S T U D I A

UNIVERSITATIS BABEŞ-BOLYAI

STUDIA EUROPAEA

3

SUMAR – CONTENTS – SOMMAIRE – INHALT

This special issue of Studia Europaea gathers the second group of the most relevant of the proceedings of the International Conference on "The New Frontiers of Europe. International, Inter-ethnic and Inter-confessional Relations in Central and Eastern Europe", organized by the Faculty of European Studies (Babeş-Bolyai University) in Cluj (April 2006).

SPECIFIC PERSPECTIVES IN STUDYING MULTICULTURALISM

MULTICULTURALISM AS A LOCAL AND REGIONAL ISSUE

BOOK REVIEW

THE FRONTIERS OF EUROPE

Andrei Marga[*]

Abstract

It is indispensable and appropriate to distinguish between the geographical belonging to Europe: location between the Atlantic and the Urals, the traditional geographical limits of the continent; the historical belonging to Europe: participation in the movements that have resulted in the institutional and cultural forms of the continent, from the establishment of polis, through the contact with the Judeo-Christian tradition, the modern revolutions in knowledge, economy and law, to the defence of the fundaments of the free society; the institutional belonging to Europe: the embodying of the organisations and legal framework of the open society; and the cultural belonging to Europe: cultivating a certain attitude in knowledge and in practical life, characterised by trust in factual analysis, fallibilisms and in the cultivation of the critical spirit.

Action in the service of European unification needs conceptual analyses[1]. From one point of view, they cannot but start with the question: how far do Europe's borders stretch?

It is common knowledge that European unification started in Western Europe after the Second World War. It is led to the establishment, of the "small Europe" (the initial European Community), in many aspects. But historically and geographically, "Great Europe" comprises Central and Eastern Europe as well. How does this part of geographical and historical Europe integrate politically into the new united Europe? Geographically and, many a time, historically, sometimes culturally[2], Europe has had as its Eastern border the Ural Mountains. How does it relate to this remote component of its ensemble?

---

[*] Professor of Contemporary Philosophy and Logic, President of the Academic Council of the Babeş-Bolyai University Cluj-Napoca

Not only with the politician's precaution, but also with his emblematic lucidity, Richard von Weizsäcker, before 1989, stated: "undoubtedly, I adhere to the opinion that Europe ends at the Berlin Wall"[3]. He was among the many who expressed the main theory on Europe in the after war era, until 1989. The Berlin Wall was the sign of the severe frontier, which divided Europe after 1945 into social organisations with opposing values, upheld by military powers, armed with the most sophisticated nuclear and electronic techniques. On one side of the wall, the Western, liberal side, the European Community was built, which turned into the European Union, following a complex tuning process, in 1993. Certainly, not even the advocates of *the idea that Europe is to be identified with a "Small Europe"* could ignore the fact that geographical and historical Europe is much more far-reaching. On the other side of the Berlin Wall, there was an "oriental socialist" Europe, controlled by the Soviet Union, which was lagging behind, in what the scientific, technical, social and institutional development is concerned, and which had asynchronous political traditions. The advocates of the "small Europe" avoided conceptualising the "Great Europe" for fear of giving rise to irritated responses from the Eastern countries leaders, among other reasons in doing so.

But, even as the famous "Iron Curtain" was descended across Europe, there were voices that asked for *the geographical and historical conceptualisation of Europe*. I would like to make a note here of the thesis defended by Heinrich Böll, according to which Europe cannot be reduced to Western Europe. "The Soviet Union, the old Russia belong to Europe; Poland, Czechoslovakia, all Balkan states belong to Europe"[4]. Heinrich Böll, jut like many other advocates of the *geographical and historical Europe*, finds arguments in favour of his thesis in the fact that there is no relief from dividing Western Europe from the rest of the Europe, as well as in the factual impossibility to separate the chief events in the history of Western Europe from the historical events in the Central and Eastern part of the continent. They find another argument in a simple calculation, which shows that a Europe, which is reduced to small Europe cannot be safe from the noticeable threat of a new migration wave, from the East in turmoil and poverty, toward the rationalised and attractive West.

For many reasons, the issue of belonging[5] to Europe must be tackled with more precise theoretical means. The reasons in doing so is not only for avoiding the naiveté of some intellectuals, who are tempted to see Europe stretch from the Atlantic to Siberia, for praiseworthy historical and moral reasons, or the theoretical adventures of some politicians, who postulate a Europe stretching from the Atlantic to the Urals, for understandable tactical reasons. There has always been more than one reason to be considered. It is the haste with which some political waves in Eastern Europe – that have noticed the strengthening of the pro-European trend in their countries and the international pressure in favour of this trend – to decreed "the belonging to Europe" even in the conditions of cultivating the old ideology of nationalism. It advocates *the belonging without any Europeanisation*.

To face such waves, it is necessary and appropriate to distinguish[6] between *the geographical belonging to Europe*: location between the Atlantic and the Urals, the traditional geographical limits of the continent; *the historical belonging to Europe*: participation in the movements that have resulted in the institutional and cultural forms of the continent, from the establishment of polis, through the contact with the Judeo-Christian tradition, the modern revolutions in knowledge, economy and law, to the defence of the fundaments of the free society; *the institutional belonging to Europe*: the embodying of the organisations and legal framework of the open society; and *the cultural belonging to Europe*: cultivating a certain attitude in knowledge and in practical life, characterised by trust in factual analysis, fallibleness and in the cultivation of the critical spirit.

And if the distinctions are honestly made, we will have to admit that, from the point of view of the process of unification started after the war, geographical and historical belonging do not prevail in deciding *the belonging to Europe*, now under question. *Geography and history are indispensable conditions, but, as European unification is, basically, an institutional and cultural process, the belonging to Europe is determined by taking into account the institutions and the culture*. Being geographically and historically European does not automatically generate cultural Europeanism, and cultural Europeanism can be found in countries which do not, strictly speaking, belong to European geographically and historically.

The process of *enlargement* of the European Union (started in 2001) has led to a flexible interpretation of the meaning of Europe, which allows for the inclusion of the various current societies from the European area into one conceptual unit[7]. Cultural diversity is often evoked as a defining European value. Documents adopted by European organisations consider diversity to be an enduring trait of cultural Europe. *The first observation I would like to make is that it would be a mistake to consider, having in mind this diversity of cultures, that European integration means only an assemblage of entities without criteria*. In other words, European integration is not a simple sum of diverse cultures, but a reorganisation which is based on criteria which can be defined with sufficient precision.

European construction, which began with the **Rome Treaty** (1957), was based on the realistic premise that a functional European community would only be reached if an economic community could be set in place. The importance given to the economic aspect has remained the same after 1989, especially in the transition policies promoted by the *European Union*, the *World Bank* and the *International Monetary Fund* in the Central and Eastern European states. The formation of a functional market economy has always been a more urgent priority than the cultural and educational agenda. On the other hand, though, education was conceived as an essential medium fro Europeanisation in the civil and even economic sectors. *My second observation is that education for a united Europe begins with an understanding of European culture with sufficiently precise criteria of European belonging*. In simpler words, one cannot teach the new generations to promote a united Europe without knowing clearly what it means to belong to Europe.

I will not linger upon European specificity and the criteria for the Europeanisation of cultural societies. Allow me to express my point of view in the concentrated form of two theses, which I have developed in detail elsewhere[8].

The *first thesis* has to do with belonging to Europe. European unity, especially after Maastricht and Nice, does not concern solely geographical or historical factors, but insists primarily on a cultural and institutional affiliation with Europe. In other words, *geography and history are indispensable conditions for a European identity, but as the European unification –* as it has already been said – *is mainly an institutional and cultural process,*

belonging to Europe is evaluated today by taking into consideration institutions and culture.

The *second thesis* deals with European specificity. If we consider institutions to be the incorporation of culture (as we are bound to do), then we can bring the whole discussion on belonging to Europe to the matter of culture. However, we must point out that by culture we do not understand just philosophical ideas, artistic symbols, scientific theories and ideological programmes. *Culture*, obviously, comprises all these things, but together with their incorporation in various forms of social existence. One matter to be noted is that it is the individual culture of the citizens, and also mainly the culture shared by the structured multitudes of individuals that is involved in the process of European Union. Facts support the statement that we can find individuals endowed with a remarkable level of culture in various European nations, but also that *national communities now incorporate, in various degrees, various European values in their internal structures*. This being the case, it is necessary to obtain indicators of Europeanisation especially in order to evaluate the status of institutional Europeanisation. Such indicators (as can be proven by detailed analysis) imply the understanding of what the common traits of a cultural Europe really are.

Nevertheless, the establishing of the European cultural specificity is often submitted to the pitfalls of essay-writing which is impregnated by contextual opinions, of that of ideological improvisations of local policies. It is time that systematic viewpoints are assumed, in order to bring about the conceptual clarifications which are necessary for decision-making actions. *My second thesis is the following: European culture, understood as the ensemble of the ideas, symbols and theories which are incorporated in various forms of social existence, is specified on the levels of science, technical competence, economic behaviour, administrative skill, political action, spiritual culture of a certain kind*. We find, from the very beginning, unsatisfying the results of an approach to culture which starts with the postulation of a unity which spreads by assuming shape in everything, because these approaches do not allow for sufficiently differentiated descriptions of the factual situations. Today, approaches are rightfully preferred which understand European culture as the interaction of technical competence, economic behaviour, administrative skill, political action and spiritual culture of a certain kind. *In other words, neither the monism of economy, nor the monism of culture, like*

any other kind of monism, permit the specifying of European culture, and, consequently, realistic evaluations and adequate actions.

Cultural belonging to Europe – understood in this sense – means *the conditioning of productive competence by a continuously ascending technical competence, based on the application of modern sciences*; furthermore, *an economic behaviour characterised by economic rationality*, that is, formed in such a way that the result constitutes a surplus by comparison with what has been invested. It also means *efficient administration* which is based on a culture of law characterised by personalism, legalism and formalism; *a culture of law* which promotes the person as subject and aim of the law as well as the generality and sovereignty of the law. Cultural belonging to Europe also relies on values based *on individual freedom and the understanding of this freedom as autonomy*; also, the construction of the human being as a private area which rests on property, granted by laws which state fundamental and inalienable rights. Another European characteristic is *that political will and state policy should derive from the public debate upon the issues of general interest, giving the upper hand to better arguments*. European culture also entails *a culture of research, of systematic knowledge working toward the idea of changing* the technical, economic, administrative and cultural environments; and continuous communication of intellectual reflection with the issues of human life.

But what is, in fact, *specifically European in the area of the spiritual culture*? We may formulate the answer by invoking symbols (Faust, for instance, has been used as a specific symbol of the European culture, at least of the modern one), appealing to the great interpretation frames of the world (the "Copernican space", for instance), but the discussion can be carried more precisely and more controllably if it is around the *concepts*. The European culture has brought into play and has developed the implications of great options comprised within several *pivot concepts*: the concept of *truth*, as a fundamental value, understood as a correspondence, verifiable in experience, between sentences and the very fact; the concept of *knowledge* oriented toward the resolution of people's life problems, who is confronting with the utility criterion; the concept of *rationality*, which consists of a calculus and it is established through results; the concept of *right*, as an ensemble of rules that have the characteristics of generality and formality; the concept of individual *autonomy*, as a form of manifestation of

his/her liberty; the concept of *public sphere*, as a medium of settling the public will; the concept of *human person*, as an individuality called to build a sense superior to the simple living.

To formalise criteria for belonging to Europe has become a topic on the European political agenda; such criteria are establishing the borders of Europe. The political frontiers have to take into account, in Europe, primarily cultural and civilisational borders.

Notes:

1. See my analyses in Andrei Marga, **Filosofia unificării europene**, EFES, Cluj, 2006, Part I, Chapter 1; Andrei Marga, **Europäische Identitätsbildung in Osteuropa**, in Ludwig Kuhnhardt (Hrsg.), **Europäische Identität: Paradigmen und Methodenfragen**, CEIS, Bonn, 2001; Andrei Marga, **La correlación de las identidades**, in Christian Wenzlaff-Eggbert (ed.), **Europa como espacio cultural: La identidad y las instituciones europeas**, "Kölner Beiträge zur Lateinamerica - Forschung", Universität zu Köln, 2006, p. 12-25

2. Nietzsche has already noticed this aspect. See Manfred Riedel, **Herkunft und Zukunft Europas. Nietzsche in unserer Zeit**, in "Studia Universitatis Babeş-Bolyai", Philosophia, 1, 1991

3. Richard von Weizsäcker, **Europa muß bleiben**, in Franz König und Karl Rahner (Hrsg.), **Europa. Horizonte der Hoffnung**, Verlag Styria, Wien, Köln, 1988, p. 231

4. Heinrich Böll, **Europa – aber wo liegt es**, in "Merkur", 371, 1979, p. 343

5. See Andrei Marga, **Filosofia unificării europene**, Part I, Chapter 1

6. Ibidem

7. Andrei Marga, **University Reform Today**, Cluj University Press, 2005, p. 147-152. See eventually Andrei Marga, **Europeanisation in Educational Policy and Recent Developments within Bologna Process**, in Jan de Groof, Gracienne Laumers (eds.), **Cultural and Educational Rights in the Enlarged Europe**, Wolf Legal Publishers, Nijmegen, 2005, p. 157-166

8. Andrei Marga, **Filosofia unificării europene**, Part I, Chapter 1

HOW TO PREVENT ETHNIC CONFLICTS: THE UNLEARNED LESSONS OF HISTORY

Géza Jeszenszky[*]

Abstract

We may argue whether the recent riots in the suburbs of Paris were ethnic or social based conflicts, but there is no question that the roots of the last wars in Europe, the Balkan conflicts of the 1990s (in Croatia, Bosnia and Kosovo), were national and religious differences. Or more properly: they were the results of old and new tensions between national groups living intermingled, in ethnically mixed areas. The on-going violence in Iraq and Afghanistan also goes back to such antagonisms. But the history of the last two hundred years shows not only numerous wars between nations, but also many successful efforts at reconciliation, and we know of many models for the harmonious co-existence of national/religious groups who live side-by-side or in close proximity. A study, an overview of the successful and unsuccessful arrangements may be useful for the prevention of future, ethnic-based tensions and conflicts.

Conflict resolution is a fashionable field of study, a Google search on the internet resulted in **96 800 000** hits. The number of special institutions that deal with it is impressive: you may find an *Association for Conflict Resolution*, a *Center* for the same, the *Conflict Resolution Information Source* (www.CRInfo.org) and the website of the Intractable Conflict Knowledge Base Project (www.BeyondIntractability.org) offer succinct,

---

[*] Born in Budapest in 1941. Read history, English and library science at Eötvös University, Budapest, receiving an M.A. in 1966, and a Ph.D. in 1970. Between 1968 and 1976 on the staff of the National Library of Hungary. In 1976 invited to the Budapest (then Karl Marx) University of Economics.A founding member of the Hungarian Democratic Forum (1988), Minister for Foreign Affairs in the government of J. Antall (1990-94). Ambassador to the United States of America, 1998-2002. In September 2002 he resumed teaching at the Corvinus University of Budapest. His publications include *The Changing Image of Hungary in Britain* (1986, 1994), and *The New (Post-Communist) Europe and its Ethnic Problems* (2005).

executive summary-type articles on almost 400 topics as well as links to recommended sources (web, print, and audiovisual) offering more in-depth information. Also available are over a hundred hours of online interviews, featuring more than 70 distinguished scholars and practitioners, and comprehensive bibliographies with more than 20,000 citations. Periodicals, like the *Ethnic Conflict Research Digest*, or the *Journal of Conflict Resolution* contain articles, reviews, as well as numerous on-line resources.

Far less can one read about <u>conflict prevention</u>, how to defuse the many potential time-bombs, how to remove combustible or inflammable material from the many dangerous hot-spots of the world. Although **42 600 000 hits** in a similar Google search is not too bad, but it shows much fewer institutions and no periodical. The International Crisis Group, an independent, non-profit, non-governmental organisation, with nearly 120 staff members on five continents, working through field-based analysis and high-level advocacy to prevent and resolve deadly conflict (headed by my one-time colleague, Gareth Evans, former Foreign Minister of Australia), deals mainly with „third world" conflicts, as its recent reports and briefings testify.[1]

Finally a search for <u>ethnic conflicts</u> also gave **42 500 000** hits, but in the *Ethnic Conflict Research Digest***,** a journal which „contains peer reviews of recently published books, journal articles and research papers on the dynamics and management of ethnic conflict", I was unable to find any reference to the problem of minorities in Central Europe.

Fortunately Europe does not figure prominently on today's conflict maps, and even Central and Eastern Europe or the Balkans did not show high-level conflicts in the last few years.[2] Nevertheless I am convinced that a study of the "ethnonational" conflicts of this continent offer the best lessons for the prevention of such conflicts.

As we all know, ethnic conflict is a relatively new phenomenon. Before the age of nationalism, before the French Revolution and Napoleon Bonaparte social class and wealth was far more important than language,

---

[1] When I made a search in its impressive data base the word „Hungary,", "Hungarians", "Transylvania", gave no results, and finally under "Romania" I found reports on Uzbek refugees transported to that country by the UNHCR.

