and development.

### **Economic sustainability directions**

By means of durable development (growth) we understand that ethical-economical rationality that ensures the preservation of the human society’s existential conditions, on an indefinite period of time, at the level of the entire natural economic and social space accessed in the future<sup>5</sup>. By means of actions centered on human development and entrepreneurial spirit, the society will ensure for itself a potential of generating some rational economic behaviors, based on the efficient use of resources, on acknowledging the danger of using all the available resources, and implicitly the possibility of extending the market. The economic process must be based on the reproducing capacity of some preexisting economic factors, with limited usability duration, which implies taking into consideration a limited ecologic capital stock.

The problem of economy is how it is going to potentiate this ecologic capital stock. In this sense, it is taken into consideration the process of producing and

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<sup>3</sup> William Baumol, Robert E. Litan, Carl J. Schramm, 2009, *Capitalism bun, capitalism rău și economia dezvoltării și a prosperității*, Ed. Polirom, Iași

<sup>4</sup> Dinga Emil, 2009, *Studii de economie. Contribuții de analiză logică, epistemologică și metodologică*, Ed. Economică, București

<sup>5</sup> Cofas Elena, 2013, *Objectives And Requirements Relating To The Sustainability Of Romanian Agricultural Production*, Simpozionul Științific Internațional „Managementul Dezvoltării Rurale Durabile”, Facultatea de Management, Timișoara, Lucrări Științifice, Seria I, Vol XV (1)

distributing the incomes in order to sustain the actions of producing economic welfare. There will be taken into consideration the following:

- The production of economic goods allotted through the market, desiring the intensive utilization of economic resources;
- Defining the term “decent” and identifying those limits that would allow the preservation of some expected levels of economic utility at the various fluctuations of the income’s level;
- Generating economic incomes that would ensure the premises of a decent life level;
- Imposing a specific institutional measure of the income generated by the taxation levels;
- The supportability degree of the private system’s economy that generates taxable incomes from productive activities, of the passive, productive beneficiaries. It is taken into account the fact that the sustainable development of economic resources implies the process of training in the economic activity of all the work resources, generating an active, creative and participative behavior.
- The transferability of economic resources, inclusively at the level of the local economy, which implies approaching the economy on the principle of relative advantages, the efficient use of the productive potential, the increase of the complementarities degree between economic regions, the stability of market relations strictly on competitiveness criteria.

### **The economic governance strategy**

Traditionally, the state is responsible for the production and distribution of public goods. The state, in exchange for some financial transfers under the form of taxes, can realize public goods that would lead to the growth of the citizens’ welfare level. We try to eliminate the population collocation, as we will use citizens<sup>6</sup>, although in our opinion, the right one would be people<sup>7</sup>. It is clear that an individual’s citizen attribute refers to his institutional relation, to the action by means of which the state convince him to accept a form of institutional collaboration and to be a correct player in his relation to the state. The characteristics of a people, the extent to which it is a passive or active receptor of the state’s actions, can analyze the politics/government’s involvement degree in the act of an efficient allotment of public goods in order to increase the citizens’ welfare. The issue consists in the process of measuring the results of the governing act in terms of welfare for the citizens.

The life environment is the only quasi-unlimited provider of material elements that are extremely important to the existence of the human being, as well as the only source of contacts and emotions that are part of the biological quintessence of human being<sup>8</sup>. From this point of view, the natural component

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<sup>6</sup> Diana Apostol, 2011, *Perspectivale Noii Economii. Incidente asupra României*, ASE (PhD thesis)

<sup>7</sup> Adam Przeworski, 2010, “*Democracy and the Limits of Self-Government*”, Cambridge University Press, <http://voices.washingtonpost.com/political>

<sup>8</sup> Rădulescu D.M., Rădulescu, V., Cetină, I., 2009, *Legal and ethical principles in establishing the prices of the goods and services*, Revista Metalurgia Internațional XIV, vol. XIV, nr. 3, ISSN 1582- 2214

has an importance that must be highly recognized and respected. On the other hand, the artificial component of the life environment is also very powerful, whose favoring – in the detriment of natural environment – has been the source of the major disequilibrium registered today at the scale of the planetary ecosphere.

Continuing to decompose on elements the people’s life environment, these elements can be associated in three groups:

Table 1: Components of human life environment

<b>A. natural environment (NE)</b>	1. richness and biological diversity of natural environment (NER), 2. aesthetic satisfactions and comfort provided by natural environment (NEC), 3. scientific developments determined by the natural environment (NES) $NE=NER+NEC+NES$
<b>B. anthropized environment (AE)</b>	1. the richness of useful artefacts created by man (RAE), 2. aesthetic satisfactions and comfort offered by the anthropized environment (CAE), 3. scientific developments related to the anthropized environment (SAE) $AE=RAE+CAE+SAE$
<b>C. social environment (SE)</b>	1. the richness of social relations in which the human being integrates (RSE), 2. the comfort and security degree offered by the social environment (CSE), 3. scientific developments related to the social environment (SSE) $SE=RSE+CSE+SSE$

The analogy between state’s rulers and entrepreneurs made us believe in the “country management” concept. Elinor Ostrom, who in October 2009, became the first woman to receive a Nobel Prize for Economy (together with Oliver E. Williamson), “for her analysis regarding the governance and economic cooperation” developed this analogy, appreciating that the efficiency of the public goods’ governance resides in their management using users associations. Therefore, leaders, as well as entrepreneurs, appropriate the surpluses.

The citizens, as well as the agents, could do better if they accept the coercion exerted by the leaders. If the efforts are successful, the leader appropriates a substantial part of the surplus<sup>9</sup>. In this case, there isn’t a mechanism that would resemble the market competition and that would exert over the leader the pressure of developing efficient institutions. He could confront rebellions, if the measures that he will choose would be too oppressed; this fact will consume

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<sup>9</sup> Pascu, Emilia, P.S. Nedea, and O.M. Milea, “Promoting Healthy Principles for Sustainable Development”, *SGEM2012 Conference Proceedings*, June 17-23, Vol. 4, 2012.

according to the people's reaction capacity.

In the case of the leader, the surplus will appear from the taxation of economic goods produced in the real economy, the coercion being the taxation rate that equals an institutional measure of adjusting the profit, respectively the surplus.

The dualist approach between the firm's theory and the state's theory implies that the task of organizing collective actions belongs to a single individual, whose incomes are directly related to the produced surplus. Both theories imply the existence of a person from the exterior, who would assume the fundamental responsibility of executing the required changes inside the framework of the existing institutional rules in order to coordinate the activities. The entrepreneur or the leader must take a credible commitment of punishing anyone who does not follow the firm's or state's rules. As they are the ones to keep the surpluses, it is their interest to punish this disobedience when they are confronting this aspect. Consequently, their threats according to which they would apply sanctions become credible. Moreover, it is in their interest to monitor the previous agreements<sup>10</sup>.

Who and what part does this person from the outside play, according to Elinor Ostrom? The need of an self-organized and self-managed collective action has as premise the fact that individuals cannot organize themselves, but they always need authorities from the outside to do this in their place, which strengthens the conviction that it is good to develop a regulation authority or that, for monitoring or implementing the auto-negotiated contracts, it is required a secure juridical system.

In the specialty literature there are theories that sustain the fact that the common management of public goods is most of the times doomed to fail. This fact indicates the necessity of privatizing the common goods in order to determine an individual or an institution that would be able to obtain a result from an action on the goods and, in a contrary case, could be submitted to a coercion process. Both the economic analysis of the resources placed in common property and Hardin's theory on common goods' tragedy<sup>11</sup> made Robert J. Smith suggest that the only manner to avoid the tragedy of common goods is to end up the common property system by creating a system of rights over the private property<sup>12</sup>. Smith underlined the fact that when we consider a resource to be in common property, we become stuck in an inexorable process of destroying it. Welch stated that the privatization of common goods represents the optimal solution for all the problems that they generate. His main preoccupation was how to impose the private property rights when those who were using a common good weren't disposed to switch from common rights to private rights.

Therefore, in Elinor Ostrom's opinion, the only way of solving the problem of common goods is by means of X. The content of X is extremely variable: either a central authority that would assume the constant responsibility of taking unitary

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<sup>10</sup> Elinor Ostrom, 2007, *Guvernarea bunurilor comune. Evoluția instituțiilor pentru acțiunea colectivă*, Ed. Polirom, Iași.

<sup>11</sup> Idem.

<sup>12</sup> Ibidem.

decisions (the centralization of the decisional system) or a central authority that first has to allot property rights and only then allow the individuals to follow their own interests in the limit of well -established property rights (privatization). In both cases, the institutional change must come from outside and must be imposed to the individuals involved. If we talk about common public goods, the solution of privatization is feasible as it allows the individuals to obtain very good results<sup>13</sup>. When referring to institutions and who should “produce” their efficiency, we could define our “country management” concept as that technocrat or political party affiliated entity, nationally established, with regional or local ramifications, which militates for guaranteeing an optimal institutional frame for realizing common socio-economic activities and not only, necessary for ensuring and increasing the citizens’ welfare.

A “wise/efficient” country management uses the so gained resources (by means of taxing the economic goods created inside an economy and the consume of the economy’s subjects) in order to increase the general level of the economic and social welfare (creating public expenses through redistributing the state’s incomes) sufficiently enough so that it could increase the income tax (in fact, through increasing the chargeable base in the conditions in which economy is currently developing as a result of the business environment’s competitiveness) and reduce the use of coercion (which would consist of the impossibility of the access to public goods, respectively the lack of living possibilities for the individual and his family).

We can identify many attributions belonging to country management, residing from the need of ensuring and generating welfare and sustainable development for an economy, in the context of generalizing the penury/precarious state of economic resources.

Hence, we take into consideration:

- Attributions necessary for human development’s sustainability
- Attributions necessary for ensuring the economic sustainable increase
- Attributions necessary for reaching prosperity in an economy based on knowledge
- Attributions necessary for ensuring the individual’s and the community’s security
- Attributions necessary in order to transmit the manner of understanding the significance of the predominant economic system, that would also be eligible for ensuring democracy and welfare

### **Responsibility**

Perhaps the most important characteristic of the “country management” concept is assuming the responsibility of the decisional factor, regardless the level, and the introduction of a system for measuring the results after establishing the

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<sup>13</sup> Diana Apostol, 2011, *Perspectivetele Noii Economii. Incidente asupra României*, ASE (PhD thesis)



action plan on a determined period of time<sup>14</sup>. In this sense, there are statistical indicators of assessing the factor's accomplishment degree, as it follows:

- The coefficient of the plan duty:  $k_{pl/o} = x_{pl}/x_o$
- The coefficient of accomplishing the plan:  $k_1/pl = x_1/x_{pl}$
- The dynamics coefficient:  $k_1/o = x_1/x_o$

These indicators highlight the relation between the established objectives and what has been achieved in reality. This relation is important as the public policy decisional factor, just like a company's manager, will take into account only those objectives that are achievable with the resources available at a specific time, and with those that can be attracted in the analysis interval, in order to achieve some results that are opportune for the citizens, the consumers of public policies. More exactly, those who have the power to decide will become more responsible only when the results will become quantifiable. This analysis also takes into consideration the utility of economic policy measures reflected in the economy by means of monetary-fiscal tools (the monetary policy interest's rate, the imposition rate, the rate of exchange, public incomes, public expenses etc.) which influence in a decisive manner the consumer's behavior. This will purchase/consume a public good generated as a result of the implementation of an institutional policy measure in the case in which the marginal utility of the public good (the additional satisfaction resulted from consuming an additional unit from the public good's sphere) will surpass the paid price for purchasing/consuming the public good. In the contrary case, he will not purchase this good or will become a clandestine consumer<sup>15</sup>.

It is necessary for those taking the decisions in what regards the public policies to adopt a rational economic behavior, based on efficiency indicators in using the resources, belonging to the "maximizing the useful effects and minimizing the consume" type<sup>16</sup>, being necessary to take any kind of public policy decision that would have the lowest opportunity cost.

In essence, we refer to a new vision of the state, of the state's role in generating stimuli for creating and preserving richness<sup>17</sup>. Why richness? How will be richness used in what regards the human growth and development, the individuals' and the community's socio-economic welfare or a sustainable economic development? The initial problem is that of defining correctly the richness and the factors which compete when it comes to preserving and increasing the richness and the sustainability concept. What does it contributes to the transformation of richness into sustainable development? Can we talk about richness at the level of the community, state, without favoring human development? What is necessary and sufficient for ensuring a compatibility level

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<sup>14</sup> Irina Nicolau, Adina Musetescu, Doina Maria Tilea, 2010, *The innovation process – imperative for the companies' development*, International Scientific Conference ECO-TREND 2010, VII<sup>th</sup> Edition, ISBN: 978-973-144-409-3, Ed. Academica Brancusi, Tg. Jiu.

<sup>15</sup> Holcombe Randall G., *Public Sector Economic*, Wadsworth Publishing Company, California 1998;

<sup>16</sup> Dinga Emil, 2009, *Studii de economie. Contribuții de analiză logică, epistemologică și metodologică*, Ed. Economică, București.

<sup>17</sup> Adam Przeworski, 2010, *"Democracy and the Limits of Self-Government"*, Cambridge University Press, <http://voices.washingtonpost.com/political>

between the human synergies in order to generate human development models or schemes? Is it possible a human development model without prejudicing individuality and free will?<sup>18</sup>

All these questions will find a kind of answer or solutions with a certain realization probability degree in the conditions in which it can be built a model of sustainable development based on existent and potential economic resources, state's support, entrepreneurial motivation, the functionality of business environment based on the market's functionality, ethical principles at a societal level or social responsibility.

### **Why do we need a new vision over the concept of governance?**

In essence, we refer to a new vision over the state, the state's role in generating stimuli for creating and preserving richness. Why richness? How will richness be used in what regards the human growth and development or the individuals' and the community's socio-economic welfare?

The initial problem is that of correctly defining richness and the factors that compete towards the conservation and increase of richness, respectively the concept of sustainability. What are the elements that contribute to transforming richness into sustainable development? Can we talk about richness at various levels – community, state – without favoring human development? What is it necessary and sufficient for ensuring a compatibility level between human synergies in order to generate human development models or schemes? Is it possible a human development model without prejudicing individuality and free will?

All these questions will find a kind of answer or solutions with a certain degree of realization probability in the conditions in which it is being built a sustainable development model based on economic resources – existent and potential –, state's support, entrepreneurial motivation, business environment's functionality based on market's functionality, ethical principles at a societal level or social responsibility.

### **CONCLUSIONS**

This paper looks at a certain plea towards the state's reconfiguration on the institutional market, considering valid the hypothesis according to which the state and the market are two institutions that do not exclude each other, are competitive and complementary. This is the perspective from which we must analyze the state's institution in the context of the lost of confidence in this institutions from the part of economic agents, consumers and employees, assisted persons, as a result of the growth of the failure degree commensured through bankruptcies, decrease of the purchasing power, unemployment, reductions of pensions and other forms of social assistance.

Another side of the "state's institution's problem" is the issue of registering some limits in relation to the wealth stimulation possibilities, respectively

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<sup>18</sup> Cosmin Stoica, 2013, *The Role of Economist in Economic Life*, Vol. 2, No. 2 ISSN: 2226-3624 49 [www.hrmar.com](http://www.hrmar.com)

ensuring sustainability on a medium and long term. The management of some big social problems, meaning that of the social costs resulted from implementing unhealthy and unsustainable public policies, does not represent anymore an item of the state in its current form. The modern state must acknowledge the limits of economic growth, social problems generated by the global ageing of population, the rarity of conventional resources, mutations on the map of geopolitical resources and the appearance of some economic power poles, the limits of the globalization process with perverse effect at a social level.

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Stoica Cosmin, (2013), *The Role of Economist in Economic Life*, Vol. 2, No. 2 ISSN: 2226-3624 49 [www.hrmars.com](http://www.hrmars.com)

# THE FORGOTTEN ISSUE: CUSTOMERS' MORAL DUTY

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**Abstract:** *The paper attempts to restate what seems to be a forgotten issue for business ethics experts: consumers' moral responsibilities and duties. The main point is that trade relationships on the market should be linked to what the author calls "mutual morality". This new concept grasps together both sides of an economic transaction, i. e. seller and customer. In order to better specify this concept, the author refers to four principles that shape customer's moral duty: moral trade, moral acquisition, non-coercion, and moral consumption.*

**Keywords:** *mutual morality, consumers' duty, direct responsibility, associative responsibility, ethical motivation.*

Whenever it comes to customers – mainly individual ones – business ethics scholars refer almost exclusively to rights. Even if one speaks about customers' obligations, it all comes about their obligation not to allow sellers or producers to break juridical or moral laws<sup>1</sup>. It seems, although strange, that sellers and producers have obligations, and customers have rights. Scientific papers or treatises never utter just one word (with some minor exceptions) about customers' moral duty. It seems that, since the power belongs to producers and sellers, ethics is an instrument to limit their power. Customers are merely weak and poor victims of the powerful producers and sellers, and they are supposed to be protected<sup>2</sup>. This is even a common place within philosophy of economics, often expressed through the principle *caveat vendor*<sup>3</sup>. In the present paper we intend to challenge not a perspective or a hypothesis, but this annoying silence regarding customers' moral duty.

Just as producers and sellers are humans (or associations of humans), so are customers. Just as producers and sellers have legal obligations, so do customers.

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<sup>1</sup> This is the famous concept of "ethical consumption". See also Macoviciuc, Morar, Crăciun [2005], p. 481.

<sup>2</sup> Cf. Macoviciuc, Morar, Crăciun [2005], p. 451 sqq.

<sup>3</sup> See William H. Shaw [2011], p. 213. This principle springs from the idea that consumers lack the necessary experience for evaluating a product.

And, by analogy, just as sellers and producers have moral duties, so do customers. Now, if there is a moral duty of a producer or seller towards society, so there is one for the customer. If sellers and producers have a moral duty towards customers, so do customers have a moral duty towards sellers and producers. As a starting point, we have to say that everybody seems to consider themselves perfectly entitled to accept customers' ongoing search for advantages (smaller prices for better quality a. s. o.), but people seem to be outraged when sellers and producers do the same and willing to issue more and more laws (either juridical, or moral) in an attempt to stop them from succeeding. We might as well wonder why, since both customers and sellers or producers are economic agents in search for profit. Why shouldn't they be treated the same? They are all searching for a better life. But this "better life" must not be an excuse for hurting other people; for none of them, nomatter their economic statute as customers, or sellers, or producers. Given these remarks, we are able to state our **thesis**: all economic agents – customers included – have moral duties towards one another, and these moral duties stop them for searching for a better life regardless of the effects that this search has upon others; customers should not be exempted from any moral obligations, nomatter their type.

### **A Sophism of Business Ethics**

What exactly is a customer? A customer is a person (or group of persons) that buys some goods and/or services from a seller. If there is a business ethics at all, then one deals here with a relation between two moral agents. What does business ethics tell us? It tell us that, whenever an exchange relation is at stake, not only profit, but also moral imperatives hold the floor. In theory, this seems to be absolutely sound. When it comes to reality, things change. And here comes the sophism: ethical obligations belong only to the seller<sup>4</sup>, even if the customer is a moral agent, too.. The seller is the only person that has to make sure his/her actions are not aimed towards profit only. Although they are both – customer and seller – economic entities that tend to gain the best advantage in exchange for the lower cost, only the seller seems to have his actions limited by moral duties. There is no problem with the buyer trying to gain a better advantage – or, at least, none that business ethics specialists seem to talk about. In order to better understand this sophism and to see it is no mere cheap talk, one must take into account a moral distinction.