[2] See PIOOM World Conflict and Human Rights Map 2001. St. Louis, MO: Goals for Americans Foundation, 2002.

and the source of primary loyalty was the territory and its sovereign. The nobles speaking different tongues did not identify themselves with the peasants who happened to use the same language as their masters. By the early 19th century, at least in Europe, that changed. Most national/ethnic groups (in Europe) asserted themselves, and national identity became based on language and culture, rather than on history. Their aim, the creation of a State of their own, ran into two difficulties: the existing Romanov, Habsburg and Ottoman Empires, and the fact that in most cases it was next to impossible to carve out units from the existing states where one national/linguistic group would form a compact bloc. One way of solving the problem was to change the composition of the population by killing, expelling or assimilating the alien, undesirable ethnic elements. The 19th and 20th centuries were characterized by such attempts, the last ones being called – euphemistically – "ethnic cleansing", i.e. killing based on one's nationality, ethnicity.

Despite efforts to exterminate all the Jews and to force millions of people out of their homeland int he 1930s and 1940s the majority of existing states of the world are multi-national. That means that their population is far from being ethnically homogeneous, they contain different national, linguistic or religious groups, all with a rather strong sense of separate identity. Most countries in Asia and Africa bear this statement out. At first glance Europe is different, being composed of so-called nation states. But just a few years ago the United Kingdom accorded substantial self-government to Scotland and Wales, the Spanish Parliament has just recognized that the Catalonians constitute a separate nation, and the Basques are clearly not Spanish. Even after the break-up of the Soviet Union the Russian Federation includes at least 15 million non-Russians. Between the Germans and the Russians today there are eighteen independent countries with an aggregate population of about 170 million. Between the two world wars about one third of them belonged to a national minority. Hitler's and Stalin's (and more recently Milosevic') policies, expulsions and so-called "ethnic cleansings" (in reality ethnic killings) reduced the proportion of those minorities to about 12 per cent of the overall number. But close to 20 million is still a large number.

A good ethnic map of Central Europe looks like a colourful mosaic. (As we know, a mosaic is composed of tiny coloured pieces as opposed to

colours mixed on a painter's palette.) The former Yugoslavia was a good example. But that mosaic blew up. Many people keep on asking: "Why?"

Most of the wars of the past were caused by or related to conflicts between different national groups fighting for territory, influence and wealth, and, as a concomitant, trying to dispossess, often even to eliminate rival ethnic groups. The very recent tragedies in the former Yugoslavia offer an object lesson. The plan to turn Serbs, Croats, Slovenes, Macedonians, let alone Albanians, Hungarians, Slovaks etc into Yugoslavs proved an illusion. The primary precondition for the peaceful coexistence of the peoples that made up the new state, the recognition of their special interests and needs, was not realized. The Constitution of 1921 was seen by the majority as creating a Greater Serbia. Even the century-old Croatian *Sabor* was abolished. Following Word War II Tito understood the birth-defect of the first Yugoslavia and tried to remedy it by establishing a federal state and autonomous regions, but this federalism was much like the similar structures in what used to be called the U.S.S.R., the Union of Socialist Soviet Republics. A rose is by any other name is a rose, a dictatorship is always a tyranny, it is a centralized autocracy, it does not tolerate self-government even on the local level. Nevertheless in communist Yugoslavia not only the Croats and the Slovenians but even the minorities, Albanians, Hungarians, Croats, Rusyns, Slovaks etc. were allowed to cultivate their own culture – probably to compensate them for the lack of political rights. But the last phase of Communism turned out to be nationalism.[3] When the iron hand of Tito was gone, Slovenian and Croatian resentments came to the open. Then in 1989 Milosevic abolished the autonomy of Kosovo and the Vojvodina, and that proved to be the death-toll for Yugoslavia.[4] The real and imaginary grievances of the various peoples that composed Yugoslavia prompted the demands for independence, and the Serbs' unwillingness to accept the separation of Slovenia and Croatia led to war and horrendous crimes motivated by ethnic hatred. But the primary cause of that war was not any age-old feud between the Serbs and the Croats, but the existence of a half a million

---

[3] Banac, Ivo (1984), *The National Question in Yugoslavia. Origins, History, Politics.* Ithaca and London: Cornell University Press.

[4] Ramet, Sabrina P. (2002), *Balkan Babel: the Disintegration of Yugoslavia from the Death of Tito to the Fall of Milošević.* Boulder, Colo.: Westview Press.

strong Serbian ethnic island in the heart of Croatia, and the inability of the Croats and the Serbs to work out an equitable arrangement for the future status of that enclave. Then the European Community devised a solution called the "Carrington Plan," which envisaged far-reaching territorial autonomy for the Serbs of Croatia. Foolishly neither side accepted it. While it was too much for the Croats, the Serbs thought it did not provide enough for them. Milosevic declared that "all Serbs must live in one country," in total disregard of the wishes of the non-Serbs. The war and the crimes spread from Croatia to Bosnia[5] and finally to Kosovo. Eventually NATO, prompted by the United States, stopped the horrors and helped to create at least a lasting truce, opening the way to a real settlement - which has not arrived yet.[6]

The present, fashionable western ideal, an integrated multiethnic and multicultural society, is a far cry in real life. With the best intentions and genuine efforts in Scandinavia and in Western Europe, the absorption of the new immigrants failed miserably, as recent riots, murders and the proliferation of criminal gangs show. The picture is significantly better and more promising if we look at the traditional, old, historical minorities in the western world. Switzerland adopted the system of self-governing, autonomous units, *Kanton*s, centuries ago. That works, apparently mainly because it prevents domination by any other national group, and preserves the ethnic balance. Similar aims guide all the more recent and successful arrangements, like the federal-type ones in Spain, Belgium, or overseas in Canada. They are all based on the idea of separate national communities. A somewhat different case is when one language and national identity form the clear majority in the country, to which it gives its own name, like here in Romania, or in neighbouring Bulgaria, Serbia (some call it the titular country), but there is one or more substantial national or ethnic minority. Such minorities have their own distinct culture, traditions, and language, they also have a territory which they have inhabited for centuries, and they want to preserve their own identity for future centuries. This desire is partly explained by the fact that - at least in Europe - those minorities

---

[5] Magaš, Branka and Žanić, Ivo (eds.) (2001), *The war in Croatia and Bosnia-Herzegovina, 1991-1995,* London, Portland, OR: Frank Cass.

[6] Hasani, Enver (2000), *Dissolution of Yugoslavia and the Case of Kosovo: Political and Legal Aspects.* Tirana: Albanian Institute for International Studies.

emerged not by people crossing borders but by borders crossing people. Some of these minorities passed from one citizenship to another several times in one's lifetime.[7] Most of the national minorities have a "mother country" or a kin state just across the border, so their treatment has international connotations. That's why it is customary to speak of a three-cornered or triadic relationship between the "mother country" or "homeland state", the minority, and the host state to which they belong today.[8] Besides their strong attachment to their national identity, the national minorities are motivated by the fear, based on too many examples in the past and the present, that the stronger national group will always aim at undermining the position of the weaker groups, and that their very existence is in jeopardy. Recent "ethnic cleansings" only bear that feeling out.[9]

Arnold Toynbee, the renowned philosopher of history, wrote a book in 1915 entitled "Nationality and the War." It was war propaganda against the Central Powers, but the author's intellect and foresight led to some very pertinent observations. Rather than advocating the break-up of all the European multinational states, Toynbee preferred large economic and political units with guarantees for the rights of the various national groups. "We can only secure that the minorities are as small and the suffering as

---

[7] There is the celebrated case of a person who was born in 1914 in the Austro-Hungarian Monarchy, went to school in Czechoslovakia, married in Hungary, spent years in prison in the Soviet Union and today finds it very hard to survive on a meager pension in Ukraine - and the man or woman never left his/her birthplace in a region called Subcarpathia.

[8] Rogers Brubaker (1996), *Nationalism Reframed: Nationhood and the National Question in the New Europe*, New York: Cambridge University Press, esp. Chapter 3.; Michael Mandelbaum (ed.) (2000), *The New European Diasporas. National Minorities and Conflict in Eastern Europe*, New York: Council on Foreign Relations Press, esp. Introduction.

[9] Carmichael, Cathie (2002), *Ethnic Cleansing in the Balkans: Nationalism and the Destruction of Tradition.* London: Routledge, Várdy, Steven Béla and Tooley, T. Hunt (eds.) (2003), *Ethnic Cleansing in Twentieth Century Europe*, New York: Columbia University Press.

mild as possible. […] Savages wipe out minorities: civilized men take testimonials from them."[10]

Having witnessed the recent break-up of several federal states and the bloodshed that accompanied the disintegration of Yugoslavia, many people think that meeting, satisfying the demands of the various national groups of a State inevitably leads to wars and the proliferation of states. On the contrary, it is usually not the demands of the various national groups which is to blame for ethnic tensions, but the unwillingness of many governments to meet the legitimate, natural aspirations. States which built a centralist system based on the hegemony of one national group, and often try to maintain it by force, have been experiencing great difficulties, an upsurge of separatist movements. The recent history of many Asian and African countries bears this statement out.

In Asia and Africa the problem of multi-national states is even more serious than in Europe. In countries where there was a lasting colonial presence the so-called "liberation movements" directed against the imperial masters united the many ethnic groups, but with independence gained this unity proved difficult to maintain. Nigeria, Congo, Sri Lanka, Rwanda are some of the more obvious examples for that, but the most telling case is Iraq. That country was an artificial creation following World War I, putting together Sunni and Shiite Arabs and non-Arabic Kurds, with smaller national-ethnic groups, such as the Turkomans and the Chaldeans, interspersed. The British mandate tried to be fair to all, but independence soon led to domination by the Sunni Arabs, numerically outnumbered by the Shiite Arabs. Saddam's infamous dictatorship was especially brutal for the Shiites and the Kurds. That's why it is so difficult today to introduce a democratic system which satisfies all the national/religious groups, and why there is not enough mutual confidence for a federal arrangement. In Afghanistan "nation building" is hardly possible, because there is no such thing as an Afghan nation. It is an amalgamation of tribal territories (the overall population is 45 percent Pashtun; 25 percent Hazara; 19 percent Tajik; 8 percent Uzbek), with co-nationals living in the neighbouring states. On the other hand India, South Africa, Kenya, even Pakistan are more promising cases, mainly on account of the fact that those states recognize

---

[10] Arnold J. Toynbee (1915), *Nationality and the War*, London and Toronto: J.M. Dent, 17, 20.

the separate identities of the various regions, historic provinces and national groups. We can safely say that *one of the key problems facing the world is finding a way for the harmonious coexistence and collaboration of the many national/ethnic groups living together in one state.* While open ethnic cleansing will hopefully not reappear, as the international community made it clear in Bosnia and in Kosovo that it would not tolerate it, it is also essential to prevent the tensions and conflicts caused by national oppression, mistreatment and second-class citizenship, which are only too frequent even today.

The melting-pot of America is rather the exception than the rule, but even there the various immigrant communities increasingly resist assimilation and keep much of their separate culture. Most multi-national countries have not been a melting pot for their national groups, and attempts at assimilating them may easily turn the country into a powder keg. History abounds in examples. What most national, ethnic and religious communities are seeking is only guarantees for survival. Usually they do not demand separation or a change in borders, but the right to retain their language and culture, to have their children educated in the language of their forbears, and to have local officials and representatives chosen from their own community, who understand their way of life. This is what the claim for autonomy and collective rights is all about.

Most multi-national states have **not** been neutral in matters concerning the national minorities.[11] On the contrary, state authorities have often been a tool for their mistreatment, or even elimination through expulsion, assimilation - and sometimes by outright massacre. Too many people tend to think that life is a zero-sum game, that rights accorded to a national minority are bound to hurt the interests of the majority. While open discrimination is no longer the rule, more subtle versions of it are evident. Members of the minority are seldom represented in the civil service, the officers' corps, and the police. Street names, signs, inscriptions, displays usually ignore their language. The proportion of students coming

---

[11] A most illuminative treatise on the 'non-national' state, where "every cultural, linguistic, religious, or ethnic group could have its own school system, or more generally put, its own cultural 'infrastructure,' subsidized on an equal basis by the state," is by Koen Koch in (1993), *Minorities. The New Europe's Old Issue*, Ed. by Ian M. Cuthbertson and Jane Leibowitz. Prague, etc.: Institute for EastWest Studies.

from the national minorities is considerably lower in high schools and even more at universities than that of the members of the national majority. Local officials make no effort to speak the language of the minorities even in regions where the latter form a substantial group, often a local majority. There is also a deliberate policy of moving people from the majority population into the areas inhabited mainly by the minority, so as to colonize those regions and change their ethnic composition. All that is a constant source of tension, leads to massive unemployment among the minority, or, where the formerly closed borders have opened up, to emigration, especially among the educated younger people. The result is an alarming decrease in the number of the minority, leading to growing exasperation.

The idea of the exclusive nation-state is not in line with modern democracy. The only way to create homogeneous nation-states - short of massive ethnic killings - would be through exchanges of population on a vast scale, involving tens of millions of people, at enormous financial cost and causing untold human sufferings. Some territorial readjustments would also be inevitable in such an arrangement. So it follows that the only real solution for the national minorities is to have democracy on every level, territorial or cultural self-government in which every national group cold participate in accordance with its proportion.[12]

One thing is certain, I am afraid. The issue of the national and ethnic minorities is a time-bomb threatening with explosion, and a preventive solution must be found, combining national legislation and enlightened practice with international action like the codification of rights, monitoring their observance and a mechanism of enforcement. The minorities need guarantees for a decent life and a future. Individual minority rights are not enough. That approach is exactly like the notorious adage that the rich and the poor have an equal right to sleep under the bridge, to be homeless. Real equality requires opportunities, and a positive, at minimum neutral attitude by the authorities.

It is often argued that there is no such thing as collective rights or group rights for minorities. Although both the UN (in Article 27 in the

---

[12] Resolution 1334 (2003) of the Council of Europe, "Positive experiences of autonomous regions as a source of inspiration for conflict resolution in Europe." http://assembly.coe.int/Documents/AdoptedText/TA03/EREC1609.htm.

International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights) and the Council of Europe (most explicitly in the 1993 Recommendation 1201 of its Parliamentary Assembly) speaks of rights that could be exercised "in community with others in their group" and that local self-government is desirable, too many European countries do not endorse the idea. But no one denies that there exists xenophobia, racial and national discrimination. Those prejudices are always directed not at an individual but at the member(s) of a particular ethnic, religious or national group or community. If the denial of rights can take place on a collective basis, then legal guarantees should be also available for a whole community.

The events of the last twelve years demonstrate that the way to achieve and preserve a truly multi-ethnic state does not lie in deliberately and artificially mixing national groups that speak different languages, follow different religions and even use different alphabets. In my view the way to peace, cooperation and prosperity is to be found in allowing each national group to have self-government, in another word, autonomy. In many cases this autonomy can have a territorial basis, but the majority nation tends to oppose it. There is an alternative solution, the voluntary association of the individual members of the minority into a corporate body, like the various denominations are organized. The first to propose that was Lajos Kossuth in his exile in Italy, where in 1862 he proposed the creation of a "Danubian Confederation." In the 1900s that very idea was taken up by two Austrians, Karl Renner and Otto Bauer, using the term "cultural autonomy." What is essential is an arrangement where the state is decentralized, where the smaller regional units are based on traditions and on ethnic/national composition, where those units decide over their own affairs and receive a due proportion of the taxes paid by the citizens.

We, Hungarians, offer an object lesson both on how not to handle this issue and also, in the 1990s, how to offer self-government to the national minorities. In 1848 Hungary transformed itself into a modern constitutional state. Then well over half the population spoke no Hungarian. The small Slovak, Romanian and Serb elite (mainly lawyers and priests) demanded territorial autonomy, but what the liberal and enlightened Hungarian political class offered was only full individual rights and freedoms. That made it easier for the Habsburg court to incite "the nationalities" against the Hungarians. In July 1849, the Hungarian

Parliament realized its mistake and offered generous terms for the non-Hungarians, but it was too late, Hungary was crushed by the army of the intervening Russian Czar. When Hungary made a compromise with the dynasty in 1867 one of the first acts of the restored Parliament was the passing of a Law on Nationalities. It was a good liberal piece of legislation, and offered rather extensive language rights, but refused to recognize the non-Hungarians as state-forming elements with territorial autonomy. Hungarians paid dearly for their political avarice in 1919, when their historic kingdom was partitioned, and well over three million Hungarians were detached from the nation to become ill-treated minorities in Czechoslovakia, Romania and Yugoslavia.

After the trials of the Second World War and having witnessed brutal treatment (expulsion and often massacres) of the Hungarians in the territories ceded to the neighbouring states, Hungary finally learned the lesson. In 1993 passed a law on its own national minorities giving them self-government on local level and cultural autonomy on national level. With minor shortcomings the system appears to be working.

I have already mentioned several good examples in Western Europe, whether larger federal units (Scotland, Wales, Northern Ireland in the U.K., Catalonia and the Basque country in Spain), or local autonomies like South Tyrol, the Åland Islands. Autonomy prevented the renewal of violence and partition in Macedonia. It may now be introduced in Kosovo for the Serbs, in case of the independence of that territory would be recognized. Then some form of autonomy for the non-Serbs in the Vojvodina cannot be denied. That is what the Hungarians in Slovakia and Romania are also striving for, particularly in the south-eastern corner of Transylvania, where Hungarians live in a compact bloc.

The EU and NATO have great influence over all the countries that aspire for membership in those organizations. That influence could have been used to induce governments for guaranteeing the rights and interests of the national minorities through decentralization or "devolution." European integration goes hand-in-hand with regionalism, at least in the West. But apparently a Hungarian region in Romania and in Slovakia is still an anathema for the majority.

The lessons go beyond Europe. In Asia federalism based on autonomies appears to be the only way for respecting national and

religious differences **within existing states.** The survival of Afghanistan and Iraq hinges on that. This is the way to avoid new Bosnias and Kosovos, to prevent new ethnic cleansings in the continents with vast populations. But the model is still to be found in Europe, and particularly in Central Europe. "The various nationalities of Central Europe are so interlocked, and their racial frontiers are so unsuitable as the frontiers of really independent sovereign states, that the only satisfactory and permanent working policy for them lies in their incorporation in a non-national superstate. We can delay, but we cannot prevent the eventual coming of that superstate." Those words were written in October, 1918 in a Foreign Office memorandum by the British Leo Amery, a close adviser to Prime Minister Lloyd George.[13] It took a long time for that truism to come close to be realized, but today European integration indeed promises to guarantee the peaceful co-existence and cooperation of the peoples who live in the ethnic mosaic of Central and Eastern Europe.

---

[13] The Austro-Hungarian Problem. Memorandum by Leo S. Amery, 20 October 1918. Public Record Office, London. FO 371/3136/17223. Cf. G. Jeszenszky, "British Policy towards Central Europe during Word War I," in Ignác Romsics (ed.) (1995), *20th Century Hungary and the Great Powers,* Atlantic Research and Publications. New York: Columbia University Press, p. 66-67.

TRAVEL AND IMAGES: HOW TO OVERCOME PREJUDICES IN INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS?

Enrique Banús[*]

Abstract

"Wer den Dichter will verstehn,
Muss in Dichters Lande gehn"
(Johann Wolfgang von Goethe)

Prejudices do exist. And they are a part of International (and furthermore of Inter-etchnic and Inter-Confessional) Relations. They can play an essential role. At least since the 18th century, writers, philosophers and also the common people were convinced that travel is a good way to overcome prejudices, to introduce dialogue instead of stereotypes. And that dialogue could contribute to the comprehension of "the other". In the European Union, mainly programs realted with the University and, more generally with the joung people, are based on this philosophy: they have to travel (to exchange), in order to know "the other" in the real situation.
Is all this true? Is travel really contributing to the knowledge, to the establishment of relations which overcome prejudices, which open for alterity? Some examples from former centuries seem on the contrary to suggst that travel can confirm prejudices.
Under which conditions can trevel be a positive element for transfrontier contacts?

---

[*] Profesor Banus has done studies in German Philology, Romance Philology, and Comparative Literature at the universities of Bonn and Aachen. M.A. and Ph.D., University of Aachen. He has been lecturer at the Universities of Aquisgrain, Cologne, Bonn, and Paderborn, in Germany. Since 1988, he teaches European and Comparative Literature at the University of Navarra. Director of the Centre for European Studies, University of Navarra, since its creation in 1996. Jean Monnet Chair ad personam "European Culture" (2003). Since 1998, Deputy Director of the Board of the Humanities at the University of Navarra and Coordinator of the section of Cultural Management. Among others, Member of the Expert Group "Intercultural Dialogue" of the European Commission. Chair of the Research Group "Culture and Society" at the University of Navarra.

In the myth, Europe has travelled, not exactly on her own will; Zeus has "invited" her to a travel. And since then, Europeans have travelled: for making war, for making love, for praying, for studying, for making business, for finding jobs; they have also travelled because they were persecuted, they had to go in exile, they have be carried to the camps, the have been sent to the gulags. They have travelled because they have wanted to find El Dorado, because they wanted to find a shorter way to the world Marco Polo was describing, because they wanted to conquer territories, to find slaves; because they wanted to meet other peoples, to preach them their faith, to bring to them a better world. Sometimes it has succeeded, sometimes not. The old heroes in European literature, Ulysses or Aeneas, have travelled, and these travels have had marked the history of literature. In the Bible, Abraham has to abandon, due to God's manifestation, his land and to travel toward the Promise Land. Twice, from Egypt and from Babylon, the elected people have to travel back to this Land: 40 years in the desert, the first time. In some of the Gospels, Jesus' life is seen as a way to Jerusalem, where his life al Redeemer will find its fulfilment.

Yes, Europe is intrinsically connected with travel. Also in a metaphoric way: texts and stories and music and art; topics and arguments and motifs have travelled throughout Europe, helping to create a space in which many cultural elements were shared.

The Enlightenment in the 18th century will promote travels in its desire to know other cultures, the Romanticism will underline this tendency: the exotic worlds abroad or near attract really or mentally not only the writers and painters. Living between Enlightenment and Preromanticism, Johann Gotfried Herder could write: "Wer Geld und Gelegenheit hat, der reise"[1]. Plenty of Romantic enthusiasm, Joseph von Eichendorff introduced in one of his novels a song in which is said that travel a gift of God is[2].

There is not only an enthusiasm for travelling. There is also the conviction that travel can help to understand the other, other cultures,

---

[1] Johann Gottfried Herder (1967), "Ueber Thomas Abbts Schriften", in *Sämtliche Werke,* ed. by Bernhard Suphan, Hildesheim vol. II, p. 359.

[2] "Wem Gott will rechte Gunst erweisen, den schickt er in die weite Welt" (Joseph von Eichendorff: „Der frohe Wandersmann", in: *Aus dem Leben eines Taugenichts*).

other realities, and people living far away but sharing human characteristics which are common to human mankind. Again, Herder can be quoted when he wrote:

> Wie nun der Wanderer kein süßeres Vergnügen hat, als wenn er allenthalben, auch wo ers nicht vermuthete, Spuren eines ihm ähnlich, denkenden, empfindenden Genius gewahr wird: so entzückend ist uns (...) die Echo aller Zeiten und Völker (...)[3].

Goethe will express very clearly the idea that oinly travelling one can understand the other:

> "Wer den Dichter will verstehn,
> Muss in Dichters Lande gehn".

And this probably could be applied not only to the poets and other artist, but to every person. In this conviction fosters nowadays the European Union all kind of programmes including travelling, programmes mainly for the youth people, who will be responsible for this European project which has signified the opening of the frontiers, the creation of a huge space in which the free movement is guaranteed. But not only this: well-sounding programmes like *Leonardo*, *Socrates*, *Erasmus* or *Comenius* encourage to travel, to know other Europeans in their environment, in their culture and, if possible, in their language. Exchange is one of the keywords of the European politics to overcome prejudices, to establish relations, of course, intercultural relations.

But prejudices do exist. They are a part of International (and furthermore of Inter-ethnic and Inter-Confessional) Relations, especially when these relations are realised not by diplomats or civil servants, but by citizens in their daily life. We have indeed to be aware that most of the intercultural relations are realised by the citizens, who meet each other on the street, in cities in which more and more citizens live coming from different cultural backgrounds. And all the efforts of the authorities to maintain a civilised intercultural dialogue will be vain (and frustrating for the authorities) if the citizens are unable to maintain also civilised intercultural dialogues in their daily life. And what could be better for this

---

[3] Johann Gottfried Herder: *Ideen zur Philosophie der Geschichte der Menschheit*, in: op. cit., vol. XIV, p. 231.

than travelling? Herder's recommendation indicates the way: "Wer Geld und Gelegenheit hat, der reise". Is this as easy as we suppose?

A reflection about one important travel can help to answer this question, a travel in the XVIIIth century, a "Zeit des Reisens und des Reiseschrifttums"[4]. 1799 came to the Bask country a man who should become very famous: Wilhelm von Humboldt. The travel was, as he wrote to Schiller, "eine zufällige und halb erzwungene Wahl"[5]: a friend, who has businnes relations to the Bask Country, invites him: "so fasste ich schnell den Entschluss, den Vorschlag anzunehmen"[6]. And he is fascinated: many factors –so he wrote– "flössten mir (...) grosse Lust ein, langer in dieser Gegend zu verweilen"[7]. What has he found in that part of Europe, what has caused this fascination, what has he seen? His further research has done that he could write, that therefore "stieg meine Begierde, das Land selbst genau zu durchreisen, aufs höchste"[8]. His discovering has to do with his research interest. A first remark: the discovery on the travel has to do with the interest. What has he found?

He travelled a second time (1801) and confirmed what he has „seen" in the first stay[9], which –I repeat- was not long prepared, was –so to say-spontaneous, without prejudices. After the second travel he gave in a letter the key: "Was (...) Spanien an uralten Bewohnern besass (...), kann man allein in dieser Gegend, an der Küste des einsamen und unbesuchten Oceanes antreffen"[10]. This is what he has seen and what has fascinated him: Spanish old, pre-Roman population is living in the Bask country. And is maintaining its peculiarities, which connect them with the previous times,

---

[4] Hans-Joachim Lope (1985), "Der Reiz des Fremden", in: *Neues Handbuch der Literaturwissenschaft*. Vol. 16, Wiesbaden, p. 620.

[5] Letter from 26.6.1799, quoted in F.C. Ebrard (ed.) (1911), *Neue Briefe Wilhelm von Humboldts an Schiller*. Berlin, p. 251.

[6] 429.

[7] Wilhelm von Humboldt (1979), *Werke*, ed. by Andreas Flitner and Klaus Giel. Vol. II. Darmstadt, 3rd. ed. p. 428.

[8] Ibid., p. 428.

[9] He has published two books about the Bask language: *Berichtigungen und Zusätze zu Adelungs Mithridates über die kantabrische oder bastische Sprache* (Berlin 1817) and *Prüfung der Untersuchungen über die Urbewohner Spaniens vermittelst der Vaskischen Sprache* (Berlin 1821).

[10] Wilhelm von Humboldt, op. cit., p. 421.

centuries ago; they are the rest of the first populkation in Spain: La "die Stammeigenthümlichkeit der Vasken weist auf entfernte Jahrhunderte, auf (...) die ersten Bevölkerer Spaniens zurück"[11]. The Basks do interest him because they have not lost their independency, their "Selbstständigkeit", "ihre Eigenthümlichkeit und ihre ursprüngliche Einfachheit"[12] -not in political, but in linguistic and cultural matters-.

This is what he has "seen" in the second travel, in which he is looking precisely for these elements. Because in the first travel he had "discovered" them: indeed, he had contacts with "los más destacados vascólogos de la época"[13], the most important experts on Bask questions in Spain[14], which at that moment are defending the quoted thesis, which Humboldt adopted "por su dependencia precisamente de las fuentes españolas"[15].

But these theses find an enthusiastic acceptation by Humboldt because his inner world was prepared for them: in some sense, he was waiting for them. It is not only an apparently scientific explanation which fascinates him. This explanation is being linked with some concepts which are key concepts in Humboldt's mental world: for him, the Basks "sind (...) in einem Zustand ursprünglicher Sitten-Einfalt geblieben, und haben immerfort die Eigenthümlichkeit ihres Nationalcharakters, und vor allem den alten Geist der Freiheit und Unabhängigkeit bewahrt"[16]: Ursprünglichkeit, Eigentümlichkeit, Selbständigkeit, Einfachheit: these are key-concepts but also Nationalcharakter – and the Bewahrung of all them.

Humboldt is moving in categories which are very common in his time, categories which link him to the Preromanticism in which Rousseau's influence is very present, Rousseau, who separates himself from the

---

[11] Ibid., p. 426.

[12] Ibid., p. 420.

[13] Georg Bossong (1984), "Wilhelm von Humboldt y Hugo Schuchardt: dos eminentes vascólogos alemanes", in: *Arbor* 119, p. 163-181, p. 165.

[14] Bossong (op. cit., p.165) mentions Juan Antonio de Moguel and Pablo Pedro de Astarloa; Tovar adds Larramendi and Erro (Antonio Tovar: *Mitologia e ideología sobre la lengua vasca. Historia de los estudios sobre ella*. Madrid, 1980, p. 154.)

[15] Tovar, op. cit., p. 11.

[16] Humboldt, op. cit., p. 419.

Enlighten cosmopolitanism[17]. This is a cultural environment in which a key author in Germany, Herder appreciates the diversity and sees the Babel Tower as a positive development[18]. Like Humboldt, who dedicates a work to "Die Verschiedenheit des menschlichen Sprachbaus".

It is a mental world who appreciates even –with Rousseau's word- "simplicité des premiers temps" – and just this have discovered in the Bask language the experts Humbold meets in his first travel, and just this fascinates Humboldt in that travel and moves him to further discoveries in the second stay.

But Humboldt is also a son of his time in another sense: Jean Starobinski has analysed that the main problem of Rousseaunianism has been "la réconciliation de la nature et de la culture dans une sociéte qui retrouve la nature et dépasse les injustices de la civilisation"[19]. It is a paradox, maybe contradictory time[20], but Humboldt is fascinated because in his view the Basks have realised to overcome this contradiction. Indeed, they have been able to maintain their substance whilst being able "viele der wohlthätigsten Früchte Europaeischer Aufklärung glücklich (...) zu verpflanzen"[21]. A proof of the eclecticism with characterises some authors of that time: appreciation of the roots but appreciation also of the progress...

---

[17] See Rousseau's ambigous opinion on cosmopolitanism in Jean-Jacques Rousseau: *Oeuvres completes*. Paris, 1964-69, vol. 3, p. 966 and 4, p. 249. See also the works of Joseph Texte: *Rousseau et les origines du cosmopolitisrne littéraire* (Paris, 1895), F. Haymann: *Weltbürgertum und Vaterlandsliebe in der Staatslehre Rousseaus und Fichtes* (Berlin, 1924 ; with a strong nationalistic perspective) and Friedrich Meinecke: *Weltbürgertum und Nationalstaat* (München, 1962). As Feldmann sums up, the absolute cosmopolitanism would be suspicious: "So erscheint Weltbürger als Gegensatz zu Patriot!" (Werner Feldmann: "Modewörter des 18. Jahrhunderts", in: *Zeitschrift für deutsche Wortforschung* 6 (1904/05), p. 347).

[18] Cf. el capítulo correspondiente en BORST.

[19] Jean Starobinski: *JJ. Rousseau. La transparence et l'obstacle*, Paris, 1957, p. 37. See also the interesting analysis in Robert Spaemann: Genetisches zum Naturbegriff des Aufklarung. En: *Archiv für Begriffsgeschichte XI* (1967).

[20] Cf. Paul Van Tieghem (1947-48), *Le preromantisme*, Paris, vol. 1, p. 291 and Paul Hazard (1958), *El pensamiento europeo en el siglo XVIII*, Madrid, p. 457, 468 and 557.

[21] Humboldt, op. cit., p. 420.

No doubt: there are reasons, profound reasons for Humboldt's enthusiasm. But the looking to this travel "experiences" is moving to certain scepticism. Before analysing in more detailed way what this example means, another element of this travel has to be underlined: its immense impact: Humboldt has become an authority in the field of Bask studies –"(er) hat (...) in Wahrheit Epoche gemacht"[22]. And although "sostiene en nuestro tema tesis bien poco científicas"[23], with him the thesis of Baskiberism –it means, the thesis that tha Basks are the remaining rest of the Iberian population has achieved international relevance and has conditioned the view of the Bask language till the XXth century. This has been often critisised: "Cet écrit célebre dont les conclusions ont été adoptées de confiance par nombre de savants, a retardé pendant près d'un siècle l'étude vraiment scientifique des origines iberiennes"[24]. The critics are justified; we don't know nowadays what the origins of the Bask language are, but we are able to affirm with some fundament that they are not related with the Ibers.

Humboldt wanted to see the surviving of a people linked to the origins – and he has seen it. This consequence of a travel has had considerable importance for the scientific history.

Around one hundred and thirty years later, another German speaking intellectual arrived in Spain, due to very different reasons. Heinrich Beck had to abandon 1933 Germany, persecuted by the Gestapo, because he has edited a forbidden newspaper. Three years after his arrival we find him in Madrid in the waiting room of a doctor, doing what is very common in a waiting room: taking a journal, without any special intention. But suddenly: "Der Blitz hatte eingeschlagen –he wrote years after-, ich war verliebt, wie sonst nur in Frauen, kaufte mir die 'Zigeunerromanzen' und

---

[22] Ernst Ruprecht (1962/63), "Wilhelm von Humboldt und Spanien", in: *Festschrift für Johannes Vincke.* Vol. 1. Madrid, p. 671.

[23] Tovar, op. cit., p. 11.

[24] E. Philipon (1909), *Les ibères*. Paris, p. 2. Bossong adds: "desafortunadamente, la tesis del vascoiberismo obtuvo rango científico y audiencia universal debido a la autoridad de Humboldt" (Bossong, op. cit., p. 166). And Tovar: "otro hecho que influyó desfavorablemente en los estudios vascos fue la prestigiosa tradición basada en Humboldt. La tesis vasco-iberista esterilizó en buena parte los estudios sobre las lenguas primitivas de la Península" (Tovar, op. cit., p. 14).