### **Two Types of Responsibility**

Moral responsibility, as all people understand it, seems to be related to the consequences of one's deeds. If either by action, or by refraining from acting, one generates an effect, he/she is morally responsible for it. This distinction, however, is of no use when it comes to seller-customer ethical relation. Sellers have to make sure that they treat customers with fairness, and this comes in two ways. A specific argument is now useful: it is a seller's moral obligation to inform the buyer about

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<sup>4</sup> For instance, in an insightful article, Thomas Donaldson clearly states that consumers' rights ar of the highest importance. He never utters a word about consumers' duties. See Thomas Donaldson [2003], p. 122-123.

the characteristics of the product. If the seller fails to do so, and some effects emerge because of the fact that the customer was not informed by the seller, the seller is morally (and, sometimes, even legally) responsible. The argument can also go the other way around: it is the seller's moral duty to hide some characteristics of the product (for instance, one should not tell children how to make fire using certain types of cola beverages and some old batteries – assuming this was possible). When it comes to customers, moral duties seem less restrictive. The customer must simply make sure that the product was not obtained in a morally debatable manner. There seems to be something missing here. This is where the distinction arises.

**Direct responsibility** is in question whenever actions or lack of acting generates some effects. **Associative responsibility**, on the other hand, is in question whenever one fails to sanction somebody else's action. Direct responsibility seems to be related to sellers. Associative responsibility seems to be related to both sellers and customers. But what happened with **customer's direct responsibility**? There is a direct responsibility of the seller towards society. Then, there must be a direct responsibility of the customer towards society, also. There is a direct responsibility of the seller towards the customer. Then, there must be a direct responsibility of the customer towards the seller, also. And thing could go on and on. Whenever one refers to sellers' moral duties, one must also refer to customers' moral duties<sup>5</sup>. Alas, this hardly ever happens!

### **General Overview of Direct and Associative Moral Responsibility**

Now, there are some issues that hold the floor when it comes to this distinction. The first one refers to that "core" of market economy, which is called **competition**. There is – and no doubts are allowed here – a harsh competition on the market among sellers. And we are not saying that there should not be. But, imagine the general context: customers always use this in order to put pressure on sellers. Sellers must always reduce costs, fight among themselves for a bigger piece of the market – not just for the sake of profits, but often for the sake of surviving on the market; remember there are family businesses that are aimed to provide food and education resources for children –, attract customers, a. s. o. But there is no competition among customers, although they are still economic agents that aim towards increasing their benefits. Maybe we can mention here some exceptions: public auctions, for instance. But these are hardly a model for economy. Should there be competition among customers? We cannot tell. But we sure can say that, if it were, sellers should not try to take advantage of it, because of moral issues arising. Then why not ask the same question when customers have the advantage of sellers fighting for them? One answer could be that competition among sellers generates progress. But it also generates manipulation – as sellers would try to improve their image or even convince customers to buy things they do not really need, thus creating what customers and media might call "fake needs" – and unemployment, since reducing costs is important for sellers and producers,

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<sup>5</sup> In a very persuasive paper, Göran Svensson and Greg Wood state that society has expectations from all its citizens. But throughout his paper they refer only to corporations and state institutions. Not a word about customers! See Svensson and Wood [2007], p. 305 sqq.

also. It can generate pollution – due to continuous attempts of sellers to reduce costs, and even more unemployment, if companies that do not resist on the market should go bankrupt. So, economic disadvantages. Still, leaving aside the economic issues, we surely can say that **it is not morally right to take advantage of a dominant position on the market, although this could be economically productive.**

Secondly, it is all about **loyalty**, when it comes to customers<sup>6</sup>. This is an entirely moral concept, but customers seem to find a way of turning it economically. Sellers seem to be engaged into a never ending fight on the market. So, they should continuously look for better market strategies. One of them is offering more for the same price, or lowering the price for the same product. Of course, there is always the best situation, i. e. offering more for less money. Whether this is efficient or not, we cannot tell: it depends on the market conditions. The difficulty arises when customers take this as an obligation of the sellers or producers. And they learn to live with the idea that they are entitled to receive bonuses, otherwise they will choose another seller. This is a moral issue, since customers are not entitled to receive more for less money. There is a short story that could function as an example:

Once upon a time, there was a businessman that came to a little town and opened a business. In order to be accepted in that community, he decided to pay each family 200\$ per month. Years passed, the business was doing fine, and everybody shared a piece of benefits. When the businessman's children grew up, he wanted to send them to college. For that, he needed money. So, he decided to reduce the amount of money for each family to just 100\$. The town hall was immediately invaded by enraged citizens that asked the mayor to throw that businessman out of the town. Their argument was as follows: "Ok, he needs money to send his kids to college. But why take this money from us?". We believe that this might happen when customers come to believe that they are entitled to receive something that was, in fact, a mere gift<sup>7</sup>.

Thirdly, there is always talk about **social assistance** for the more unfavoured people. Unemployed people and also some other social categories should benefit for it, and this is a moral duty of the society towards them. But what happens to entrepreneurs? With people that show initiative, develop a business, but, at a certain moment in time, are unlucky and go bankrupt? They have proved their worth to society. They opened a business, payed taxes from which hot meals for unemployed people were paid for, they gave people jobs a. s. o. If they go bankrupt, should they get a second chance? And we do not speak here about them receiving the same. If they have proved their worth to society and contributed to social welfare, then, if they go bankrupt, they should receive money to start other business. Because they deserve it. They were usefull to society and

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<sup>6</sup> There is little talk about customers' loyalty as a moral obligation. Usually, loyalty is associated with the issue of employees. See Macoviciuc, Morar, Crăciun [2005], p. 513 sqq.

<sup>7</sup> There is a very interesting point here made by O. C. Ferrell, John Fraedrich, and Linda Ferrell. They refer to four types of responsibility: legal, economic, moral and philanthropic. The one we have mentioned seems to belong to the fourth category. See Ferrell, Fraederich, and Ferrell, [2011], p. 39.

now, when they have difficulties, society should help them get back on the track – it seems fair from a moral point of view.

All these – and the list could go on – entitle us to state a general feature of morality in business: **mutuality**. Thus, we refer to a **mutual morality**. Whatever duties there are for some economic agents (sellers), one should apply them for others (customers). Let us now state how this should look in reality.

### **Consumers' Duty towards Sellers**

The ethics of the customers must take into account some direct responsibilities also. Customers are not supposed to be exempted from direct moral responsibility. Descending into reality, this could look as follows:

1. Customers have the moral duty to be loyal to their seller. The loyalty duty can be broken only if the seller proves unwilling to make all efforts to improve the products, without exceeding its economic capabilities. We can call this the **moral trade** principle.

2. Directly connected to the previous one is the next one: customers are morally obliged not to abandon a seller when he/she has economic difficulties. To put it another way: customers have a moral obligation to buy from the seller in order to help him/her to regain economic power, if the seller proved worthy of their trust, i. e. if the seller did all in his/her power not to go bankrupt and if he/she always tried to improve products. We can call this **moral acquisition** principle.

3. Customers should never try to take advantage of their dominant position on the market and put pressure on a seller, if, along time, seller proved itself worthy of trust. We can call this principle the **moral non-coercion** principle.

4. Customers should not expect to be rewarded for acting in a morally correct manner. All bonuses should be taken as gifts, not as something consumers are entitled to. Customers should not change their sellers in exchange for higher benefits, if the seller proved worthy of trust, i. e. if the seller always had a morally correct price policy. We could call this the **moral consumption** principle.

We believe that these four principles would establish a better business environment and re-establish the mutual trust among buyers and sellers. We believe that trust that is obtained by “bribing” the customer with bonuses merely viciates the business environment. Both sellers and customers have direct and associative moral duties. But there are also economical advantages of applying these principles.

### **Economic Advantages of Customers' Ethics**

First of all, one can refer to the **economic benefit of resources utilization**. If customers would be reluctant to accept all types of bonuses – from which a lot are useless – and change sellers “on a daily basis”, this might reduce, on the long term, the pressure on human resource. In order to have a decent place on the market, sellers have to reduce costs. This can be achieved mostly by a better use of resources. Non-human resources have physical or technical limits – for instance, there are only a few types of motors with specific yields and one cannot make a better gasoline; a motor with 100% percent yield is rather unplausible to



exist, but if it did, it could not be improved unless one can find a way of creating energy out of nothingness. Thus, trying to improve the return of non-human resources would be unproductive. Therefore, if there is an economic pressure on the sellers, they would instead turn towards human resources. Better use of these resources, on the long run, could cause the apparition of “workaholics” and unemployment. Thus, if the seller proves itself worthy of trust, i. e. if the seller does everything in his/her power to improve the return of non-human resources, then no pressure should arise from the customer. This might as well be called **ethical motivation**, and it could successfully replace **economic motivation**<sup>8</sup>. Ethical motivation is based on cooperation, while economic motivation is based on conflict. Ethical motivation springs from the desire to improve, economic motivation springs from the fear of being eliminated from the market.

The second advantage refers to the **elimination of fake benefits**. Too often are the customers “fooled” by advantages that are, in fact, useless, but are forged by sellers in order to resist to the market pressure. If this type of advantages would be ignored by the customers, sellers and producers would strive to find improvements of products that are really usefull. It is, of course, obvious that this would generate a real progress, connected to real social needs, and besides, it will stop the waste of resources on improvments that are really fast proved to be fake or useless. Due to the fact that sellers and producers have to resist on the market, they often create some fake benefits and then try to impose a “fake need” on the market<sup>9</sup>. Here we find one source of manipulative marketing – since one needs to manipulate customers in order to convince them to buy useless stuff. If competition turns into a perpetual fight for existence, then the business environment turns into a jungle where all weapons are allowed. Unfortunately, law is always behind the economy and people always find ways to elude the law. In order to block unfair and manipulative marketing, judges and authorities must make a long trip. Whenever they succeed in stopping questionable practices, it is often too late. An environment where sellers are not threatened with extinction might just solve some of the problems. Of course, sellers that are not morally reliable should get eliminated from the market.