übersetzte, trunken, auf nichts anderes bedacht, krank, bombardiert, von des großen Bruders Anhängern verhaftet, hungrig, weniger hungrig, ganz gleichgültig, ich übersetzte"[25]. In this travel he had discovered an author, with whom he will remain connected for the whole life: In 1946, after Lorca's death, Beck got with the mediation of Thomas Mann and Georg Kaiser the "Alleinrechte"[26] for Lorca's translation into German; at least, this is the name he himself gave to the situation, which is not so clear as he has –successfully- maintained till his death. Federico's brother Francisco had sent to him from the exile in New York a telegram which could be interpreted in that way[27]. In any case, without entering the juridical problem, during decades all the texts of García Lorca will be known in Germany through Beck's translation. It is well-known that a translator is an interpreter, a mediator, and that he presents only one translation among many others. After a first enthusiastic reception[28], nowadays' criticism is very distant in front of the version Beck has presented to the German audience: his text –so different critics- are "getragen" y "betulich"[29]; one author who is studying Lorca's reception in Germany uses the not very friendly denomination "Edelkitsch"[30]. In his translations –it is no place for analysing it- Heinrich Beck transmits a García Lorca, who is "more Spanish", "more Andalusian" than the original – at least according to the common stereotypes: García Lorca sounds very baroque and, therefore, very Spanish, with all the "classic" (or better: Romantic) elements in this image: "passion", "temperament", "mystery", "orientalism", but also "violent"... a good part of "black Spain" can be found there[31] - and Baroque,

---

[25] Heinrich Beck (1981), *Über Lorca*, Basel p. 119.

[26] Beck, op. cit., p. 120.

[27] Francisco spoke about "authorised" translator.

[28] Heinz Politzer wrote about the first edition of the *Romancero gitano*'s translation r: "Die Übersetzung (...) ist wunderschön. (...) Sie hat eine Volkstümlichkeit und einen Adel, eine Arglosigkeit und einen Schwung, die sie hinter die Urschrift nicht allzu weit werden zurücktreten lassen" (Heinz Politzer, (1939), „Zigeunerromanze"; in: *Mass und Wert* 2, p. 550).

[29] Gustav Siebenmann (1988),"Lorca im deutschen Sprachraum - Geschichte einer Verzerrung", in *Arcaduz* 3 p. 17s.

[30] Horst Rogmann (1981), *García Lorca*, Darmstadt.

[31] On Spain's image in Germany see Werner Brüggemann (1958), *Cervantes und die Figur des Don Quijote in Kunstanschauung und Dichtung der deutschen Romantik*,

a lot of Baroque, which is –according to some very influential philologists of former times- one of the most stable characteristics of the Spanish literature – and of the Spanish character[32]. The audience is not scandalised by Beck's Lorca: his prejudices do coincide with the audience's prejudices, so that a critic can enthusiastically proclaim: García Lorca is "die Stimme Spaniens"[33]. And Beck himself underlines again and again that Lorca is an Andalusian[34]; he recognises: "Wir spüren Traditionen des Barocks"[35]. And he put him into the frame of his image of Spain: "Irrationalität und Mystizismus haben sich wohl in keinem Lande Europas so dauerhaft mit realen Lebensvorstellungen vermengt wie im Bereich der Iberischen Halbinsel"[36].

"Wer den Dichter will verstehn, muss in Dichters Lande gehn"[37]. The Humboldt and the Beck examples show that the consequence not always does succeed. Indeed, Beck has gone to the poet's country, and he has radically misunderstood him. Travel seems a simple procedure (when we forget the normal organisational problems, the waiting times at airports, the lost luggage and some kind of incidences); but as intellectual activity it seems really not complicated: you go there where you want to go, you open your eyes, see the world, try to establish contacts with the human being living there... In reality, travel is an immense complex procedure, a hermeneutic process, in which observations and expectations are intrinsically linked and cannot be separate. The dialogue with the "new"

Münster (with a good presentation of the "Enlighten" and the "Romantic" image of Spain) and Werner Brüggemann: "Die Spanienberichte des 18. und 19. Jahrhunderts und ihre Bedeutung für die Formung und Wandlung des deutschen Spanienbildes"; in: *Spanische Forschungen der Görresgesellschaft*, Reihe I, XII, 1956, p. 1-146, and also Georg Herbert WALZ (1965), *Spanien und der spanische Mensch in der deutschen Literatur vom Barock zur Romantik*. Erlangen

[32] See above all Ludwig Pfandl (1929), *Geschichte der spanischen Nationalliteratur in ihrer Blütezeit*. Freiburg

[33] Henning Rischbieter (1962), "Federico García Lorca", in: Siegfried Melchinger (ed.): *Welttheater*, Braunschweig, p. 464.

[34] "Es soll noch einmal hervorgehoben werden, daß Lorca Andalusier ist" (Beck, op. cit., p. 13).

[35] Ibid., 24.

[36] Ibid., 36.

[37] Johann Wolfgang von Goethe: *West-östlicher Divan*.

reality is not established ex novo, but from the standpoint to which someone has arrived with his or her whole history, made by experiences, previous dialogues, imagined worlds, cultural experiences (readings, music, pop culture...), narration of previous travellers you know, traditions –living in your culture- of contact with this other culture... In travel literature "mischen sich Beobachtungen und Projektionen"[38]. Therefore, travel sometimes confirms what Ernst Gombrich has described for some scientific work: "Was man den hermeneutischen Zirkel genannt hat, die Suche nach Erhärtung der ursprünglichen Intuition, wird dort, wo nur vermeintliche Bestätigungen gelten dürfen, zu einem ganz gewöhnlichen Zirkelschluß"[39].

When, therefore, fostering travel as way to know the others and to overcome distance, estrangement, prejudices, how can be assured that intercultural travel can be really an instrument of comprehension, of dialogue, of living together? When asking this question, we should not forget that many of not all travellers become, when returning, mediators: they tell about the travel and the country they have seen[40]; the German proverb says: "Wenn einer eine Reise tut, hat etwas zu erzählen". They convoke their relatives or their friends for looking the pictures they have made –now, they can also been sent via e-mail- or the videos they have –so to say- produced, although in some cases of the video or photo travellers you are not sure if they really have perceived the country in which they were or only the selective view through the objective. In any case, here a double mediation is given. Mediators play a considerable role in cultural life, but also in intercultural dialogue: travelling to the country you "know" through the telling of former travellers (or through other forms of mediation: travel books, TV-programs, internet information), you will be confronted at first with this interpretation you maybe will confirm or

---

[38] Uwe Japp (1976) "Aufgeklärtes Europa und natürliche Südsee", in Hans Joachim Picchotta (ed.): *Reise und Utopie*, Frankfurt, p. 23.

[39] Ernst Gombrich (1986) "*Sind eben alles Menschen gewesen*". *Zum Kulturrelativismus in den Geisteswissenschaften*, in: Albrecht Schöne (ed.): *Akten des VII. Internationalen Germanisten- Kongresses*. Tomo I, Tübingen, p. 22.

[40] The question "How was your travel?" has a long tradition in European culture: Ulysses or Aeneas are confronted with this question, and the telling of their travels conform a good part of the Odyssey and the Aeneis.

modify with your direct impressions. If you will not have occasion to travel to this part of the world, your image will be made by the results of the different mediation, you can of course select and priorise according to the authority the different mediators have for you.

Mediation is as such again a hermeneutic process, highly complicated therefore: in every telling, in commenting pictures, in transmitting impressions prejudices are inevitably activated: they form a package with the comment or the telling, a package which cannot be separate.

After this brief theoretical approach, again the question: how can be assured that intercultural travel can be really an instrument of comprehension, of dialogue, of living together?

"Only with the heart you can see well", this is the secret the fox gives to the prince in Antoine de Saint-Exupéry's novel "Le petit prince". He has done a long travel, with a motivation which is not only positive: he is tired about the rare flower which has arrived to his planet, in which such a flower was completely unknown – exotic, therefore, and interesting. But also very exhausting, because it is exigent and capricious, and the little prince has continuously to take care about it. One day it is too much for him. He travels looking for friends, with an open mind and no prejudices. He visits several planets in which only absurd persons are living, persons fixed in their own world, unable to establish a real relation with the visitor: each one of them tries to instrumentalise him, to convert him in the object he needs for fulfilling his own desires: for the King he becomes a subject; for the vain man, an admirer; for the expert in geography, an explorer. The drinker simply ignores him and the other one, who is counting the stars, feels perturbed by him, like a big fly that arrived to his planet time ago and caused that he could not fulfil his task to count the stars.

Only the unique inhabitant of a very small planet is able to provoke his admiration: he is constantly switching on and off a streetlamp. Only he is not living in an egoistic manner, realising only his desires and plans. But the planet is so small – there is no place for a second inhabitant.

After this deception, assessed by the expert in geography, he travels to the earth. With the difficulty that he arrives in the desert – and no one is there. He looks for friends, he asks a serpent he meets. Nothing to do – in the desert there are no inhabitants, no chance to get friends. And he makes a terribly discovery: there are thousands of roses – the flower he has

abandon in his planet was a rose, not unique, not special, a common rose, like thousand others. His deception increases. What sense can have his travel? He has learnt that the world is full of crazy people, absurd in his life sense, unable to establish real relations? And now – sand and only sand, a "waste land" after having now the "Hollow Men", if you want to read this text from the perspective of T.S. Eliot's famous poems.

But now he meets the fox; and the fox is able to tell him a new story, the story of how to make friends. Only now, the travel gets a sense. Openness, patience, the creation of link, the slowly approach, the silent (a certain scepticism towards the uniting power of words, like in some many other literary works of the 10th and 20th centuries!), the power of the look: all these elements are described by the fox as part of this process of dialogue, of becoming friends, a process in which the travel ends.

And only then, looking with the heart, the travel opens for new insights of the world: the prince discovers that his rose was, nevertheless, unique not due to its uniqueness but due to the fact that it is the alone rose of which he had taken care; the fox discovers a new relation to the wheat fields to which he has no relation – now the fields are a remembering of the little prince: the colour of his hair is similar to the fields. And the pilot to whom the prince tells all this story discovers that somewhere in a star his prince is living again, with his flower and with a lamb he has drawn for him and which maybe will eat the flower... And he discovers he can suffer in front of this incertitude and he discovers a new light in one of the stars: it is his friend's star.

The travel has fulfilled the goal. Openness, a sincere heart, the willingness to establish not only contact but friendship, lack of prejudices: all these attitudes have contribute to a successful travel.

There is, unfortunately, only one problem: this travel belongs to the world of fiction; in reality it never could happen. A world without prejudices doesn't exist. Prejudices are part of our system of getting knowledge. The "petit prince"-model can be moving – especially taking into account that it has been published during the World War, in a time in which prejudices are confronting with each other in the most brutal manner – but unrealistic. It can be used as "exemplum", but with so many changes and limitations that its value is very limited. In the real world the question

has to be repeated: how can be assured that intercultural travel can be really an instrument of comprehension, of dialogue, of living together?

"Du sollst Dir kein Bildnis machen!", "don't make an image!" – this word of the Old Testament can be found in Max Frisch's *Diaries* in a new interpretation. In the Bible, God had forbidden the elected people to make sculptures of living beings because of the risk that the people would adore them, a risk which indeed succeeds. But Max Frisch applies this commandment of God to the temptation to live with images of other human beings in the head. Here is a risk, the risk that this image solidifies to a firm conviction: I know you; I know how you are; you always have been so and you never will change. And that attitude can be given in front of individuals or of collectives. The force of the stereotypes hinders the real communication, the perception of the messages the other is sending: they will be interpreted according to the stereotype. In a theatre play from 1964, *Andorra*, Max Frisch himself shows one example of this attitude, which can become fatal for the individual. In this small country, that has not to be identified with the real Andorra, lives Andri, a young boy which is supposed to be the son of the teacher. But he is different, and the Andorranian people explain this because he has been adopted by the teacher. But he is strange, he shows some strange characteristics. Maybe he is a Jew? - people begin to say. Really, he thinks always on money… and he walks like the Jews. Yes, undoubtedly, he is Jew – and the strong neighbours, who threaten to conquer the small country, do hate Jews. At the end, all the inhabitants are convinced: he is a Jew; also his father is convinced, also Andri himself. But his mother appears: she lives in the neighbour country, and many years ago, she had a relation with the teacher. Andri is her and the teacher's son. But in Andorra it was a dishonour to have relations with the neighbours, so it was better to invent the story of the adoption. Now the neighbours come really an conquered Andorra. The courageous Andorranian people, who had promised to defend their country, to fight like heroes, to die before seeing the enemies' victory, accept them friendly. The experts come who has to determine who is a Jew in Andorra and –in a grotesque ceremony- is "scientifically" revealed and has to dye. Only a girl, Barbie, defends him and tries to hinder the execution. Without success.

This parable is referring obviously to the Nazi Germany. But it is also universalising the tendency to live in images, in stereotypes and to interpret the reality according to these images. Travel can indeed confirm the stereotypes. Frisch's warning is speaking also about a real danger to be as traveller, as telling traveller after the return home, a transmitter of these stereotypes instead of a real communication which has not been established because of the lack of the willingness to the effort of be open for the messages, also and especially for that messages which are deconstructing the stereotypes. To abandon the firm thinking about the other presupposes always an effort, the effort to go out from oneself and to begin an always new story.

Humboldt and Heinrich Beck were unable to do this. Probably each of us is unable too. But the effort to try it is enough, the effort to be open for the real other, to accept his or her messages, like the little prince.

THE IMPACT OF THE FRAMEWORK CONVENTION FOR THE PROTECTION OF NATIONAL MINORITIES ON DOMESTIC PUBLIC ADMINISTRATIVE PRACTICES– A RATIONALIST/CONSTRUCTIVIST APPROACH

George-Tudor Florea [*]

Abstract

The current thesis attempts to illustrate the impact of the Framework Convention for the Protection of National Minorities (FCNM) on the domestic public administration's practices in the Central and Eastern Europe region analyzed in direct relation with the states' compliance with it. Furthermore, it provides an assessment of the FCNM document in both its theoretical implications as well as on its practice while evaluating its possibilities to reach effective norm empowerment at the states' public administration level.

Introduction

Re-occurrence of wars and a growing climate of insecurity on the European continent in the aftermath of the Cold War have represented vital main reasons for pressuring the Council of Europe (CoE) to react and take a leading part towards safeguarding national minority rights in Central and Eastern Europe. The fruitful consequence of the CoE led approach has been the adoption of a European based legal document, the Framework Convention for the Protection of National Minorities (FCNM). The Convention represents the outcome of a decision taken at the 1993 Vienna

---

[*] Bucharest born 'traveler', holding a Masters of Arts in International and European Legal Studies from the Utrecht School of Law in the Netherlands as well as a Master of Arts in International Relations and French from the University of St. Andrews in Scotland. His professional career includes an internship with the European Centre for Minority Issues in Flensburg, Germany. Currently, he works as an intern with Peace Brigades International - Switzerland.

Summit of Heads of States and Governments while drawing on other previous important national minority based texts such as the Concluding Document of the Copenhagen Human Dimension Meeting of 1990 and the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Persons belonging to National or Ethnic, Religious or Linguistic Minorities. The FCNM entered into force on the 1st February 1998. The Convention's main aim is to specify the principles which States undertake to respect and ensure the protection of the national minorities living in their territories.

The FCNM represents a realistic but limited success in the context of the CoE's increasing leadership in the promotion of national minority provisions in the Cold War era's aftermath. On the one hand, the FCNM's importance in providing an internationally sustained viable pattern for the safeguarding of national minority rights has been largely accepted by most academicians and policy-makers in the field. It has been deemed "a milestone in the process of strengthening minority protection", as it became the first legally binding multilateral agreement devoted to minority protection to be ratified by the vast majority of CoE Members.[1] Moreover, the FCNM has been considered realistically as the "leading standard" in the international law of minority rights while taking part in the European family of human rights treaties.[2] On this note, many international organizations whose field of action is related to minority rights have stated their support for the Convention. For instance, the European Commission Against Racism and Intolerance (ECRI) expressed that the FCNM represents an instrument "which offers significant safeguards for combating certain forms of racism, racial discrimination, xenophobia and

---

[1] C. Decker, A. McGarry, "Enhancing Minority Governance in Romania", ECMI Roundtable for National Minorities MPs and the Council of National Minorities, ECMI Report #54, 2005 at http://www.ecmi.de/download/Report_54.pdf

[2] See Minority Rights Group International, "The Framework Convention for the Protection of National Minorities, A Guide for Non-Governmental Organizations" at http://www.greekhelsinki.gr/pdf/FCNM-NGO-Guide.pdf and R. Hoffmann, 'Protecting the Rights of National Minorities in Europe. First Experiences with the Council of Europe Framework Convention for the Protection of National Minorities, *German Yearbook of International Law*, 44, 2001.

related intolerance".[3] Henceforth, as a consequence of the international pressure towards creating a secure legal structure which would safeguard the national minorities' rights in the future, the FCNM can been viewed as a vital document that would remain relevant and existent despite changes of governmental structures at national public administration level.

On the other hand, despite representing an initial success in providing for the first legal instrument on national minorities as how to specifically protect their rights, the FCNM's application in the states' domestic scene has been limited specifically with regards to the domestic administration's compliance with the Convention. On this note, the FCNM has been perceived as an "incomplete painting" in that it does not meet all minority aspirations.[4] It indeed stands as a perfect example of a compromised agreement between states and the European institutions which consequently results in only limited success of the national minority provisions' effects on domestic public administrations.[5] The main problem illustrated involves the FCNM's enforcement and application in its signatory states which is deemed as problematic due to a lack of coercive mechanisms as well as of capacity limitations that the treaty suffers from.[6] More specifically, the lack of coercive mechanisms is demonstrated among others in that the FCNM does not provide for sanctions against non-compliance with the treaty's provisions, the CoE monitoring process remains politicized and time-consuming, the states are allowed too much say in the modality of implementing the Convention and, consequently, the lack of accountableness is prevalent.[7] On the other hand, the capacity

---

[3] European Commission Against Racism and Intolerance (ECRI), *All Different, All Equal: From Principle to Practice*, statement, Brussels, 2000.

[4] G. Alfredsson, 'A Frame with an Incomplete Painting. Comparison of FCNM with International Standards and Monitoring Procedures', *International Journal on Minority and Group Rights*, 7/2000, 4.

[5] B. Cilevics, "The Framework Convention for the Protection of National Minorities Within the Context of the Council of Europe", presentation, Strasbourg, 2003 at http://www.coe.int/T/E/human_rights/minorities/5._5_anniversary/PDF_Final_Pres entation_Cilevics.pdf

[6] Above, n. 5.

[7] Above, n. 5.

limitations are perceived through the treaty's ambiguous language and general wording clearly demonstrated by the lack of definition of the key term – national minorities, the inexistence of collective rights or the limited role of the CoE's monitoring mechanism.

Consequently, given the relevance of the above mentioned international debate on the FCNM's effectiveness, the current article assesses the impact of the Convention on the domestic public administration's practices in the Central and Eastern Europe region in direct relation with the states' compliance with it. Since the FCNM does not provide for strong and binding enforcement possibilities per se, I illustrate to what extent compliance can be promoted at the national level in the absence of such mechanisms. Consequently, I emphasize that the most effective empowerment scheme that the CoE may provide for, vis-à-vis the FCNM's success in the domestic administration system, would need to be based on a combination of augmented enforcement and management techniques which can ultimately lead towards a more efficient implementation of the treaty.

My approach and rationale behind the analysis of the FCNM's impact is based on two main theories, rationalism and constructivism, that attempt to provide explanations for states' norm compliance and the norm's subsequent empowerment in the legislation and practice of a domestic public administration which offer relevant pathways towards understanding processes of political transformation and change. On the one hand, the rationalists are interested in how the incentives posed by the political environment affect the strategic behavior of state actors while attempting to maximize certain interests or preferences, thus making strategic choices. On the other hand, constructivists investigate how persuasion, the environment, social learning, or deliberation affect a state through the propagation of universally accepted shared ideas accomplished through a process of elite learning. Consequently, while rationalism promotes treaty coercion, cost/benefit calculations and material incentives, constructivism is based on elite learning, socialization and social

norms. The 'rationalist-constructivist divide' has been very trendy in political science and sociological studies in the last fifteen years. A huge amount of political research has been done on both the rationale for incentive-based behavior of states as well as on the key non-strategic co-operation based instruments for promoting constructive exchanges with international institutions.[8] Despite a large amount of literature analyzing the two concepts separately by preferring to focus on one sole variable, it has been argued recently that the divided approach has its own limits and weaknesses in not providing a complete systemic picture of reasons for processes of change in the world politics. Henceforth, a combined approach of the two variables has been preferred recently in various think tank forums and in the work of prominent sociologists and political scientists.[9] Additionally, the FCNM's evaluation shall be assessed in connection with the two relevant theories, rationalism and constructivism. Indeed, as an international treaty, the FCNM provides a relevant example since it can be applied to both theoretical approaches. Furthermore, its possibilities for a more effective norm empowerment shall be assessed and promoted in direct connection with a combined approach of rationalism and constructivism based elements correlated in a certain dose depending, among others, on the democratic level of the society in question. Henceforth, the main problem identified in relation to the FCNM's implementation is that it is indeed based on both rationalist and constructivist mechanism rationale but each is applied only to a limited extent. With regards to rationalism, the FCNM's limited application is due to its restricted enforcement possibilities. This represents a non-sufficient approach towards pressuring the domestic administration in implementing the treaty fully. Concerning the constructivist theory, its application allows for limited managerial possibilities by the states' administration in allowing it to effectively govern the FCNM's application at the national level. This is

---

[8] For an enhanced understanding of the 'rationalist-constructivist' divide, see the various works of the following authors: Moravcsik, Schimmelfenig, Kelly, Chayes, Checkel.

[9] See the essays by Katzentstein, Keohane, Krasner, Finnemore, Sikkink, Kahler, March, Olsen in the *International Organization* issue of Autumn 1998. Moreover, see, T. Risse, "Let's Argue: Persuasion, and Deliberation in International Relations", Vienna, 1998.

due primarily to the capacity limitations of the treaty. It does not provide for a definition of the central term, its language is ambiguous and it does not encompass and provide for efficient mechanisms for good implementation.

In the current article, while analyzing the FCNM's overall impact in the member states' public administrations, I shall firstly analyze the FCNM document in which I shall depict its main theoretical provisions and control mechanisms taken from a legal perspective. Secondly, I shall provide an introduction of the two main theories used for the assessment of the FCNM's norm empowerment. Thirdly, I shall provide an evaluation of the successes as well as the failures of the current FCNM document in its implementation taken from a norm compliance oriented viewpoint while perceiving both the theoretical and practical perspective of the treaty, assessed in direct connection with the rationalist-constructivist thinking. Finally, I shall provide my own conclusions and recommendations for a higher potentiality of success in the applicability of the convention in the future.

The Framework Convention for the Protection of National Minorities

The FCNM is the result of the Council of Europe's work and concern on minority issues done over many years in which it previously adopted various texts and recommendations. Ratified in 1995 and entered into force in 1998 as a peak of national minorities rights involvement on the matter, the Council of Europe's FCNM is the first multilateral legally binding international treaty specifically concerned with the protection of national minorities. Its major aim is to specify the legal principles that states accept to abide towards effectively safeguarding national minorities' rights while subsequently monitoring the relevant policies that states would put into practice. It represents minimum standards and reinforces existent human rights law while containing mainly program-type provisions and objectives that states are expected to fulfill through both legislation and practice.

The underlying principles of the FCNM are those of human rights and fundamental freedoms, non-discrimination enjoyment procedures in implementing basic rights and freedoms, and equal legal protection as they are to be found in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, the ICCP, and the ECHR. Consequently, based on the FCNM document, the signatory states' public administrations are being monitored internationally in accomplishing the main rights existent in the convention.

The FCNM document can be summarized for providing three major categories of rights. The first one invokes the protection of the national minority's overall existence. It is indeed a fundamental right, the root on which the others are based. Since the central aspect of a minority's existence is its collective consciousness, it is vital that no forced assimilation is promoted and accomplished by the state's public administration in their territory of residence. Article 5, paragraph 2 of the FCNM clearly specifies the given right.[10] The FCNM contains other related provisions on this matter.[11]

The second major category involves a general prohibition of discrimination which comes naturally through the continuation of the western legal line of thinking of the human rights general frameworks put in place gradually after the end of the WWII. Nevertheless, since the sole interdiction of discriminatory practices might not be enough as to solve past long term unequal developments, a system of positive discrimination would need to be put in practice as it has been portrayed as further back as in the PCIJ's opinion on the minority schools in Albania.[12] On this note, the FCNM has included related provisions such as Article 4, paragraph 2 specifically dedicated to positive discrimination: "The Parties undertake to

---

[10] Art. 5, para 2 of the FCNM explains that 'without prejudice to measures taken in pursuance of their general integration policy, the Parties shall refrain from policies or practices aimed at assimilation of persons belonging to national minorities against their will and shall protect these persons from any action aimed at such assimilation'.

[11] See, specifically, Art. 16 FCNM.

[12] Permanent Court of International Justice (PCIJ), *Question of Minority Schools in Albania*, Series A/B, No. 64, 1935.

adopt, where necessary, adequate measures in order to promote, in all areas of economic, social, political and cultural life, full and effective equality between persons belonging to a national minority and those belonging to the majority. In this respect, they shall take due account of the specific conditions of the persons belonging to national minorities."[13] Similarly, from a general perspective including public life, cultural, social and economic affairs, the national minorities' participation in the public administration should be guaranteed and promoted.

Finally, the third category of rights is dedicated to the <u>preservation of the national minority's cultural identity</u>. The subsequent rights are being expressed in a very detailed manner and make up most of its body. They are linked to the specific characteristics which make up a minority such as the ethnical, religious and linguistic ones and the duties of the signatory states in providing and promoting the possibility of the relevant groups to flourish over the national territory. On this note, the specific right towards the <u>effective participation of national minorities</u> ensures that their representatives can participate in public decisions aimed at the maintenance and development of their cultural identity.[14]

The success of any international document or convention is based not only on the substance of the text and principles invoked but also on its monitoring mechanism and review of its practicality. Henceforth, the existent monitoring mechanisms of the FCNM need to verify the state' public administration's various ways of complying with the propagated principles, process being carried out by a "competent expert body", through "improved consultations with all parties involved, and taking into account good practices".[15]

---

[13] Art. 4 FCNM.

[14] Permanent Court of International Justice (PCIJ), *Question of Minority Schools in Albania*, Series A/B, No. 64, 1935.

[15] B. Cilevics, "The Framework Convention for the Protection of National Minorities Within the Context of the Council of Europe", presentation, Strasbourg, 2003   at http://www.coe.int/T/E/human_rights/minorities/5._5_anniversary/PDF_Final_Pres entation_Cilevics.pdf

For an effective review of the states under the FCNM, it is important that monitoring is transparent and governed clearly by the specific rules. Consequently, the Committee of Ministers (CoM) of the CoE has elaborated in its meeting on the 7th of October 1994, the mechanisms of protection and monitoring of the FCNM.[16] Moreover, the FCNM convention provides similar rules in Articles 24-26 in which it is clearly stated that the CoM shall be in charge of monitoring the implementation of the Convention by the State Parties.[17] More specifically, the system shall be based on the evaluation of national reports submitted by the signatory states which shall be examined by an Advisory Committee of independent experts (AC) established for this purpose and whose members are proposed by their states of origins. The AC can hold meetings with governments for a more fruitful and direct co-operation. Following the receiving of the state reports, the 18 members of the AC prepare an opinion which after being allowed a response on an article by article basis from the state concerned involving legislation and specific measures taken, it is submitted to the CoM which, consequently, adopts a final decision or "conclusion" serving as a recommendation for the specific state in question. On this note, it would be a breach of trust if states did not implement the recommendations in the CoM resolutions.[18] The reports to be submitted can either be periodic done over a period of five years or ad hoc upon express request from a Contracting Party by the CoM; they need to include both information on relevant legislative measures as well as vis-à-vis specific policy programs implemented based on the FCNM principles.

A Rationalist-Constructivist Theoretical Approach

After presenting the FCNM document, this section shall be focused on the presentation of the theoretical approach that I relied on in the analysis of

---

[16] CoE, Rules Adopted by the Committee of Ministers on the Monitoring Arrangements under Articles 24 to 26 of the Framework Convention for the Protection of National Minorities, CoM Resolution (97)10, 1997.

[17] Art. 24-26 FCNM.

[18] Art. 15 FCNM.

the FCNM, an approach which has been based on two main political science theories that help to understand political transformation and change: rationalism and constructivism. They both attempt to explain how norms work their effects and reach the domestic arena, a process called norm empowerment. The two political science theories also investigate the main reasons why states choose to adopt and implement specific treaties.

On the one hand, rationalists are interested in how the incentives posed by the political environment affect the strategic behavior of state actors who attempt to maximize certain interests or preferences by making strategic choices. The <u>rationalist</u> school of thought argues primarily that international norms affect incentives facing societal actors and policy makers and, consequently they can constrain behavior.[19] Consequently, the reason a state would comply with an international agreement lies in its major interests; so, in order for a state to sign and implement an international treaty, it needs to find a strategic reason-interest, some usefulness in doing so. In other words, their decision becomes a question of priorities for a country's specific policy.

On this note, the rationalist theory as perceived from a public administration perspective, relies on the logic of consequences and argues that state behavior changes depending on incentives such as compensation, rewards or threats which shall shape the ultimate domestic behavior in treaty empowerment.[20] Consequently, based on the rationalist enforcement theory, international pressure and incentives, the so called carrot and stick approach, are vital as to secure the positive empowerment of a norm at the domestic administrative level.

As with regards to some clear examples of institutional factors of a treaty affecting norm compliance, the multilateral rationalist strategy supported by international organizations has been based on monitoring

---

[19] A. Moravcsik, "Explaining International Human Rights Regimes: Liberal Theory and Western Europe", *European Journal of International Relations*, 1, 6/1995.
[20] D. Nielson, M. Tierney, C. Weaver, 'Bridging the Rationalist-Constructivist Divide: Engineering Change at the World Bank', paper at http://mjtier.people.wm.edu/papers/ntw.pdf

and sanctions. Also, the conditionality between norm compliance and the possibility of inclusion or membership in a desired international organization is another important cost/benefit variable. On the other hand, variables involving norm compliance that **are not related to a treaty's institutional design** could be, for instance, the presence of a large and active civil society that would be pressuring the government towards abiding with a specific norm and psychologically constraining the public authorities to implement it, the existence of a large electorate favoring the specific political change promoted by a treaty,[21] or, more generally, the pre-existing political environment.

On the other hand, constructivists investigate how persuasion, the overall environment, social learning, or deliberation affect states' policies through the propagation of universally accepted shared ideas accomplished through a process of constant and progressive elite learning. It represents the alternative to rationalism in the effective norm empowerment of an international treaty in that not political pressure but learning leads to agent compliance with an international norm. It is merely based on the neo-functionalist claim that prolonged exposure and a high degree of communication will ultimately lead to a greater sense of common values, with the natural consequence of norms being easier empowered in a domestic administration.[22]   Some of the key words used by constructivist theoreticians include concepts such as "socialization, "social learning", "deliberation" all implying "a social process through which agent

---

[21] E. Nadelmann, 'Global Prohibition Regimes: the Evolution of Norms in International Society', *International Organization*, Autumn, 44/1990. It is nevertheless understood by itself that civil society and electorate pressure occur more drastically in liberal regimes with advanced democracies than in countries where there is a transition from an authoritarian rule to a democratic one.
[22] J. T. Checkel, 'Social Mechanisms and the Quality of Co-operation: Are Europe and the EU Really All That Different?', ARENA – Centre for European Studies, Oslo   at   http://www.arena.uio.no/publications/working-papers2004/papers/wp04_8.pdf

properties and preferences change as a result of interaction" between agents and structures.[23]

For constructivists, through the process of elite learning, ideas and norms may change the state's initial purely strategic interest. The international diplomatic relations, their subsequent influences and general debates and theories arising from treaty adoption overcome the state's immediate interest. Consequently, norms per se could end up being perceived as efficient enough as to influence a state into treaty empowerment.[24] Henceforth, non-compliance becomes the result not of rational calculations or of a domestic will towards the breach of a treaty but merely an effect of the capacity limitations and the treaty ambiguities existent in an international document. On this note, norm clarity is an essential prerequisite of securing a high level of state compliance with an international treaty.[25] Consequently, an efficient remedy for treaty non-compliance would be capacity building, enhanced rule interpretation and a high level of transparency.[26] Also, the role of persuasion in the constructivist thought needs to be allowed a privileged stand. As a result, political transformations appear as the result of effective international sustained arguments and persuasion through which actors on the international scene influence each other.[27]

As a result, while rationalism promotes treaty coercion, cost/benefit calculations and material incentives, constructivism is based on the key elements of elite learning, socialization, social norms, persuasion and norm clarity.

---

[23] J. T. Checkel, '"Going Native in Europe", Theorizing Social Action in European Institutions', ARENA Working Papers, Oslo at http://www.arena.uio.no/publications/wp01_23.htm

[24] J. Tallberg, "Paths to Compliance: Enforcement, Management, and the European Union", *International Organization*, 56, 3/2002.

[25] Above, n. 24.

[26] Above, n. 24.

[27] T. Risse, '"Let's Argue!": Communicative Action in World Politics', *International Organization*, 54/2000, Winter.

The above 'rationalist-constructivist divide' has been very trendy in political science and sociological studies in the last fifteen years. Despite a large amount of literature analyzing the two concepts separately by preferring to focus on one sole variable, it has been argued recently that the divided approach has its own limits and weaknesses in not providing a complete systemic picture of reasons for processes of change in the world's politics.

Henceforth, **a combined approach** of the two variables has been preferred recently in various think tank forums and in the work of prominent sociologists and political scientists[28]. Indeed, norm compliance, in its complexity appears as a process of cost and incentives calculations **as well as one of persuasion and social learning** and research portrayed that where compliance systems have been supplemented with new enforcement mechanisms, the effectiveness of pre-existent constructivist-managerial instruments has been widely enhanced.[29] An example on this field would be the creation of the regimes in the last fifty years in the areas of trade, environment and human rights where compliance systems have been deemed more effective when the rationalist - enforcement and the constructivist-managerial strategies have been combined.

Furthermore, Frank Schimmelfennig, a leading theoretician studying regime theories provides a different interpretation of the combined rationalist-constructivist theoretical approach by relating it to the possibility of **one variable depending on the other temporally** as to explain political transformations and norm compliance, a process called sequencing. Schimmelfenig's sequencing process would involve an initial rationalist approach which would be followed by a supportive constructivist one, the latter becoming increasingly more important in time

---

[28] See the essays by Katzentstein, Keohane, Krasner, Finnemore, Sikkink, Kahler, March, Olsen in the *International Organization* issue of Autumn 1998. Moreover, see, T. Risse, "Let's Argue: Persuasion, and Deliberation in International Relations", Vienna, 1998.