### **Customers’ Moral Duty: Local or Global?**

There is at least one more thing that should be taken into account, when it comes to customers’ moral duty. Is it local or global? If placed at a local level, this could easily lead to protectionism. Thus, we must state that protectionism is fair as long as it is a moral one, and not a juridical one. If one community needs to protect itself from the outer competition, it may make some recommendations regarding the consumption. Members should take into account the fact that the community needs to survive, therefore they should prefer local sellers and

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<sup>8</sup> It is important to understand that, in nowadays society, one cannot say that the only goal of an enterprise is to increase profits. So, economic motivation, as a single tool of progress, is no longer enough. See Kenneth R. Andrews, 2003, p. 82-83.

<sup>9</sup> Often, people think that advertising is about imposing “fake needs” on the market. The expectations of customers are, thus, altered. Often, this results in disappointment. See William H. Shaw, 2011, p. 234 sqq.

producers, even if they should accept a lower quality of the products. The point is that the burden of resisting on the market should be shared. We could call this the **burden share imperative**. Of course, all people should be morally trustworthy, meaning that customers should help the local economy by buying local products and sellers and producers should make all efforts to improve the quality of products.

Anyway, this local application can turn global, at the point when, at a global level, sellers and buyers are not threatened with extinction any more. If a local economy is strong enough to resist outer competition, it no longer needs support from the locals; therefore, it is a “grown-up” economy that could engage in competition with others. Of course, this could mean that global economy has reached a certain level of evolution, in which sellers and producers, and also customers, have also reached a certain level of economic and moral adulthood.

When it goes global, customers’ moral duty is no longer related to burden share principle. Sellers and customers are engaged in morally shaped economic exchanges. The share of the burden must be applied in order to protect those that could not resist the market conditions otherwise. The model is that of human education: a person is raised by his/her parents until reaching adulthood. Adulthood means telling right from wrong, i. e. having a moral capacity (and also juridical capacity) to manage the facts of life. When this moral criteria is met, the person is “leaving the nest”<sup>10</sup>.

Therefore, moving from local to global can be considered a moral evolution of the economic and business environment. The point is to teach both sellers and customers to behave in a moral manner and not to allow them to engage in bloody fights for a larger market share, hoping that, some happy day, they will understand that cooperation, and not conflict, is the key to solve problems.

Instead of a conclusion, we might say that completing the debates around companies’ social and moral responsibilities with a discussion about customers’ moral duties seems to offer some solutions for some main economic issues. The way that business ethics has to offer is that of an economy based on mutual morality. This concept, directly drawn from that of customers’ moral duty, is aimed to eliminate the idea that sellers and producers are bloodthirsty sharks and customers are powerless victims; they are all economic agents endowed with moral responsibilities towards one another and towards society.

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<sup>10</sup> We link our perspective to that of Joseph L. Badaracco, Jr. who, in an excellent paper, considers that business is also about building character. Unfortunately, he refers mainly to managers. We should say that building customers’ character through business methods is an important issue, also. See Joseph L. Badaracco, Jr. [2003], p. 140 sqq.

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## DOSTOEVSKY'S *DOUBLE* AND *UNDERGROUND* WORLD (II)

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**Abstract:** *The study examines the criticism operated by Dobrolyubov to early Dostoevsky's work. Russian critic does not understand the profound original character of the novels and short stories written by Dostoevsky, he does not want to understand that Dostoevsky's art cannot be understood through his criteria of analysis, namely the ones specific to the paradigm of literary realism. The aesthetics is confused at him with the description of the poor folk's life, of the suffering of the people, of the common life. Everything that does not fit this aesthetic and literary canon is a failure in terms of art. But this is not the way to understand Dostoevsky's work. The Double is a visual drama, full of dark humour, in which the central character sees in doubling a solution to his unhappiness. Finally, instead of long dreamed happiness, the double bring with him despair and death.*

**Keywords:** *the idea of double, tragic humor, visual drama.*

### 1. Dobroliubov

In his article *Downtrodden People* published on the early '70 of the XIX century, Dobrolyubov makes a real reconstitution of the Dostoevsky's work, analyzing in detail both the novels of this fabulous debutant whose fame faded then from less known reasons and also his role within the frame of contemporaneous writing's world. Thus, from the beginning it must be observed that are covered two levels: the first one is referred exclusively to Dostoevsky and his opera while the second regards generally the writer's role in society and what functions it must accomplish within the human society he belongs to. It can be observed therefore the „thesis” character of this analysis; the critic tends to constantly sacrifice the opera and the analyzed writer in favour of the “thesis”, of the central embraced idea which it sustains/claims that is the only one able to validate the artistic character of a work.

The critic's exigency to reduce the work of art to an idea that is not by default contained by it but to which it must be complied leads to an easy/slightly distancing; Dobrolyubov leaves the sensation that he wants to liberate himself from the admiration shadow that he tried for Dostoevsky some years before and now to discuss his work from a different position, somehow more sober and more severe. It seems that he's imposing him this tone not to reconsider his position, but to shade it. He doesn't want to forget/to erase that moment from his youth when he's read with so much interest the debut novel of Dostoevsky, *Poor Folk*, but on a contrary, to remind himself what a special place this writer has occupied

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in the hearts of young people of his generation. And this self-constraint and the adopted tone testify the Dobrolyubov's weakness for Dostoevsky; this weakness is not nearly a sign of a secret friendship, but the echo of an old admiration, despite the divergent positions of those two and their radically different convictions; from this perspective the honesty of Dobrolyubov's critical approach is guaranteed.

Dobrolyubov's paper is published on 1861, 15 years after Dostoevsky's debut. His analysis is focused in main on the novel *Humiliated and Insulted*, recently published, but approach – and not only in passing – also the first period of Dostoevsky's creation that precedes his arrest and deportation to Siberia. Dobrolyubov find that there can be raised many arguments against the writer, intended to contest his value and specially the privileged position of brilliant successor of Gogol but it cannot be ignored, you cannot overlook that he marked a generation even that the novels after *Poor Folk* never raised on this one's level; moreover, is not to forget that Dostoevsky remarked himself in a time when Tolstoy, Turgenev, Goncharov, Ostrovsky etc. had not yet appeared and that, in a way, he preceded all announcing, in a quite approximately manner, indeed, the great explosion of a Russian literature of a second decade of XIX century.

Apparently laudatory/praise but rather full of caution, scattered here and there with plenty of irony – this is the tone adopted by the progressive critic regarding Dostoevsky, to which is added his belief that to Dostoevsky's work/opera it cannot be applied “the norms of a rigorous esthetical critic”<sup>1</sup>. First of all, the Russian critic remarks the writer's incapacity to create anything other than characters resembling striking himself. In his novels, the author reveals only his own particularities; his books are nothing but author's confessions, as well as his characters are just projections of a unique ego that permeates everywhere.

And still, Dobrolyubov does not notice/observe that he contradicts his own affirmations when remark on Dostoevsky on one hand, a perfect transparency, a direct relationship of identification between author and the created characters and on the other hand, a strange inner opacity that characterize the same author's personages. Well-founded, he notices that Dostoevsky's heroes remain for the reader but also for their author, indecipherable mystery. Regarding Natasha, the *Humiliated and Insulted* heroine, he says: “The heroine's heart remains to us a mystery and probably, the author himself does not know their secrets more than we do. With confidence we ask Dostoevsky: how is this possible? And he answers: how you can see, it happened and this it's! More, he can add: an extremely weird case .... Besides, in life a lot happens...”<sup>2</sup>. But it is to assume that an egocentric author's attitude that permanently relates only to him-self is quite different; usually, the egocentric is content to revolve around his own orbit without leaving room for any mystery. Separated from the world by an illusory veil, by an artificial polish, it has, on a contrary, a claim that regards his unlimited capacity of knowledge; the last thing that this kind of writer will admit is that he does not know himself well enough, that he is to himself an enigma. Dostoevsky's case is completely different; despite that many critics of his work have seen him as a

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<sup>1</sup> Dobrolyubov, *Opere alese*, Vol. 2, p. 357.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid*, p. 366.

mega-egocentric creator, however he always delimited himself of his characters or better said, these characters gradually estranged from the one that created them.

But after all, where this mystery is coming from? When he was writing his study, Dobrolyubov cannot have seen that the mystery is inherent on the Dostoevsky's world, one of his essential characteristic. Without revealing anything from his inner universe, the Dostoevsky's hero is always covert/ interiorised and quickly passes from a moment where opens out to a moment of closing itself, to an interior isolation. He's Ego remains untouched by any exterior knowledge and not even the author can penetrate behind the displayed mask.

The relationship between Dostoevsky and his heroes, far from being direct how Dobrolyubov sustain, is marked by a profound rupture/break. Without any doubt, on the foundation of his novels is a disequilibrium caused by the transparency absence, by the fact that Dostoevsky, as author, does not identify himself with his characters/personages. He's nothing of these characters, being yet something of each of them and he's offering us these sides of his personality precisely to stimulate us for knowledge even he's aware of the incapacity to fully have this knowledge. Thus it is ensured favorable conditions to start searching, without being guaranteed in any way achieving the purpose of knowledge. But specific Dostoevsky novel is that the author not only exhorts the readers to knowledge, but primarily on himself, despite the limits of human knowledge.

Every novel is thus a challenge because Dostoevsky write like he reads in the same time with writing and that makes him rather a perfect reader than a writer, a reader that never takes things as they are but shapes them, transforms them and surrounds them with mystery.