[29] Above, n. 24; J. T. Checkel, "International Norms and Domestic Politics: Bridging the Rationalist-Constructivist Divide", *European Journal of International Relations*, 3, 4/1997.

as to justify and internalize the norm accepted originally by the public administration for a strategic reason.[30] On this note, my current evaluation of the FCNM is closely linked to the combined rationalist-constructivist perspective and in addition it adds the sequencing pattern already explained.

In conclusion to this section, as an international treaty, the FCNM provides a relevant example since it can be applied to both theoretical approaches.   The Framework's initial rationalist cost/compliance based variables that have led states to sign and ratify the convention have, in time, been combined in many of the member states with the norms' increasing internalization and their general rhetorical acceptance by public officials as sine qua non provisions for an effective policy making regarding national minorities in a democratic state. Furthermore, its possibilities for a more effective norm empowerment are assessed and promoted in direct connection with this combined approach of rationalism and constructivism based elements correlated efficiently in a certain dose depending, among others, on the democratic level of the society in question.

The Applicability of the Convention: A Rationalist/Constructivist Assessment

After having portrayed the theoretical approach to the analysis of the FCNM, the third section provides an assessment of the actual impact of the FCNM on domestic public administrative practices through its possibilities of creating norm compliance taken from both the constructivist and rationalist strategies.

On this note, the application of both approaches is evident in the treaty mechanisms and up to a certain point, it portrays a limited success in the Framework's empowerment. However, the main problems arising from the implementation of the legal document is that, albeit existent, the low

---

[30] T. Risse, S. Ropp, K. Sikkink (1999) (ed), *The Power of Principles: International Human Rights Norms and Domestic Change,* Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

extent to which both the rationalist and constructivist elements have been theoretically provided in the process of the treaty's empowerment and the absence of a combined approach have diminished the state compliance and application of the FCNM provisions. Consequently, since the FCNM has been often perceived as ambiguous and capacity limited from a constructivist point of view, while not providing for strong and enforcement mechanisms from the rationalist perspective, it is precisely why an enhanced presence of both approaches taken in tandem would be beneficial.

Starting from a rationalist perspective, with regards to the FCNM's enforcement mechanism, the Convention's effectiveness may be judged through an analysis of its **monitoring mechanisms, its possibilities for creating sanctions, and its political conditionality based approach in provoking state compliance.**

With regards to **CoE monitoring mechanisms** and their subsequent possibilities to effectively verify state compliance, there have been both positive and negative implications. The FCNM's monitoring is being performed by two bodies of the CoE, the AC and the CoM. The AC, while being specifically created for the purpose of verifying state compliance with the Convention, consists of nationals of the FCNM's signatory member states who serve in their independent capacity from any governmental influence while being chosen solely based on merit. This portrays clearly their intended expert role in the national minority rights field. The second body in charge of verifying the Convention's implementation, the CoM represents a political organ consisting of member state representatives acting as final decision-makers in the process of monitoring state compliance with the Convention. Now, if the theoretical institutional linkage between the AC and the CoM works effectively and is based on constructive dialogue, and if the CoM's recommendations followed the AC opinions, then the state monitoring process would function properly and would upgrade the FCNM's overall empowerment. On this note, **on the positive side**, there have been signs of trust and co-operation based on dialogue and mutual respect between the two monitoring bodies, with the CoM following the main arguments and

findings illustrated in the AC Opinions.[31] Consequently, the follow-up of the AC gathered evidence could be considered beneficial as it represents the results of an impartial high level of expertise given the position of the AC in the CoE as an elected body, with no governmental representatives being allowed to run for this purely "technocratic" position. Finally, the AC's efficiency in the field has also been provided on a more practical level. This has been exemplified by the direct communication and co-operation pursued with the state public administration authorities, national minority and civil society representatives, through the use of various state visits or the organization of seminars. Those activities were aimed directly at providing the needed legal advice for reform making, checking compliance through empirical monitoring and, generally, promoting the values of the Convention altogether, actions that have certainly enhanced the general transparency of the FCNM values and the governmental compliance with them which put a high amount of pressure on the public administration officials to attempt to better implement the Framework.

On the other hand, **on the negative side**, the FCNM's monitoring mechanisms hold a limited effect on norm empowerment since they may be perceived as the result of a compromise between the member states and the CoE, as to secure the signatures of the former, and in the mean time, as not to diminish the states' sovereign power and to constrain their action in their public administrative territory. Indeed, as already mentioned above, the CoM comprises the Foreign Affairs Ministers of the member states or their permanent diplomatic representatives which, despite, a de facto co-operation pursued thus far with the AC, may still institutionally and legally take a different, more lenient perspective vis-à-vis the domestic public administrations' obligations.[32] Furthermore, the role of the AC is legally quite limited which leaves the CoM the entire grasp of the political leadership and control of the FCNM monitoring mechanism and its

---

[31] P. Thornberry, "Conclusions of the Conference by the General Rapporteur", Strasbourg,   2003   at www.coe.int/T/E/human_rights/minorities/5._5_anniversary/PDF_Conclusions_Thornberry.pdf

[32] See the CoE website, Council of Ministers section at www.coe.int/T/aboutCM_en.asp

subsequent application in the member states. On this note, the possibilities for national minority rights to lose primacy to the states' discriminatory objectives remain possible and this can only undermine the efficiency of the enforcement approach arising from the existent monitoring mechanisms. Finally, the time aspect with regards to the country reports' submission appears problematic as it allows states to delay the preparation of their opinions while, consequently, holding up the monitoring process' efficiency. The delays have also been triggered by the bureaucratic elements arising out of the institutional linkage between the AC and the CoM.

Secondly, the enforcement mechanism provided by the Convention from a rationalist perspective should be evaluated through its **sanctioning system**. From a positive viewpoint, despite lacking an institutionalized CoE backed sanctioning organism, indirect pressures on the signatory members' governments have been propagated by the AC since the Convention's entry into force. More specifically, the AC has been actively involved in holding meetings at the civil society level and publicizing the Convention in the field with the aim of raising the transparency and awareness of the Convention which consequently triggered a higher pressure on the government from the level of their domestic civil societies. Henceforth, the governments could be indirectly sanctioned by their own society through elections or manifestations as a consequence of non-compliance with the Convention's principles. Consequently, many of the AC's recommendations have been followed by the states' public administrations with the obvious consequence of improving the process of national minority reform, the domestic state reports on the matter providing in a substantive and large manner the exact pathway of reforms taken by the public administrations in abiding with the Convention's requirements.

On the negative side, the lack of direct institutional triggered sanctions that can be enforced by the CoE led to drastic limitations to the FCNM's enforcement. There is no judicial enforceability or review expressed by the Convention. Moreover, a more modern system of direct accountability which would involve linkage to an international or domestic court reviewing individual cases on the matter is left out as well which

leads to the impossibility for persons to directly invoke the infringement of their rights under the FCNM. Henceforth, the court system of "requetes" is unavailable to members of national minorities.

This leads us to the third rationalist based variable applied to the FCNM empowerment process: the **political conditionality mechanism**. On the positive side, the FCNM has managed to gather a very large membership specifically due to the presence of certain rewards linked to the ratification and abidance with the Conventions' requirements. Specifically, CoE membership, NATO inclusion and the long term EU adherence have been the main perceived benefits that have triggered compliance with the FCNM in the CEE region. On the negative side, the political conditionality of allowing new members from the CEE to join the EU pending on specific reforms that they would need to implement appears rather immoral and creates divisions in practices existent in the West compared to the ones in the East of Europe. This immorality appears in the context of long term EU members not even signing, and ratifying the Convention or not abiding fully by its mechanisms.

Taken from a constructivist approach, the assessment of the Convention may focus on its norm clarity, legitimacy and its possibilities for promoting elite learning.

Firstly, with regards to the **norm clarity** as depicted from the FCNM treaty, on a positive note, the lack of a clear-cut definition of national minorities withers away any limits to the concept by allowing states to extend both at present and in the future the applicability of the convention as to include an enhanced number of ethnic, religious, or linguistic groups in their territories. Furthermore, by not obliging all countries to take on a specific one clear cut pattern of reform based on which a state would need to adjust its course of action, the CoE allows states to take different policies on national minorities as to provide for a larger consideration of the various European states' cultural arrangements and constitutional settings and not to disrupt the institutionalized validity of the existent domestic systems.

From a negative viewpoint, the Convention's capacity limitations in this area may leave doubts on whether its provisions can be read as hard legal obligations. The lack of a definition of its main term leaves the subsequent possibility for states to hold the subjective margin of appreciation in providing the national minority status to some groups but not to others which could trigger a de facto manipulation of the Convention's provisions altogether. This situation has been clearly portrayed, for instance, through the declarations issued by fourteen states who have restrictedly applied the definition of national minorities only to specific groups over their territories. Finally, the subjective application of the FCNM's provisions' ambiguous wording has led to the promotion of different legislative implementation procedures in Western Europe as compared to the Eastern part.

Secondly, with regards to the **norm legitimacy** of the Convention, taken from a positive point of view, the FCNM can be deemed as very important in being the first treaty dedicated solely to national minority rights encompassing the entire European continent. Additionally, it has received a high amount of praise internationally, with many international organizations being supportive of the Convention's legitimacy in promoting its values. Moreover, by taking a limited approach in not providing for territorial autonomy rights, the Convention has reached legitimacy in relation to the states' public administrations, the majority of European states having accepted and ratified it thus far. On this note, the FCNM's relevance in the field must be viewed in light of its major initial goal, the prevention of violent conflicts on the European continent, a task accomplished since its entry into force. Furthermore, the Convention has held a practical success in allowing a legal status to many small and dispersed minorities in the territories of certain FCNM member states where they have previously been denied those rights. Finally, concerning the monitoring mechanisms of the Convention, the high expertise existent among the members of the AC in analyzing states' policies and their various visits and seminars organized appears as creating norm relevance in relation to the domestic administrations.

On the negative side, from a negative perspective, the FCNM's norm legitimacy has suffered some important setbacks. To begin with, once

again the compromise between the CoE and governments gave birth to a limited Convention containing many general provisions leading to highly subjective possibilities of implementation as they arise directly from the FCNM treaty. Furthermore, since the recommendations publicized with regards to the Convention's enforcement are being taken by a political body, the overall norm legitimacy in terms of the expertise and objectivity of the opinions propagated by the CoM is severely undermined. Indeed, the final decisions' authority with regards to the CoM's lack of expertise and impartiality may nevertheless considerably decrease the Framework's overall norm legitimacy. Additionally, the non-signing and non-ratification of the FCNM treaty by traditional EU members, such as France, Greece, or Belgium have certainly left many question marks on the general authority and applicability of the Convention and of its programs of implementation vis-à-vis the CEE countries. Finally, we should not forget the capacity limitations that the CoE has been faced with in terms of lacking resources and funding with diminished possibilities for effective program management and consultancy in relation to the CEE countries which have weakened the Framework's overall prestige.

Thirdly, in its possibilities for promoting **elite learning**, the FCNM has met a limited success. First of all, the adherence of the vast majority of the European states to the Convention portrays not only the public administrations' rationalistic calculations of evaluating benefits as they would arise from the ratification of the treaty but also a certain general acceptance of the increasing importance of the values represented by the safeguarding national minorities in their respective countries as a means of promoting a peaceful and fair co-existence on an inter-ethnic level in their territories. Additionally, the AC's expert and apolitical role in promoting elite learning may not be undermined. The numerous AC organized state visits, seminars, symposia in which expert advice sessions have been established in connection with the governmental authorities have certainly bolstered the level of elite learning in the field through constant interaction with the Convention's aims and values. Consequently, the constant CoE-CEE public officials' interaction has been illustrated through the country opinions' substantive content in which most concerns expressed by the AC with regards to national minority related policies have been answered in an

attempt to provide an efficient communication pattern on the implementation of the Convention.

On the **negative** side, in light of the subjective nature of the FCNM provisions, **elite learning** has been nevertheless impeded. This has been the direct consequence of certain western states applying lower standards to national minority protection than others which has provided other countries with a negative "model" to follow. Furthermore, as portrayed above, the unclear language existent with regards to the applicability of the Convention's provisions has certainly hampered the elite learning process as the CEE domestic public administrations would lack a clear and direct theoretical model based on which they would guide the implementation of national minority related policies. Finally, the preference for external donors of short term "results-based funding" policy vis-à-vis the CoE programs instead of a long term strategy of funding with the related negative outcome of a lower financial support accorded to the organization of meetings, seminars and other interactive activities aimed at promoting the values and the ideals of the Convention has once again impeded the constructivist process of elite learning.

Concluding Remarks

The general idea arising out of the present analysis, portrays that despite reaching a minimum level of compliance and success with the Convention, given the lack of an effective enforcement based strategy supporting the FCNM's implementation and in light of the existence of a multitude of structural and capacity limitations, the CoE would need to extend its current norm empowerment features as to reach the full respect and compliance of Framework's minority provisions in its signatory states. Consequently, the ideal solution to a more effective empowerment of the Framework in relation to the CEE states could be provided by Schimmelfenig's vision of combining the two theoretical strategies, rationalism and constructivism, through a CoE-led sequencing empowerment strategy with rationalist based elements leading the initial

approach and leaving their place gradually as state compliance improves to a long term elite learning constructivist based policy.

On more specific practical terms, from a an initial rationalist perspective, as to allow for a more efficient FCNM empowerment, the CoE needs to augment its enforcement strategy in making use of a variety of potential options such as extensive international review of a state's performance (monitoring), voluntary mediation, public criticism, judicial review, withdrawal of membership, or diplomatic sanctions. On this not, the following recommendations should be taken in consideration. An enhanced number of state reports should be required and at a faster rate. The improvement of its sanctioning mechanism could be provided by allowing the European Court of Human Rights to be bound by the FCNM in the same manner as it is currently bound by the ECHR. Direct CoE sanctions should be put in place such as the possibility of membership withdrawal under Article 8 of the Statute of the CoE which should additionally be considered by the Council officials as to pressure member states should they have seriously violated the FCNM provisions.[33] The conditionality based mechanism that the CoE uses in tandem with other European organizations needs to be continued. An example could be promoted by the EU itself, if the exclusive organization decides to link its legal mechanisms to the FCNM, and to allow for the possibility of economic sanctions and even exclusion from the Union. Furthermore, an economic conditionality approach should be promoted, through an attempt of the CoE to work much closer with the OSCE as to commonly build a rapport with the financial institutions of the EU, World Trade Organization (WTO), World Bank, the International Monetary Fund (IMF) and the European Bank for Reconstruction and Development (EBRD) in creating the possibility for long term funding strategies.[34]

From a long-term constructivist perspective, the CoE needs to improve the clarity of the FCNM mandate with regards to both its

---

[33] CoE, Statute of the Council of Europe, ETS 001, 1949 at http://conventions.coe.int/treaty/en/treaties/html/001.htm
[34] A. Phillips, "Minority Rights in Europe", draft paper, 1995 at http://www.geocities.com/Athens/Delphi/6509/warwick.html.

provisions and its applicability. On this note, more extensive and regular AC Opinions are needed combined with the propagation of CoE led programs covering specific recommendations for reform with a clear mandate and providing for viable steps to be taken at the state level. A definition for national minorities should be given while attempting to eliminate the double standards existent between the Western countries and the CEE ones. Moreover, an important step that could be taken towards achieving a higher relevance of the FCNM principles at the level of the entire society would be the inclusion in the domestic Constitution of the most important national minority provisions such as the respect and freedom of ethnicity as well as ideally the development of a domestic law specifically directed at national minorities. The organization of seminars, meetings and symposia could improve the significance and relevance of the Convention in relation to all ethnicities at the domestic level. On this note, the CoE should focus its projects in creating and educating new elite at the CEE's public administration level as well as members of NGOs and civil society components as to ensure that it could be properly educated and effectively persuaded of the national minority rights' importance. Inter-ethnic co-operation could be additionally enhanced by promoting the creation of coalition type governments as well as comprising ethnic parties in the executive leadership's structure. Finally, political, social and cultural common programs in which the national minorities and the majority would participate should be promoted by the CoE as to create an environment of continuous dialogue towards elite learning at both the administrative and civil level in all countries.

Ultimately, what the future holds is impossible to predict but, nevertheless, the possibility of expanding the FCNM towards a more effective implementation and practicability is indeed possible and depends ultimately, on improving and efficiently correlating the initial rationalist and the long-term constructivist theoretical strategies of norm empowerment while directly applying them in relation to the states' domestic public administrations. Consequently and specifically, the outcome can be successful if the Convention's norm empowerment tactics and approach additionally take into account all the major factors involved in the implementation process, ranging from the political will of the

member states to abide by the FCNM, to the financial and logistical possibilities of the European institutions to cooperate more effectively in intensifying the pressure on the member-countries into complying with the existent norms while keeping in mind that the potential influence of external factors is only temporary and may be withered away though a constant and efficiently applied method. Furthermore, the approach needs to be enhanced through the promotion of extra patterns or communication in which joint multilateral organs of decisions involving all the subjects concerned from European institutions, international experts, public administration leaders, national minority representatives, and relevant local and international NGO representatives active in the field could exchange ideas effectively and take common decisions which in the end would count towards the overall stability and prosperity of multi-cultural societies throughout the Old Continent.

Bibliography

1. G. Alfredsson, "A Frame with an Incomplete Painting. Comparison of FCNM with International Standards and Monitoring Procedures", *International Journal on Minority and Group Rights*, 7/2000, 4.

2. B. Cilevics, "The Framework Convention for the Protection of National Minorities Within the Context of the Council of Europe", presentation, Strasbourg, 2003 at http://www.coe.int/T/E/human_rights/minorities/5._5_anniversary/PDF_Final_Presentation_Cilevics.pdf

3. J. T. Checkel, '"Going Native in Europe", Theorizing Social Action in European Institutions', ARENA Working Papers, Oslo at http://www.arena.uio.no/publications/wp01_23.htm

4. J. T. Checkel, "International Norms and Domestic Politics: Bridging the Rationalist-Constructivist Divide", *European Journal of International Relations*, 3, 4/1997.

5. J. T. Checkel, "Social Mechanisms and the Quality of Co-operation: Are Europe and the EU Really All That Different?", ARENA – Centre for European Studies, Oslo at

http://www.arena.uio.no/publications/working-papers2004/papers/wp04_8.pdf

6. CoE, Statute of the Council of Europe, ETS 001, 1949 at http://conventions.coe.int/treaty/en/treaties/html/001.htm

7. CoE, Rules Adopted by the Committee of Ministers on the Monitoring Arrangements under Articles 24 to 26 of the Framework Convention for the Protection of National Minorities, CoM Resolution (97) 10, 1997.

8. CoE website, Council of Ministers section at www.coe.int/T/aboutCM_en.asp

9. C. Decker, A. McGarry, "Enhancing Minority Governance in Romania", ECMI Roundtable for National Minorities MPs and the Council of National Minorities, ECMI Report #54, 2005 at http://www.ecmi.de/download/Report_54.pdf

10. European Commission Against Racism and Intolerance (ECRI), *All Different, All Equal: From Principle to Practice*, statement, Brussels, 2000

11. R. Hoffmann, "Protecting the Rights of National Minorities in Europe. First Experiences with the Council of Europe Framework Convention for the Protection of National Minorities, *German Yearbook of International Law*, 44, 2001.

12. Minority Rights Group International, "The Framework Convention for the Protection of National Minorities, A Guide for Non-Governmental Organizations" at http://www.greekhelsinki.gr/pdf/FCNM-NGO-Guide.pdf

13. A. Moravcsik, "Explaining International Human Rights Regimes: Liberal Theory and Western Europe", *European Journal of International Relations*, 1, 6/1995.

14. Permanent Court of International Justice (PCIJ), *Question of Minority Schools in Albania*, Series A/B, No. 64, 1935.

15. E. Nadelmann, "Global Prohibition Regimes: the Evolution of Norms in International Society", *International Organization*, Autumn, 44/1990.

16. D. Nielson, M. Tierney, C. Weaver, "Bridging the Rationalist-Constructivist Divide: Engineering Change at the World Bank", paper at http://mjtier.people.wm.edu/papers/ntw.pdf

17. A. Phillips, 'Minority Rights in Europe', draft paper, 1995 at http://www.geocities.com/Athens/Delphi/6509/warwick.html.

18. T. Risse, "Let's Argue: Persuasion, and Deliberation in International Relations", Vienna, 1998.

19. T. Risse, '"Let's Argue!": Communicative Action in World Politics', *International Organization*, 54/2000, Winter.

20. T. Risse, S. Ropp, K. Sikkink (1999) (ed), *The Power of Principles: International Human Rights Norms and Domestic Change*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press

21. J. Tallberg, "Paths to Compliance: Enforcement, Management, and the European Union", *International Organization*, 56, 3/2002.

22. P. Thornberry, "Conclusions of the Conference by the General Rapporteur, Strasbourg, 2003 at www.coe.int/T/E/human_rights/minorities/5._5_anniversary/PDF_C onclusions_Thornberry.pdf

MULTICULTURAL ORGANIZATION OF EUROPEAN UNIVERSITIES

Gabriel Troc[*]

Abstract

Beginning with an overview of the concept of multiculturalism, the article investigates further in details the ways in which some European universities involve this concept in their organizational structure. The aim of the article is to unravel the common patterns of this sort of organization for different universities, as well as the disparities, and to clarify to what kind of challenges these universities are trying to respond to by their multicultural organization.

Dealing with the subject of the multicultural organization of European universities has some advantages and some disadvantages. Among the disadvantages I would name the fact that the things are in motion, a general concern for making accommodation for cultural pluralism being present to many European universities. Among the advantages I would name that the number of European universities that are *actually* organized following the principle of multiculturalism – namely, which have precise rules for multicultural organization – is limited. So, at this level the subject could be researched in its entirety, by reviewing each of these universities.

Starting with a condensed recall of what multiculturalism is, I will try later on to uncover the actual ways in which each of these universities organizes itself in a multicultural manner, in order to draw in the end the common patterns that can be revealed.

As articulated by Charles Taylor, the pressures that are specific in contemporary societies for multiculturalism represent an expression of the

---

[*] Gabriel Troc is a lecturer at the Faculty of European Studies. His major research interests lie in anthropology and the study of minorities.

demands for recognition that certain minority groups - defined through a group culture - address to the majorities[1].

Of course, the demand for recognition is not new. It is in fact something that is right on the core of the modern project of society, as shaped by the Enlightenment, and refined ever since. The solution that was found by the modern societies for solving this demand was expressed in the principle of equal dignity, which means recognition for each individual and which is politically expressed in the status of citizenship. The basis for this principle was the philosophical universalistic perspective on the equality of men, who are so both by nature and by reason. Equal dignity was than a right that results from the fact of sharing - as people living in society – something that is universal, common to every individual.

But from the same principle something else emerged as well. Namely, while being individuals, thus each being unique, we also share the fact of being different, each in his or her own way. Duplicating the logic of recognizing what it is shared by all people, a new demand for recognition was also shaped: the right for being recognized in our distinctness from everyone else. Later, this second demand for recognition split in two directions: an individual sense for authenticity was asked to be recognized at a moral level, while a group sense for a collective identity was asked to be recognized at a political level. This second direction is of interest for us and is directly linked with the issue of multiculturalism.

Consequently, the modern societies had to face two opposed demands for recognition that sprung from the same philosophical principle: one that asked for individual recognition, based on what is shared by all people from a possible modern society, and one that asked for collective recognition, based on something that is shared only by a group of people within a larger society. Facing this contradiction, the tendency of the modern societies till the middle of the 20th century was to recognize only the first demand as a legitimate one at a political level, while the second one was either repressed or tolerated in the private sphere. This fact was justified through the assumption that the ground of "civilization", understood as a culture in a large format, is sufficient for the first recognition and for a peaceful living of the different groups.

[1] Charles Taylor (1992), *Multiculturalism and "the Politics of Recognition"*, Princeton: Princeton University Press.

Precisely against this latest assumption multiculturalism was pointing when it was forged. It has entered on the scene in the moment in which the liberal democratic societies agreed, on the pressure of the minority groups, that endorsing only the first demand for recognition is not enough for maintaining a valid social contract. More than that, when they accepted that neither culture understood as "civilization" nor the "national culture" - supposedly isomorphic with a nation of people living within the border of a national state - could provide sufficient space for the expression of the groups' identities. Consequently, *multiculturalism was devised for enlarging and correcting the limitations imposed on people in a certain moment of the modernization of the western societies*. Coming back to Taylor terms, multiculturalism should be seen as a step forward in the modern societies' organization, a step through which "equal dignity" is doubled by "equal recognition".

Starting to be used in United States in connection with the Civil Rights Movement, mainly with the demands of the black community for separate and equal representation on colleges and other cultural institutions, multiculturalism became later a code word for the political and administrative demands of different minority groups that are using "culture" for defining themselves. They have imposed a concept of multiculturalism that expresses both a way of performing identity politics from the part of the minority groups and a way of responding to their requests from the part of the majorities. Shortly put, *multiculturalism means today an attitude shared by the minorities and the majorities that expresses the common will for changing an actual state of affaire considered of not responding any longer to the needs of recognition of all the social actors within a given modern pluralist society*. Or, as Terence Turner articulates it, multiculturalism "stands for a liberating recognition of the de facto heterogeneity of the cultural and ethnic makeup of contemporary metropolitan societies"[2].

Before starting to review the European universities that define themselves as multicultural, let see which minority groups are actually asking for a multicultural change in the contemporary society at large.

Will Kymlicka identifies three directions from which demands for equal recognition are coming: from the part of the *national minorities*, of the

---

[2] Terence Turner, "Anthropology and Multiculturalism", *Cultural Anthropology* 8(4), p. 412.

ethnic minorities and of the *non-ethnic minorities*.[3] By "national minority" Kymlicka understands a group of people that belongs to a historical community, occupying a given territory or homeland and sharing a distinct language and culture, which at some point in history was incorporated in the territory of a state in which another nation is forming the majority. By "ethnic minorities" he understands various groups of immigrants that are accepted to live in the developed countries. Finally, by "non-ethnic minorities" Kymlicka understands a wide range of social groups which have, for various reasons, been excluded or marginalized from the mainstream of society. Each of these types of minority groups is addressing the call for multiculturalism in its specific manner. Thus, the national minorities are asking for a range of rights intended to reflect, protect and reproduce their status as distinct cultural communities. The ethnic minorities are asking for the right to integrate in the host society by maintaining some of their ethnic particularities. Lastly, the non-ethnic minorities are generally asking, by involving a constructivist meaning of culture, for a critical reconsideration of the patterns of the dominant culture, in order to accommodate the equal recognition for the historically excluded groups like the disabled, women, gay and lesbians, the working class, and others.

Now, taking Kymlicka's elaboration as a reference, we have to consider the situations that are actually encountered in the today political context. It is quite obvious that all the democratic multinational states have to respond at a given moment to the specific requests for recognition of its *national minorities*. Due to the fact that the international agreement upon a unique standard response is not yet set, each country responds following some trends that are quite clear. In the same time they are assessed on the international scene by comparing their attitudes towards the minorities rights with the attitudes of the countries that are considered to be the most advanced in this regard. The recognition of the requests of the immigrant *ethnic minorities* has to be faced especially by the most industrialized countries. The trends here are to confer those rights for maintaining some cultural peculiarities which, on the one hand, are not conflicting with the western common culture that make possible the equal recognition for each

---

[3] Will Kymlicka (1995), *Multicultural Citizenship: a Liberal Theory of Minority Rights*, Oxford: Clarendon Press, Chapter 2.

individual, and which, on the other hand, do not obstruct the integration of the immigrants in the host society. The latest form of recognition, the recognition of the *non-ethnic minority* claims for respect and equal opportunity is specific yet only to the liberal democracies, more intense to the old western democracies, where the liberating movements actually took place throughout the '70's and 80's. However, being crystallized in the politically correctness code of behavior, many of these claims for rights are now exported from the western democracies to different liberal societies, along with other western cultural products.

Finally, I would add that in a given country all the combination of these three forms of demands for recognition is possible.

Let now see how the European universities are responding to the demands for multicultural organization and to what precisely sort of demands for recognition are they responding to. But first: which are those universities? I have identified seven European universities that explicitly have developed multicultural and multilingual structures and practices: University of Fribourg, Free University of Bolzano, University of Barcelona, University of Helsinki, Ábo Akademy, Babeş-Bolyai University and University of South East Europe in Tetovo.

In order to clarify how multiculturalism was expressed I researched their public available official documents, from the charters and regulations to their official websites. In each case I made a synthesis of the specific information regarding their multicultural organization. Let's take it one by one.

University of Fribourg, Switzerland

As well known, Switzerland is a federation that accommodates two ethno-cultural groups, one speaking German the other speaking French. We may speak of a country in which two nations live, each with its national identity. However, due to a long history of living peacefully together, the sense of the people is that they belong to only one nation, sharing a common loyalty to the federal state. In this context, University of Fribourg is defining itself as a bilingual university, which "*supports and develops the communication between persons that speak different languages and belong to different cultures*",

as stipulated in the Law for University's Organization[4]. What should be note here is that the bilingual organization is not restricted to the French-German combination, even if this combination is particularly encouraged and is dominant in the actual process of education. As the rector puts it, this special support for this combination is intended "neither for excluding the access to other cultures - and the use of other language in education is supported whenever is justified - nor for inhibiting those who want to study in only one language[5]". No less important, the bilingual feature is intended to ensure a special profile of the university among other European universities, being more attractive for students that are living in a more open and pluralist Europe.

The multicultural/bilingual status of the university is stipulated by three documents: The Law for University's organization, which was issued by the Canton Assembly, The University's Charter and The Regulation of the Commission for Bilingual Education. The first document stipulates that the languages that are used in education and administration are French and German and that the faculties could use some other languages in education. The Charter set the framework for the existence of a Commission for Bilingual Education, while the Regulation of this commission makes proposals to the Universities Senate in regard with the measures to be taken for ensuring the balance of the two main languages in education and for enlarging the bilingual education. This commission has also the peculiar task of proposing measures for promoting a more comprehensive intercultural dialogue. The diploma issued by the university is a bilingual diploma.

Summing up, the University of Fribourg wants to face and to take advantage of a historical situation in which two nations are living side by side. No less important, it is open to enlarge its bilingual programs, to different combinations that might be required by the labor market, by the need of an international oriented education and by the needs for a broader intercultural communication.

---

[4] Law for University's Organization of the Great Council of The Fribourg Canton, Article 6.3

[5] Cf. the Fribourg University's official website.

Free University of Bolzano/Bozen, Italy

In Southern Tyrol, where Bolzano is located, there is also a multinational environment. Three national communities are living within the Alto Adige Autonomous Province: the German speaking community, the Italians and the Ladins. The Free University of Bolzano is a newly-founded (1997) independent, state recognized University. It is defined as a trilingual, internationally oriented educational institution, having in the same time "*an important bridging role between the Italian and the German cultural and economic sphere*"[6]. The faculties are offering courses in three languages: Italian, German and English. The possibility for studying in only one language exists only for the case of the Faculty of Primary Education, which offers courses in Italian, German and Ladino, providing thus teachers for the local communities' primary schools. The candidates of the University are required to have language abilities for two of the languages of education, the university ensuring the conditions for learning the third language during the studies. The trilingual character of the university is stipulated in the University's Charter. From the same document, its multicultural feature is also made visible in the council structure. According to the Article 5 of the Charter the national communities of the province should be represented in the Council in the following formula: one representative of the towns in which the Ladin population forms the majority, one representative of the Local Council of Bolzano, one representative of the Local Council of Brixen and seven representative of the Autonomous Province Government. Two vice-presidents of the Council should be also members of the different linguistic groups.

As we can observe, the organization of the Free University of Bolzano is so design as to represent at the level of administration all the national communities of the Province. In regard with education, the university seeks both to take advantage of the local bilingual environment and to respond to the pressure of internationalization, by providing education in English also.

---

[6] Cf. the Free University of Bolzano's official website.

University of Barcelona, Spain

I took University of Barcelona as a representative for many others universities from the Autonomous Province of Catalonia. What should be remarked here is that Catalan language has in this province the status of co-official language, along the Castilian (Spanish) language. While the language that is used in administration is only Catalan, in education both languages are used. The candidates could choose any of these languages for the admission examination at university. The professors are also chosen freely the language they want to use in teaching. However, they should know, at least passively, the second language. Among the reasons for this requirement is that the students could choose any of the both languages for the regular examination.

All the universities from the Catalonia provide education in the two languages. What might differ is only the proportion. For the University of Barcelona this proportion is 66.4 % to 33.6% in the favor of Catalan. The University of Barcelona has a vice-rector who is the president of the commission for enhancing the use of Catalan. The reason for existing such a commission is the fact observed at different universities, including at University of Barcelona, that the use of Catalan might decrease over time.

What is interesting to be seen at the Catalonian universities is that the use of Catalan is higher at the undergraduate level. It tends to decrease at the postgraduate level and both languages tend to be replaced by English at the doctoral level. The reason seems to be clear: studies followed in Castilian grow the chances for finding a job throughout Spain, while studies followed in English grow the chances for finding a job at international level. Also worth to be noticed is the fact that no university in Catalonia provides education exclusively in Catalan.

Thus, in the case of Catalonian universities we can observe the existence of an extended bilingual education, which is by no doubt softened by their common roots. There is not a clear separation of the universities on the criterion of language. On the contrary, this organization clearly provides the conditions for multicultural communication within the society at large.

University of Helsinki and Abö Akademy, Finland

As it is well known, Finland is one of the most liberal countries in respect with the minorities issues. The most important national minority in Finland is represented by the Swedish community (6% of the total population). Along with Finnish, Swedish is official language in Finland. At the level of the higher education the most important universities where Swedish is used both in education and administration are University of Helsinki and Abö Akademy. The right of the Swedish minority for studying in Swedish at the university level is guaranteed by the Finish law for higher education, from 1997. This law, The Universities Act, is in fact stipulating in details the organization of the Finnish Universities, and precisely stipulates where the education in Swedish could be organized. In the same time, the law precisely indicates in which higher education institutions the language to be used in both education and administration would be Swedish.