Double hidden both from the reader and the writer, his characters have at their disposal an absolute freedom and the writer must pay attention to their voices. The usual attitude of Dostoevsky's heroes is the confessional one; in fact they permanently oscillate between confessing and hiding, any opening movement being doubled by a reposition one, of returning to itself.

Those being said, it is obvious that the author does not transpires behind any of his heroes, is nowhere to be found in any of them and from that appears their mystery. It can be said that Dostoevsky never proposed to explain something in his books because he knows he cannot offer explanations, he tried rather to understand his characters' nature.

From a different perspective, the reprehensible that Dobrolyubov address to Dostoevsky refers to the dark/sombre atmosphere dominating his novels, expressed in the predilection to describe anomalies/abnormalities. The critic is no doubt confused in front of such large number of strange cases; even that at some point he defends him before the accuses of other critic to the same dark tones that surround his novels, still the Dobrolyubov's irritation caused by reading of each of these novels is obvious. Besides, from the critic's perspective, simple life painting use/serve for absolute literary model, for dogma regarding the artistic creation, so this creation be legitimated only if is faithful to simplicity. It is imposed therefore the existence of a direct parenthood between daily, ordinary life and the artistic creation and the first must serve as a model for this creation.

Common life, simple has the rank of instance in front of which the work of art

can be verified, and if it evade by the influence of life then the work of art loses its authenticity and value.

In other words, the creation of Dostoevsky is accused, though not directly, of inauthenticity, by the fact that it always gravitates around the unexplained phenomena, always having a tendency to go crazy, not to follow the straight path of life.

Along with the tendency to portray everything in dark colors, to move away from “real life”, simple, Dostoevsky novels are characterized, in Dobrolyubov’s vision, also by a lack of inner harmony; thus, the action from *Humiliated and Insulted* it duplicates, in strange and useless way, hence the harmony of entire work is shattered.

Furthermore, to highlight, once again, more suggestive, the removal of Dostoevsky from what is simple and worthy of being admired, the literary critic characterizes the Prince Valkovsky, one of the character of the novel, as a true “monster painted with passion, a gathering of cynicism and perfidy, but no trace of human traits”. Then he adds: “In the Prince physiognomy there is no trace of this harmonious element which acts so strong in art, when it shows to us a man of a piece and we are brought to see his human nature beyond the surface misdeeds”<sup>3</sup>. Here we see the same analogy: description of what is monstrous, inhuman, together with the presence of disharmony and upsetting imbalance, baffling - all these are signs of literary mediocre, worthless and which do not wake any interest to cultivated reader.

But what can we say about Dobrolyubov’s analysis? Is it really correct? I think so, his intuitions in what it concerns Dostoevsky’s literature are fair, but he was profoundly wrong on what should be a work of art. His considerations are anachronistic, he was the bearer of a literary movement and humanist who was doomed from the start to death since it did not the life and work of art are different things, a novel is not a scientific study on improving living conditions, and work of art should not necessarily aim to portray a man of a piece. Taking this expression and reversing it, it might say that Dostoevsky has proposed to create a fragmented man, composed of innumerable divergent parts, a man within which always conflict occurs and which is torn between opposite sides of his ego. Hence, from this continuous oscillation between extremes, coupled with consciousness of fragmented self which is own Dostoevsky’s universe maybe it originates the misunderstanding felt by his contemporaries and not only by them.

## **2. Tragic humor**

It can now ask the question in what exactly resides the artistic value of the novel *The Double*, once accepted and recognized its importance in the development of its author. It somehow possess a specific beauty, has its own something so we can say it was wrongly cataloged as a bad novel?

*The Double* brings something unique among Dostoevsky’s novels; strangely, taking into account the unfavorable opinion which has aroused, for almost all the books to come, it will give the example of a style from which the author will depart

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<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.* p. 366.

rarely. It's about **Dostoevsky's humor** which, although has affiliation in the one that Gogol practiced skillfully, it differs from it in the sense that become an internalized humor, thereby gaining a tragic shade which it was foreign to Gogol. We can speak to the latter by a typical humor, which refers to concrete situations of life and to different human characters. It can be said, without the possibility of mistake that Gogol did not write tragedies, just pranks. In neither Gogol's work nor a single character does not actually cry, but all remain in a stand still state, maybe a little angry for what is happening with them, but never fully aware of the tragedy of their existence. Gogol's poetic sensibility is not receptive to the tragic, which he refused without any explanation.

Dostoevsky's humor, practiced for the first time in *The Double*, breaks the frameworks of this kind of everyday humor and resembles more and more with the kind of humor, sometimes black, used by Shakespeare. There is otherwise a direct artistically filiation Shakespeare – Dostoevsky proven, among others, by the passion of the latter for the Shakespeare's creation. Shakespeare's influence on Dostoevsky made the humor to be transferred from the percussive, dizzying, often brilliant, but lacks the dramatic nature of Gogol's in the tragic perimeter where everything is loaded with full of tension meanings.

In *The Double* transpires this tragic lode that, visible at every step, accompanies the humor – through the tragic humor we can link the small novel and, for example, the first part of the *Demons* or *The Brothers Karamazov*, where it is present in almost every paragraph. And here Dostoevsky's style consists in highlight, through humor, the tragic side of life, thus bringing out a thought oriented inward, toward the depths of the soul.

Regarding the artistic value of the novel, it is implied, the art assuming here the role of reveal what until then had been carefully hidden, in other words, Dostoevsky's art has a demystifying function, which is proposing to reveal the depths of being.

Dostoevsky certainty, confessed in letters, that his second novel will have a huge echo and will be received very well by the readers is explained by the extraordinary visual magnitude which he put into play and which makes *The Double* a veritable game of mirrors, the first of a remarkable series: *The Village of Stepanchikovo*, *Crime and Punishment*, *The Gambler*, *The Idiot*, *The Eternal Husband*, *Demons*, *Bobok*, *The Adolescent*, *The Brothers Karamazov* etc.

Ambivalence, the temptation of ego to indulge in blind fascination, but also to be equally possessed of lucidity, all this combined creates a strange, fantastic atmosphere that surrounds the figure of Golyadkin; in addition, it adds an element that completely determines his personality namely, the dream. Golyadkin dream so intense that one can not know precisely whether he was awake or not so there is no coincidence that the novel opens with a description of how he wakes up: slightly dazed, as if he had not quite sure “whether he were awake or still asleep, whether all that was going on around him were real and actual, or the continuation of his confused dreams”<sup>4</sup>.

Without exaggerating too much we can say once again that *The Double* is a

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<sup>4</sup> Dostoevsky, *The Double, A Petersburg Poem*, The Pennsylvania State University, 2006, p. 3.



splendid oneiric novel and it proved to be a pioneer in terms of further development of Russian writer. In fact, many similarities and secret correspondences can be established between Golyadkin's dream and those of Raskolnikov, Hippolite Terentyev, Andrei Petrovich Versilov, the character named "Ridiculous man" etc. dreams that spring directly from their nature turned inwards, which is too little interest in diurnal appearance of reality.

### 3. Visual drama

Visuality is the key of this second novel by Dostoevsky; despite the smallness, the spiritual pettiness of the central character, we can glimpse at him an element which singularized and draws our attention: his ability, manifested through the eyes, eyes that seemed not to come from the same being, to dualize, to create a peer absolutely identical, but unfortunately more ridiculous and bolder than himself, and more than that, while he dreams he gives rise to an endless chain of doubles identical – with – himself that wholly overwhelms him. A downright burlesque story, whose significance one would say we're missing at first sight; so to say a psychological mystery sprung from who knows shadows of the mind of this strange writer – in other words, in *Double* is visible the author's excess of melancholy: here was the general attitude with which was received this novel<sup>5</sup>.

And yet, the story of Golyadkin contains the seeds of the mental collapse of which will later suffer the majority of Dostoevsky's characters. The symptom is almost the same in Golyadkin as for Arkady Ivanovich Svidrigailov, Nikolai Vsevolodovich Stavrogin, or Ivan Karamazov; just "subject" has changed in the meantime, become more ethereal and, why not say, metaphysical. Stavrogin, Ivan Karamazov, Raskolnikov etc. can be called metaphysical heroes, while in Golyadkin's case prevail the somatic level; he is blocked, does not succeed to see beyond, to project himself into a new existence. But, and this worth emphasizing, the same law preside over all, it circumscribe their mental development, and even if the interior inferno through which goes the negligible employee from *Double* is less frightening, it does not diminishes the prestige.

Finally we can call the fall of Golyadkin a visual drama similar to that of Raskolnikov; both of them are felling crushed by the city of which they fell so intimately connected and both are also an emanation of Saint Petersburg, though it increasingly stifling them. In their eyes something mysterious happens with this city which, perforce, became part of themselves so that they cannot break of it that with a superhuman effort, of which Golyadkin does not look capable. Saint Petersburg is itself an essential problem, having a malefic root which fascinates and destroy at the same time, one would say that the city duplicate itself in each of its inhabitants, thus having an infinite number of masks. The subtitle of the novel, *A Petersburg Poem*, insinuates this bizarre link that finally appears to be profoundly harmful, but impossible to ignore. The typical experience here is the

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<sup>5</sup> The exception is Otto Rank, which in his study *Don Juan. Double* places Dostoevsky's novel in its place, highlighting the psychological importance of this idea. He notes that the theme of the double can be frequently found in European literature, and Dostoevsky, along with E.T.A. Hoffmann and E.A. Poe, is the great master of this literary and philosophical genre that combines fantastic with reality in order to bring to light what the human psyche has most profound.

duplication that this city makes possible, contributing substantially, through troubled atmosphere, to the inevitably conflict between identical characters.

Although relatively vague, we assist in *Double* to the gradual loss of eyesight by the central character, whose eyes were as if blurred and he comes bit by bit to share the way of looking of his double, so we cannot say that he is replaced by force by the other, but he is replaced by himself alone, takes aside, and the fight that lead is so absurd that it becomes only a momentary outburst, too ridiculous to conduct to a result. And this because he is fascinated, stunned downright of admiration for the second Golyadkin, not seeing in him nothing but a creation of his mind. He will assign easily, easily everything.

And this attitude of Golyadkin 1 is dictated by intimate relationship that he maintain with the mirror and especially by the complacency that he feels at the sight of his image reflected in the mirror. He is so pleased with himself that he secretly wants not to have a single myself, but more so that his own beauty seen only by him not to lose, not to be wasted in vain.

And the mirror only partially satisfy this secret desire of doubling, giving him a somewhat illusory image of himself, a fake me, that cannot detach from the authentic one. And Golyadkin would like some more, he wants that his double to possess all the features that he hasn't, in the first place to know how to control his emotions as he never managed, and thus does not may be laughed at, to be able to overcome his petty condition and especially to be able to dominate the others (even the inconsiderable personality of Golyadkin hides a character of tyrant).

Therefore Golyadkin 2 is and is not at the same time identical with the original, on him were projected all the hidden desires and secret aspirations of the Golyadkin 1. He was conceived with a real creative energy and even though things got out of control and his creator collapsed, we cannot ignore the feverishness with which he was conceived.

But the moment when the double makes its appearances in the novel is of overwhelming importance. He was born from the Golyadkin's darkness despair, he is a being that comes from his nocturnal desires and appears just at the moment when Golyadkin feels crushed by shame and would like to run by himself, , "to vanish, pass into nothingness, to pulverize"<sup>6</sup>. The night is a fertile ground for revealing the double, it preserve the mystery, protecting it from light that shall destroy the penetrating force in the other's soul.

Through the night the double insinuates like a premonition full of dread, revealing gradually, like a breeze in Golyadkin's mind, causing him to believe that he was only a ghost. The whole scene has something theatrical: Golyadkin's bolt on the dark streets of Saint Petersburg, the stillness with which he regards the murky waters of the Fontanka River, the nightmare appearance of the one identical with himself, and finally the moment of solitude in two, in which he feels exhausted as if the entire world would hand on his shoulders etc. All this make up a tragicomical *mise en scène*, as though the author would like to laugh at his character, playing him tricks, and Golyadkin does not resign, but turns against the author, determined to disobey of his caprices. Since this fifth chapter of the novel

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<sup>6</sup> Dostoievski, *Opere*, Vol. 1, pp. 192-193.

it establishes a deaf conflict between the author and the central character, both of them being firmly resolved which directly affects the further course of the action in the novel. Everything will become unclear, confused, and downright strange.

Going back to what feels Golyadkin in the night of the meeting with his double, we see him feeling tempted to jump into the abyss; he leaves aside any caution and throw himself in the inner chaos that yawned in his mind. "His position at that instant was like that of a man standing at the edge of a fearful precipice, while the earth is bursting open under him, is already shaking, moving, rocking for the last time, falling, drawing him into the abyss, and yet, the luckless wretch has not the strength, nor the resolution, to leap back, to avert his eyes from the yawning gulf below; the abyss draws him and at last he leaps into it of himself, himself hastening the moment of destruction"<sup>7</sup>. From now on his downfall is a certainty; nothing will ever be the same, everything changed forever for him.

His regressive movement has a descendant meaning, as he falls, his double will climb, immovable like everything had been meticulously planned, a capricious god mastering Golyadkin's destiny.

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<sup>7</sup> Dostoevsky, *The Double, A Petersburg Poem*. The Pennsylvania State University, 2006, p. 46.

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WORD AND IMAGE IN SANTŌKYŌDEN'S *SEDO UMAREUWAKI*  
*NO KABAYAKI*  
江戸生艶気樺焼

Angela Drăgan\*

**Abstract:** *Kibyōshi* represented the best milieu for SantōKyōden (1761-1816) to express his skills as a writer and as an illustrator. Verbal and visual elements blend together in a *kibyōshi* to tell a story that amuses the reader, who in this case also becomes the viewer. The topic of this paper focuses on how these two elements combine in various ways.

**Keywords:** *kibyōshi*, SantōKyōden, text, image, blending.

The *kusazōshi* 草双紙 genre refers to woodblock-printed illustrated popular fiction. This was a genre that developed from the middle of Edo period (1600-1868) to the beginning of Meiji period (1868- 1912). The text in a *kusazōshi* has a distinctive arrangement as it is enclosed within the illustrations. *Kibyōshi* 黄表紙, also called yellow booklets because of their yellow covers, belong with *akahon* 赤本, red booklets, *aohon* 青本, blue booklets, *kurohon* 黒本, black booklets and *gōkan* 合巻 to this genre of illustrated literature.

The emergence of *kibyōshi* brought a change in the development of this genre<sup>1</sup>. The first *kibyōshi* is considered to be that written and illustrated by KoikawaHarumachi, called *Kinkin sensei eiga no yume* (“*Master Glitter’s Dreams of Glory*”)<sup>2</sup>. The main character’s dream is to become a *tsūjin* 通人, a true connoisseur of Edo<sup>3</sup>, which meant a man of the world, a connoisseur of the pleasure quarters and always à la mode. James Araki points out that the main character of this *kibyōshi* “seeks sensual pleasure and carefree extravagance [...]. His dreams are, after all, the dreams of a *chōnin*<sup>4</sup> in the inflexible society of the Edo period.”

Taking earlier materials and recasting them in a contemporary, humorous manner, the yellow booklets create a new story that reflects the everyday life,

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<sup>1</sup>*Kibyōshi*, in fact, developed out of *aohon*. The color blue of the cover faded out, and turned into a pale yellow, as Mizuno Minoru writes in *Nihon kotenbungakutaikei* 59.

<sup>2</sup> It is based on a classical Chinese moralist story of a young man who tries to seek glory and wealth going to the city. He falls asleep in an inn while waiting for his food and in the dream he has everything that he hoped for. But unfortunately, he is woken up by the voice of a woman bringing his food and he realizes that everything was but a dream and that life is transient, and he returns home.

<sup>3</sup> Former name for Tokyo.

<sup>4</sup> Urbanite: artisans and merchants who emerged as a major demographic force in the Edo period.

manners and customs in Edo not only at the narrative level but also at the visual one. The author employs irony and wordplay, referring to actual characters of those days.

Unlike the case of earlier *kusazōshi*, which were published anonymously, the authors, in other words the writer and the illustrator, of a *kibyōshi* are known. Writing and publishing *kibyōshi* became a profitable business. Besides, in many *kibyōshi* the writer and the illustrator are the same person, thus giving cohesion to the whole story.

One of the most famous *kibyōshi* writers and illustrators is **SantōKyōden** 山東京伝 (1761-1816). He started his career as an *ukiyo-e*<sup>5</sup> artist under the name of Kitao Masanobu 北尾政演. In 1778 he began illustrating *kibyōshi* under his brush name, Kitao Masanobu. At first, he illustrated *kibyōshi* mainly for other writers, but in 1780 he illustrated and signed the text of two *kibyōshi* under his artistic pseudonym. From this moment on, his career as a writer and illustrator was launched and he gained praise for both.

We thus see that SantōKyōden/Kitao Masanobu acted as a creator, skilled both as an artist and as an author. *Kibyōshi*, known for their balanced blending of text and image, in many ways represented the best medium for Kyōden to express both of these skills.

The *kibyōshi* *Edo umareuwaki no kabayaki* is SantōKyōden's best known work of this genre<sup>6</sup>. It was translated into English in Adam Kern's PhD thesis: *Blowing Smoke: Tobacco Pouches, Literary Squibs, and Authorial Puffery in the Pictorial Comic Fiction (Kibyōshi) of SantōKyōden (1716-1816)* and in Haruo Shirane's *Early Modern Japanese Literature: An Anthology*.

The anthology gives a full translation of this *kibyōshi* and a short commentary and description of it. Adam Kern discussed it in full, however. He pointed out that Kyōden "actively sought to appropriate Enjirō [the main character] for his own fictional alter ego". But this self-reflexivity, argued Kern, could turn against the writer as many readers could interchange Kyōden for Enjirō and could not fall for "the author's boosterism". Nevertheless, Kyōden relied on the opposite: he tried to flatter the readers and to make them believe his story.

My intention is to introduce this *kibyōshi* to a Romanian public for the first time. The English translation I provide here, tries to render a concise version for a public less familiar with Japanese literature. It uses the annotations of M. Tanahashi in *Edo no gesakuehon: Shokikibyōshi*.

I have observed the remarkable interaction of the text and image and I think it may have been another reason why *Edo umareuwaki no kabayaki* won high praise for its author. My paper will particularly focus on analyzing how these two

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<sup>5</sup> Woodblock prints or paintings which first started being produced in Edo period (1600-1868)

<sup>6</sup> The title has several English translations: Haruko Iwasaki's "Grilled Playboy, Edo style", Sumie Amikura Jones's "Play Boy, Grilled Edo Style" and Adam Kern's "Playboy: Seasoned à la Edo". It is a pun upon words referring to *unagi no kabayaki* a famous Edo dish of eel split, broiled and basted with a sweet sauce.

<sup>7</sup> Kern, Adam Lewis, *Blowing Smoke: Tobacco Pouches, Literary Squibs, and Authorial Puffery in the Pictorial Comic Fiction (Kibyōshi) of SantōKyōden (1716-1816)*. PhD thesis, 1997, pg. 297.

elements work together in forming a coherent whole, as previous studies focused more on the text and its analysis and less on the visual element.

I will give four different examples, using four scenes to show how the two elements weave the story together and mutually “support” each other.

First, I will walk you through the story. Enjirō, the son of a wealthy merchant, dreams to become a true connoisseur, a *tsū* 通, just like the character in *Kinkin sensei eiga no yume*. The word *tsū* 通 can also be translated in English as playboy, dandy or a lady-killer.

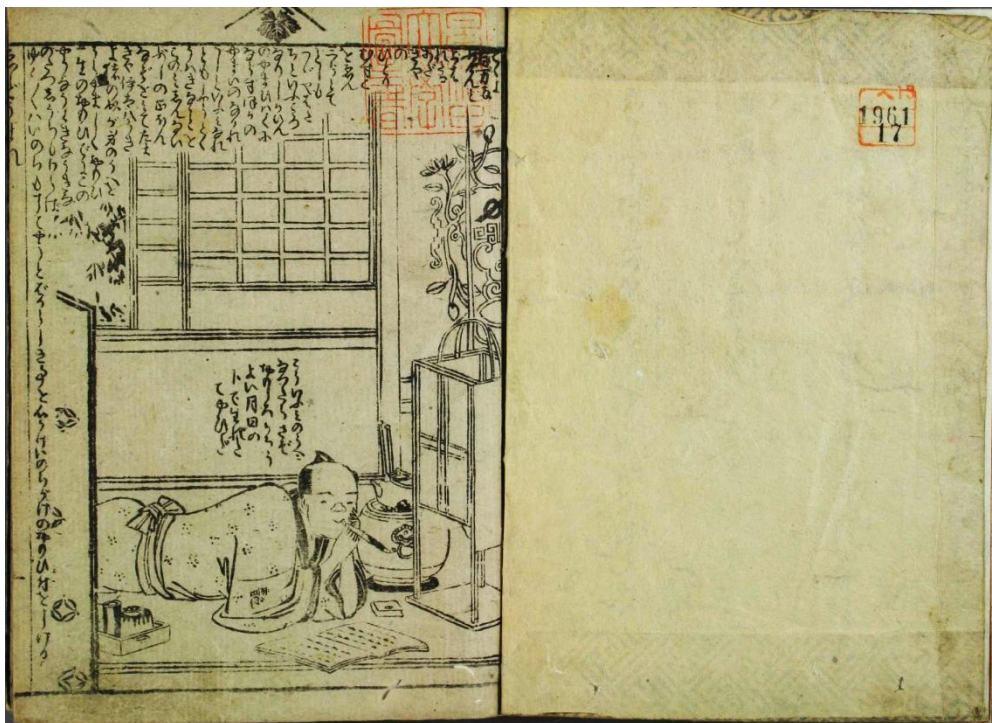


Fig. 1 (Courtesy Waseda University Library)

We can see him here lying down on the *tatami* engrossed in reading and smoking a pipe. From the text, we find out that he plans to do what it takes to become a *tsū* 通. In the next scenes, we find him following some necessary steps in gaining a reputation as a true connoisseur. First, he gets several tattoos on his arms with the names of about twenty to thirty imaginary lovers. Even if it is painful he is determined to suffer in order to establish his reputation.

Next, he hires a *geisha*<sup>8</sup> to come to his house and plea with his parents to become his wife as she is in love with him. If she cannot be his wife, she is ready to remain in the house and cook for him in their kitchen and if this is impossible as

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<sup>8</sup> A *geisha* is considered to be an entertainer. She is a skillful dancer and musician, as opposed to a *yūjo*, a courtesan.

well, then she would kill herself. But as it seemed that nobody has heard about the affair with the *geisha*, Enjirō pays to have the story printed in a tabloid paper.

Then, he decides to visit the Yoshiwara<sup>9</sup> and tries to make one of the most renowned courtesans fall for him but she is not a bit interested in him.

Another step for Enjirō to reach *tsū* status is that Enjirō sees that in the *kabuki*<sup>10</sup> plays, real men get beaten up sometimes. Therefore, he hires four or five thugs to do so, but unfortunately they beat him so badly that he falls unconscious and he gets the reputation of a fool rather than a playboy.

He even asks his parents to disinherit him and throw him out of their house.

Enjirō wishes to do one last thing to prove he is a real *tsū*; he arranges to commit a double love suicide, a fake one, of course, together with a renowned courtesan. The perfect spot for his fake suicide is found but as they proceed to it, they are attacked by two masked men who steal their clothes and who want to help them to commit a real suicide. However, Enjirō pleads for their lives and promises not to do such a thing again. He later finds out that it was his father who had paid the two men to ambush them, in order to teach him a lesson and show him what a foolish person he is.

In the end, we find out that Enjirō learns his lesson and becomes a serious man and the courtesan marries him, despite his looks. He has SantōKyōden depict his life in a *kibyōshi* and thus people can learn from his story.

Secondly, I will analyze each scene one by one, discussing what the text says and what the illustrations show.

The first text reads as follows:

“Here we have Enjirō, the only son of a millionaire, who owns the Adakiya shop. He is around 19 years old and the disease of poverty has never visited him, as the saying goes. He has love in his veins and envies TamakiyaItahachi and UkiyoInosuke<sup>11</sup>. He would die for a life of romance and amorous adventures like those in the *shinnaisong* books<sup>12</sup>.

Enjirō: “Oh, how I wish I had such a life. They are so lucky.”

Narrator: “This was all he could idiotically think of. “

The text is rather easy to understand and there are about two puns upon words<sup>13</sup>. Adakiya 仇気屋, the name of the shop can be translated as “wanton shop” or “easy –going shop”. Enjirō 艶二郎, the name of the main character can be also discussed. The meaning of “en” 艶 is shiny, glossy but also erotic, sexy and the meaning of “jirō” is second son. So, we can understand it as the shiny son or the

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<sup>9</sup> “The most famous regulated center for prostitution in Japan for almost three-and-a-half centuries, from the early Edo period until 1958. [...] Yoshiwara was founded in Edo (now Tokyo) in Yoshiwara, in 1617 when the shogunate granted a license.” (Kodansha Encyclopedia of Japan, 1999)

<sup>10</sup> Japanese traditional theatre.

<sup>11</sup> Romantic heroes.

<sup>12</sup> A narrative musical style originally derived from the *bunraku* puppet theatre, but soon developed into songs performed for entertainment at parties and other gatherings.

<sup>13</sup> M. Koike, T. Uda, Y. Nakayama, M. Tanahashi. *Edo no gesakuehon. Shokikibyōshi. Tokyo. Kyōyō bunko*. 1987. pg. 149.



sexy son. We can get now from the text a clear picture of our main character. He may be a handsome heir and even maybe a dandy as his father's shop name shows us. Therefore, he has a real chance of becoming a romantic hero like those he is dreaming of.

Moving on to the illustration now, we can observe Enjirō lying down and reading what might be a *shinnai* ballad, and smoking a pipe. He looks relaxed in a small and cozy place as the room is drawn by the illustrator. Kyōden likes details and he places different objects in the room to give it a real life impression. To the right, we can see a tobacco pouch and a kettle probably heating on a brazier. To the left, there is a tobacco tray.

As for the main character, in depicting Enjirō, Kyōden drew him with a broad, flat nose. It came to be called a *botan no hana* 牡丹の鼻 which means a *peony nose* and it became one of Kyōden's trademarks<sup>14</sup>. The nose must have looked unusual and funny for the readers of that time. One may expect to see Enjirō depicted like one of his heroes, a tragic but good-looking man in a dignified position because this is the way he is portrayed in the text. Instead, we have Enjirō stretching out on a *tatami* and not a dandy at all, as his name suggests. Moreover, he does not seem the type that would sacrifice his life and commit a love suicide. One can conclude that the text and image show us different sides of the same story. The text doesn't disclose Enjirō's true nature and it makes us imagine a different character; however the illustration reveals a surprising character. The meaning of the whole story builds around the discrepancy between what Enjirō wants to be, an Edo playboy, and what he really is, a funny looking, foolish spoiled young man. The illustrator endowed him with the nose but the writer never mentioned it in the text. Without the visual representation of Enjirō, we would not be ready for what the story has to offer us and what a *kibyōshi* is all about. The interplay of the visual and verbal aspects is like a game that is meant to captivate readers and make them laugh.

The second text I chose, reads as follows:

"Enjirō is more and more interested in finding a way to become a real playboy, a real dandy. So he asks KitariKinosuke, a prodigal son from the neighborhood, and WaruiShian, who is supposed to be a doctor but he is more of a buffoon than a doctor, what to do".

Enjirō: "There must be a way to gain a reputation as a lover."

Kinosuke: "First of all, you must learn some *meriyasu*, those soulful songs that accompany an emotional *kabuki* scene, and be able to hum them<sup>15</sup>". And he gives a long list of these *meriyasu*. "There are others but I got tired. To write letters, there are many secrets that you must be initiated into. If the envelope is not sealed, it means that you two are through. But if she signs with her real name at the end of the letter, you are in a difficult situation, she is into you. "

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<sup>14</sup> Koike M., UdaT., Nakayama Y., Tanahashi M., 1987, *Edo no gesakuehon. Shokikibyōshi*, 1987. pg. 148.

<sup>15</sup> A type of *nagauta*, a kind of ballad usually sung to *shamisen* in a *kabuki* play.

Shian: “If you see lipstick on the envelope, it means it is the work of an amateur. And another thing, no matter how plain she looks, if she has a callus behind her ear, it means it is a pillow-callus and she used to be a courtesan.”

What we can understand from the text is that KitariKinosuke and WaruiShian are true connoisseurs of the pleasure quarters and their advice is really helpful. Regarding the names of the two characters, SantōKyōden uses another pun<sup>16</sup>. Kitari 北里 refers to Yoshiwara, the pleasure quarter from Edo, and Kinosuke using the character for *yorokobu* 喜ぶ which means to enjoy, to be fond of, a direct allusion to being a true connoisseur. As for WaruiShian, the meaning of *warui* 悪い is clear: bad, and *shian* has been interpreted as a play upon words 悪い思案 *waruishian*<sup>17</sup>, a bad idea. He is a *taikoisha* 太鼓医者<sup>18</sup> which refers to a doctor who is not good at what he does, and he is rather a clown that entertains his patients /clients. Therefore, maybe he is not such a helpful friend for Enjirō.



Fig. 2 (Courtesy Waseda University Library)

The illustration shows us the three men sitting and talking. KitariKinosuke and WaruiShian wear black scarves, usually worn by those who frequently go to

<sup>16</sup> M. Koike, T. Uda, Y. Nakayama, M. Tanahashi. *Edo no gesakuehon. Shokikibyōshi*. Tokyo. Kyōyō bunko. 1987. pg. 150.

<sup>17</sup> M. Koike, T. Uda, Y. Nakayama, M. Tanahashi. *Edo no gesakuehon. Shokikibyōshi*. Tokyo. Kyōyō bunko. 1987. pg. 151.

<sup>18</sup> Ibid.

the pleasure quarters<sup>19</sup>, but Enjirō doesn't wear one, as he is still a beginner, which is shown by the text, as well.

To the right, behind Enjirō one can observe a book box on which *Genji Monogatari* and *Ise Monogatari* are written, two stories of two famous Heian period lovers (794- 1185): Hikaru Genji and Ariwara no Narihira. Some scholars argue that these are not the usual reading of an Edo playboy, as Genji and Ariwara no Narihira don't represent the ideal masculine type anymore<sup>20</sup>. However, it can be also argued that Enjirō is seeking amorous adventures just as his Heian period counterparts did and he can be considered a lover but of a different sort. At a visual level, Enjirō is presented as a beginner. So from the text and the illustration, at a verbal and visual level, it is pointed out the position of Enjirō as a beginner and moreover as a naïve person. The visual element helps to emphasize the verbal element.

On the left hand side of the illustration, behind Kitari Kinosuke and Warui Shian, we notice a standing screen <sup>21</sup> depicting Enma, the King of Hell, signed by Hanabusa Itchō<sup>22</sup>. It is believed that if you tell a lie Enma will pluck your tongue out. On this account, are the two telling the truth? Are they such well-versed playboys and can they give Enjirō the right advice? Judging from the placement of this screen, the author could be implying that the two are liars, but the text doesn't say anything like this. The only hint that is given to us in the text is in the name of Warui Shian, a bad idea for Enjirō, maybe, to trust him.

In my opinion, the scene from this illustration shows us the truth about the two and their relationship with Enjirō. Even though the image follows the story from the text by adding the screen painting and the bookcase, it creates again a certain discrepancy at the verbal and visual levels. The visual level brings more information to the text and helps to build the story.

Let us consider another text and its illustration.

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<sup>19</sup> Ibid

<sup>20</sup> Kern, Adam Lewis. *Blowing Smoke: Tobacco Pouches, Literary Squibs, and Authorial Puffery in the Pictorial Comic Fiction (Kibyōshi) of Santō Kyōden (1716-1816)*. 1997. Adam Kern cites Hamada Giichiro's work.

<sup>21</sup> Ibid

<sup>22</sup> Japanese painter (1652- 1724)



Fig. 3 (Courtesy Waseda University Library)

As Enjirō continues to pursue his dream of becoming a real playboy, he thinks of becoming a regular client of a known courtesan. The text tells us the following:

“Enjirō decided on Ukina of the Ukina house, a real versatile courtesan of the Yoshiwara. And in order to make her fall for him, he tries to smarten up and to live up to his desired position of a heart conqueror. But he keeps on fixing his collar. How truly indeed, sometimes even a playboy does not feel at ease.

Shian: Hey, you, courtesan, people say you are quite skilled!

KitariKinosuke to Enjirō: You are not quite bad yourself.

Ukina to Shian: Please, stop teasing me!”

The expression “he does not feel at ease” is a translation from the Japanese “ki no/gatsumaru” 気のつまる. Tanahashi<sup>23</sup> interprets it as 窮屈なこ と”kyūkutsunakoto”. The meaning is narrow, confined, cramped, and when referring to clothes: tight, stiff. It could be read as a pun. As the text tells us, Enjirō

<sup>23</sup> M. Koike, T. Uda, Y. Nakayama, M. Tanahashi. *Edo no gesakuehon. Shokikibyōshi*. Tokyo. Kyōyō bunko. 1987. pg. 158.

is fixing his collar. And the illustration shows us the same thing, so we can infer that “ki no/gatsumaru” 気 の つ ま る has a double meaning. On one hand, it may suggest that the clothes that Enjirō is wearing to show off in front of Ukina are tight. On the other hand, it may point at his uncomfortable situation, as a pretense lady-killer, and consequently a laughed at character.

M. Tanahashi<sup>24</sup> explains that when a client met a courtesan for the first time, it was not in her own room in the Yoshiwara but at a teahouse and then not long before they would meet again in her room. This is exactly what the illustration shows us here, the three men visiting Ukina. One can observe the inside of the room. There is a *shokudai* candle stand, a tea brazier and a small stand showing that the four have just had something to eat, and behind Enjirō stands a folding screen featuring a landscape.

Next to Ukina, there is a *kaburo*, a young girl serving as an attendant to a courtesan, and a small piece of furniture with accessories. KitariKinosuke and ShianWarui are drawn at the lower end of the illustration leaning on one side or another, as if engaged in a conversation; Enjirō as shown in the text is fidgeting with his collar. Ukina, tilting her head graciously a little forward, covers her mouth with her sleeve. Adam Kern suggests that “she seems to be stifling a laugh, perhaps over Enjirō’s odd little nose, which stands out prominently in her line of sight”.<sup>25</sup> Or maybe she is acting a bit impressed by Shian’s flattery.

The whole scene follows the line of the text and it roughly tells the same story. But in my opinion, it does something extra. It visually establishes a setting contemporary to Kyōden’s readers. They can see a real small party in the Yoshiwara even though there are just a few elements in the room; they can admire Ukina who is dressed fashionably and has the hair style of the courtesans of the time. It is what the readers may expect and the illustration helps to set the tone of the scene, making it seem alive.

If we are to interpret Ukina’s gesture as a laugh, the illustration adds more to the text and it undermines, again, Enjirō’s laborious attempts to look like a playboy, a *tsū* 通.

Let’s have a look at another text and illustration: the scene of the love suicide.

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<sup>24</sup> Ibid

<sup>25</sup> Kern, Adam Lewis. *Blowing Smoke: Tobacco Pouches, Literary Squibs, and Authorial Puffery in the Pictorial Comic Fiction (Kibyōshi) of Santō Kyōden (1716-1816)*, PhD dissertation, Harvard University, East Asian Languages and Civilizations. 1997.pg. 311





Fig. 4 (Courtesy Waseda University Library)

“For the final scene, that of the love suicide, Enjirō decides on a central place, easily spotted by anyone and again fashionable: the Sumida river bank at MimeguriInari shrine. As that place late at night made one feel quite uneasy, they set on at the early hours of the evening. Enjirō, in full dress, *hakama*<sup>26</sup> and *haori*<sup>27</sup>, together with Ukina, surrounded by an entourage he hired: teahouse girls, boat keepers, jesters and geisha are seen off as far as Ogawa Bridge. It looked like pilgrims proceeding to the Great Shrine of Ise<sup>28</sup>.

A pleased Enjirō begins his last journey as if in a *kabuki* scene<sup>29</sup>. He pulls his small sword to kill himself and utters the words to signal his friends to come to their rescue: “Amida Buddha!”

But from behind a stack of rice, two bandits with covered faces, appear and rob them of their clothes.

Bandits: “You will die anyway, so let us assist you!”

Enjirō: “Easy, easy! This is not a real love suicide. Help is on the way. I wonder where they are...Take our clothes but not our lives! We have learned our lesson.”

Bandits: “Don’t do something like this again!”

<sup>26</sup> Formal large trousers.

<sup>27</sup> An item of clothing that is worn over other clothes.

<sup>28</sup> M. Koike, T. Uda, Y. Nakayama, M. Tanahashi. *Edo no gesakuehon. Shokikibyōshi*. Tokyo. Kyōyō bunko. 1987. pg.173.

<sup>29</sup> Ibid.

Ukina: “I thought something like this would happen.”

The illustration doesn't show us in detail the party that sends Enjirō and Ukina off; we don't even see the theatrical pose Enjirō takes to commit the suicide. The illustrator chose to draw what he considered to be relevant: the surprise attack of the two bandits. It has a dramatic touch. We see on the left side the two robbers face covered, swords out, one in the air ready to fall upon the two lovers. On the right side of the illustration, Enjirō has knelt down, hand raised begging desperately for his life. Behind him, probably hiding, Ukina raises her sleeve as if protecting herself from the blows that would come.

At the level of the text, we are told the story of the love suicide plans, but at a visual level, as we have seen, the author decided on a certain part from the story to illustrate this episode. The selected part represents the climax, not only of this episode but of the whole story. As the reader follows Enjirō's so-called adventures, this is the utmost attempt to prove himself a lady-killer and he tries to commit a pretense suicide.

This is another example of how the text and the illustration can blend together. This time, the visual element doesn't cover the story of the text but it emphasizes the most important part of the text, both elements relying on each other in rendering a coherent meaning.

As we have seen in all the four scenes analyzed in this paper, there are several instances of the text- image fusion. On one occasion, the differences in what the text and the illustration represent verbally or visually puzzle the reader/ viewer and make the *kibyōshi* humorous. On another occasion, the illustration adds more information to the text. Even though the addition may seem out of place the reader/viewer can enjoy both of them and fill in the missing gaps. The third instance may not be that intriguing and amusing for the reader/viewer, still the recreation of the interiors, not only in this episode but throughout the whole *kibyōshi*, and of an actual situation of those days provides insight into the world of the Yoshiwara. Depicting the realities of the contemporary society was one of the features of a *kibyōshi*. In the last instance, visually speaking, only a part of the story is represented as to point out the most important thing SantōKyōden intended to show. At a first glance, all these different instances may not seem to support the idea of a cohesive text and image but as we have observed the two elements blend together to form a whole.

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