Now, the two universities that I was focused on here could be considered as being complementary in regard with the relationship between the majority and the minority at the level of higher education. In the first case, The University of Helsinki, we find the situation of a Swedish Faculty within the university – The Swedish School for Social Sciences – where both education and administration is appointed in Swedish. The School is functioning in close link with The Faculty of Social Sciences, where education is provided mainly in Finnish. However, this School is not the single place where students could learn in Swedish. According to the Universities Act, there should be a minimum of 27 departments within the University that, at request, should provide education in Swedish. In addition, the faculties could also provide bilingual courses, both in Finnish and in Swedish. At the level of the management, the Swedish is represented by a vice rector, who is also in charge with a committee for providing and developing the instruction in Swedish. The university could provide a quota for including the Swedish speaking candidates. The case of the Swedish School for Social Sciences is particularly interesting when thinking about multicultural issues. And this because this School used to be an independent higher education institution, which has affiliated itself, in 1984, at the University of Helsinki, as an autonomous institution within the University. This affiliation was determined by the need of its community

for "a broader approach to research and education" and for "taking the advantages of being part of a larger university", as the rector puts it. No less important, other pragmatic reasons were taken into consideration for this affiliation, especially the access of the graduates of the School to the postgraduate and doctoral programs of the University, many of them being taught in English.

Much smaller, Abö Akademy is in a different situation. Being situated in the city where the largest Swede community from Finland lives, Turku, this university is providing education only in Swedish. The language used in administration is also Swedish, but the members of the teaching staff are required to have language abilities in both Swedish and Finnish. In the last years some programs in English were also launched. What it is interesting for our concern for multiculturalism, is that 10 % of the Abö Akademi's students have a background education in Finnish. The reason for the choice for studying in Swedish is their will for enhancing their bilingualism, bilingualism that is specific in the area.

Summing up, in the case of these universities we can observe a tendency for intercultural communication between the two national groups at the level of higher education, a situation made possible both by the state provision of large rights for education in Swedish and by the will of the Swedish community to take advantage of the opportunities offered by the majorities educational institutions.

Babeş-Bolyai University

Babeş-Bolyai University is explicitly defined as a multicultural university. Its multiculturalism is reflected in its organizational structure, as shaped in the University Charter, from 1995, which gives the possibility for all the three national traditional communities from Transylvania – Romanian, Hungarian and Saxon – to have full access to higher education at all levels, from BA to PhD. The education is provided in Romanian, Hungarian and German and in a smaller proportion in wide-spoken international languages, without any restrictions in respect with the language use. The instruction in the three languages is insured within the three lines of

studies, which are forms of organizing the education that are to be found at all the levels of the university structure. As defined by the Charter, the line of study "is the form of organizing the education within the faculties, departments and chairs for teaching in Romanian, Hungarian and German"[7]. Each of the three lines of studies is coordinated by a vice rector. The lines of studies are represented also in the Academic Council of the university, by two vice presidents.

Within a faculty, which is the main unit of organization, one or more lines of studies could be organized. Where this demand exists, the faculty organizes the requested Departments of the lines of study within the Chairs. The director of the Department of the line of study, together with the line of studies' representatives from each Chair (each of them being also members of one of the Chairs' Board), are in charge with the regular functioning of education in that language, with the politics for developing the line of study, with the department staff's politics and with the curricula for the line of study. The proposals made by the Department of the line of study are voted in the Faculty's Council. In the Board of the Faculty's council the Department of the line of study is represented by the dean, the vice dean or the chancellor. This organization provides each linguistic group with the autonomy of decision within each line of study and with a large representation of each of them at all the levels of the university structure.

The reason for finding this solution of close-knit organization of the studies in the three languages within the faculties (which are set after the division of sciences and specializations) is to promote the intercultural communication between the local national communities. As stated in the Charter, the University takes as its mission "to provide a framework for multicultural, multilingual and multi-religious interferences"[8]. The same goal is aimed by the promotion of courses on Romanian, Hungarian and German culture and civilization developed within each lines of study in order to be taught for the students belonging to the other two lines of study[9].

---

[7] Babeş-Bolyai University Charter/2003, II.1.

[8] Ibidem, I.2.

[9] Ibidem, VI.3.

As a result of this framework provided by the Charter, at present at the bachelor level there are 88 specializations within the Romanian line of study, 50 specializations within the Hungarian line of study and 15 specializations within the German line of study. A bachelor program in Hebrew was also organized more recently. At the level of master there are 72 programs in Romanian, 22 programs in Hungarian, 3 programs in German and one program in Jewish Studies. Also at the level of master, 55 programs in wide-spoken international languages, mainly in English and French, were set. Many of the masters are joint programs organized by the Babeş-Bolyai University with universities from Europe and United States.

Thus, Babeş-Bolyai University has designed a system of organization in such a way as to give complete access to education of the youngsters from the traditional national communities from Transylvania in their mother-tongue, on one side, and to provide an environment in which the local cultures could communicate both between them and with some other traditional or scientific cultures.

University of South East Europe in Tetovo, Macedonia

The University of South East Europe is defined as a multilingual university. It is in fact the university of the Albanian minority from Macedonia. It was set in 1994, by a group of Albanians intellectuals as a private university. From the beginning they demanded the Macedonian state authorities to recognize it as a state university, with all the rights that are implied by such recognition. At the end of '90's the functioning of this university became a reason for an open conflict between the Albanians and the Macedonians. The Albanians asks for the right to study in their mother tongue, while the Macedonians replied that according to the state regulations in regard with education the University was outlaw. In 2000, in order to solve the conflict, the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe has proposed to re-organize the university in such a manner as to be compatible with the Macedonian laws and also to permit the study in Albanian. The university functioned as a private university till 2003, when the Macedonian parliament voted for a change in the law of higher education that allowed the education in the language of the community for the national minorities

that represent at least 20% of the total population of the country. From 2004 The University of South East Europe is functioning as a state university, providing instruction for around 10,000 students.

Under an international patronage, the university was organized as a multicultural, trilingual university. As stated in the university Statute, "the university would be open to all on the basis of equity and merit regardless of ethnicity; would contribute to the solution of the problem of Albanian language higher education; would promote inter-ethnic understanding to ensure a multilingual and multicultural approach to teaching and research and would develop its teaching programs in a broad international and European perspective"[10]. The three languages of education are Albanian, Macedonian and English. In the University Board, the national diversity of Macedonia is represented by three members. The language use is implicated differently at different levels of studies. So, at the first two years of bachelor level the education is provided in Albanian, Macedonian and English, in a formula that is called a "flexible use of language", which implies "usage of Albanian language, with prerequisite of using the Macedonian as well as English language"[11]. The students could follow the next two years, as well as the master studies in Albanian and English. At PhD level the language used is English.

As we can observe, in the case of the University of South East Europe the organization of the studies in a multilingual and multicultural fashion has been proved to be a solution for an agreement between the majority and the minority on the local disputed issue of the higher education for the minority. We can also observe that a strictly ethnic organization of the university was considered finally improper by both the majority and the minority.

Conclusions

After reviewing these universities we can clearly draw the general conclusion that European multicultural universities are responding through their organization mainly to the *demands for recognition that come*

---

[10] South East Europe University's Statute, Article 2.
[11] Cf. the South East Europe University's official website.

from the national minorities. While not reflecting in their structures the demands of the ethnic minorities and non-ethnic minorities (in the Kymlicka's meanings of these categories), as is the case in some of the universities from United States, Canada and Australia, they remained open to such demands by their intercultural commitments. In the same time, like other universities world-wide, they try to face the internationalization of education, by enhancing their local determined multilingualism with the promotion of English or other wide-spoken languages.

In regard with the linguistic politics two organizing patterns could be observed. The first pattern, embodied by The University of Fribourg and The University of Bolzano, implies the use of two or three languages simultaneously, by all the professors and students, in the educational process. The second pattern, embodied by The Finland's Universities and Babeş-Bolyai University, implies the possibility of using separately different local-spoken languages in the process of instruction. The University of Tetovo and the Catalonian Universities are somehow in-between, the trilingual education being a solution for the Albanians from Macedonia for learning also in their mother tongue, while the Catalonia bilingual education being a solution for not restricting the access of the Castilian speakers to the Catalonian Universities.

Finally, we can conclude that multiculturalism and multilingual education proves to be a good solution of responding to the national minority's quest for equal recognition, a solution which, by promoting intercultural communication, prevents in the same time the segregation, the enforced integration and the self-isolation of the minorities. On the contrary to all these, multiculturalism provides pluralism, democracy and the access to the culture of the other.

Bibliography

1. Kymlicka,Will (1995), *Multicultural Citizenship: a Liberal Theory of Minority Rights*, Oxford: Clarendon Press.
2. Taylor, Charles (1992), *Multiculturalism and "the Politics of Recognition"*, Princeton: Princeton University Press.
3. Turner, Terence, "Anthropology and Multiculturalism", in *Cultural Anthropology*, No 8(4)

ANOTHER DECADE, ANOTHER INCLUSION…
(A FEW WORDS ON THE DECADE OF ROMA'S INCLUSION;
A PERSONAL PERSPECTIVE FROM RUMANIA)

Dan Oprescu Zenda[*]

Abstract

(Almost) nothing new under the sun. From time to time, somebody is deciding to tackle "once and for all" the Roma issue(s). The recent initiative of the World Bank, Open Society Institute & quite a few governments from the Central and South-Eastern Europe (CSEE) might be considered just that.

Most of problems encountered by Roma of Rumania (and CSEE, for that matter) are very similar to the problems of the majority of the population, mainly due to the transitional difficulties (poverty, low education, subsistence farming, unemployment, unhealthy behaviour – including junk-food, smoking and alcohol –, crisis of traditional ways of life, domestic violence against women and children, corruption, inefficiency of public services, very low capacity to absorb foreign funds in order to alleviate/eliminate poverty – e.g.: PHARE, SAPARD, UNDP, USAID, Soros/OSI, numerous bilateral and international aid programs – etc.). Nevertheless, there are also some specific elements (mainly, related to widespread discrimination against Roma) which are making this transition (from communist dictatorship and from state-controlled economy to democracy and liberalism) even harsher than usual for people of Roma ethnic origin.

For more than three years, between Hungary and Rumania there were political tensions related to the adoption, by the Parliament in Budapest, of the so-called "Status Law"; this law is basically consisting in offering some advantages (material and moral) by the Government of Hungary to the relatively numerous ethnic Hungarians from Rumania. Quite the same tensions were registered between Hungary and Slovakia, and for the same reasons. Even before the bill has been approved into law by the Parliament,

---

[*] **Senior Advisor,** National Agency on Roma, Government of Rumania, (since December 2004); since September 2005, **Head of Public Policies' Unit**

it was widely resented in Rumania as representing a potential major bilateral crisis, with important regional consequences.

The main political actors, in chronological order, were: Viktor Orban (since 1999), Adrian Nastase (since 2000), Peter Medgyessy (since 2002), the "Venice Commission" (on October 2001) and the European Commission.

The perceived values at stake were:

- On the Hungarian side: the re-affirmation of the "Hungarianess" (i.e.: the quality as members of a "Unique Hungarian Nation") of about 3 million citizens of some countries neighboring Hungary; here, the "Hungarian side" means the public opinion and the political class in Hungary, and also the representatives of the ethnic Hungarians in Rumania. The law was viewed as an efficient tool for rectifying the wrongs of the past, mainly the "mutilation" of Hungary through the peace Treaty of Trianon (1920), as a modality to, finally, do justice to the Hungarian Nation[1].

- On the Rumanian side: the "confirmation" that many citizens (the ethnic Hungarians) of Rumania are able to have a so-called double loyalty, one toward Rumania, and another one (a stronger one?) toward Hungary. As such, a lot of Rumanians (public opinion and political class) were feeling that the very integrity of Rumania as a state was, somehow, put in doubt by a richer neighbor, through the use, the "activation" of a "fifth column" represented by an important national minority. In short, the initiative of the Government of Hungary was perceived in Rumania as an immediate threat to the very integrity of the country.

- An advantage (for an observer) of this crisis was its relative simple structure, as a Transylvanian (ethnic Hungarian from Rumania) scholar

---

[1] Cf. Irina Culic (2001), *Nationhood and Identity: Romanians and Hungarians in Transylvania,* in *Nation-Building and Contested Identities. Romanian and Hungarian Case Studies,* Budapest: Regio Books and Iasi: Editura Polirom, p. 241: "… the logic of nationhood in a state where the nation is primarily conceived ethnoculturaly – such as Germany, and Romania as well – is no longer that of the public good, but rather *the logic of the club.* That is, the use of this collective good is restricted to the members of the club. The Romanians <enjoy> their nation, while Hungarians are excluded from it. (…) The Hungarians exclude themselves from it, by entering the <club> of the Hungarian nation, and enjoying its goods and services."

has noticed: "the basic conflict constellation in Romania is rather simple – the majority versus one main minority community, more or less backed by its kin state – that is, overlying conflict constellations did not exist as in other countries."[2]

The crisis was based on several levels of uncertainty, usually acting simultaneous:

1. For Rumanians, the main issues were: "What is the next step to be done by Hungarians? Maybe first the autonomy, then the full independence of Transylvania, then unification with Hungary, eventually upon the "Kosovo model"? When such a step will take place? Will it involve a civil war (or just civil unrest) in certain areas of Rumania? What about the possibility of a foreign military intervention?

2. For Rumanian politicians, one of the greatest unknowingness was the reaction of the international bodies, and first of all the position of the European Commission.

3. For Hungarians, the issues were related with the chances that Rumania, Slovakia and (to a certain extent) Serbia to accept the "Status Law" without too much fuss and/or opposition, and especially without internationalizing the situation; the great unknown, from this perspective, was to be the reaction of the "Big Brother", the European Union (but also of other international bodies, like OSCE or NATO).

4. For the political parties forming the Government in Hungary, another big "if" was represented by the question: <Will the "Status Law" make the difference and ensure the re-election of a FIDESZ-DF majority during the general elections in April 2002?>

The crisis was, indeed, a regional one, affecting the Eastern neighbors of Hungary, and especially Rumania and Slovakia, the two countries with large and politically active Hungarian minorities. But, taking into account the sensitivity of the area (South and Eastern Europe, including large chunks of former Yugoslavia), this crisis may be considered as the first European one, after the end of wars in the Balkans (1991-1999).

---

[2] Istvan Horvath, *Facilitating Conflict Transformation: Implementation of the Recommendations of the OSCE High Commissioner on National Minorities to Romania, 1993-2001,* Working Paper no. 8, Zentrum fur OSZE-Forschung, University of Hamburg, 2002, p. 124.

In about ten years time, probably that this crisis will be presented as yet another huge misunderstanding, like so many before, between Rumania and Hungary, between Rumanians and Hungarians. In short, (almost) much ado about (almost) nothing. Nevertheless, there are lessons to be learned from such a crisis, including the one saying that it could happened again, almost anytime now.

Social *integration* and racial *discrimination* (adversity and/or complementarity?)

There are two important – and relatively distinct – ways of approaching the Roma issues:

1. the *"social integration"* school, and
2. the *"racial discrimination"* path of thought.

The main approach on Roma issues was the so-called "social integration" one: according to this approach, in short, Roma are just "un-civilized", "un-integrated" into the mainstream society; they need (in that order): to be captured, be forced to be sedentary, to be deparasitated, to be put in school, and (finally) to be put to work – and Roma will become full, regular citizens, will settle down and start, finally, to obey the laws. This approach has its roots into the Illuminist (= Enlightment) movement of XVIII-th century; but it was continued by different social currents originated into Marxism (including the half-a-century communist rule in Eastern Europe, but also in countries dominated by social-democratic ideology, like the ones in Scandinavia etc.). In Spain, such a policy was designed by kings Fernando VI and Carlos III (see the book by Antonio Gomez Alfaro on the arrests of almost all Roma of Spain in July 1746 (Roma were "put to work" until June 1763 …); in Central Europe, dominated by the Hapsburg Empire (which included even some Western parts of what is now Rumania), the typical policy on Roma was designed by Maria Terezia and her son Joseph II[3]. Practically, quite the same policy was followed all

---

[3] During the reigns of these two emperors, the Roma were forced to settle, become subject of taxes and compulsory service to the lords of the manor, abandoned the

across Europe, and a similar approach has been taken during the colonial era in Africa and South-East Asia (including the Indian Subcontinent), with regard to the "natives". The "natives" were supposed to be "uncivilized", unaware of such goodies like soap, books, or "decent" clothing and housing. The "natives" are considered to be real "primitives", and civilized people have the moral duty to take up these "primitives", to the level of Western wellbeing. Of course, it is very hard not to take into account the racialism of this perspective; into the case of Roma, it seems obvious that, for example, the Nazi Germany's policy of extermination was driven by the ideological conviction that Roma were "irrecoverable" for the whole society. By contrary, the Communists were quite sure that it is very possible to transform Roma into "new men", through (forced) sedendarization, schooling, and (quasi-forced) working.

Nowadays, the current "politically correct" attitude prohibits the open approach of the "social integration" school of thought, preferring very much the transparent euphemism of "social inclusion"[4]; the Word Bank & Co. initiative -- which started during the summer of 2003 – of the "Roma Inclusion Decade" is fitting into this honourable, Illuminist tradition. It is an unintended irony that the current efforts of WB, OSI and several governments of CSEE are the offspring of the same ideology, an ideology where there is no place for "Roma issues", but only "Roma problems" (requiring, obviously, "solutions"). The "Decade of Roma Inclusion" (which is supposed to cover a bit more than ten years …) is focusing on housing, employment, education and health care; upon this initiative, the "basic problems" of Roma of CSEE are related to *poverty* (e.g.: illiteracy, lack of skills, poor housing, lack of modern – "decent" – infrastructure etc.), and these "problems" may be "solved" by money from WB and good-will from the enlighten political leaders of CSEE, preferably under the careful

---

name of "Gypsy" and were called "New Settlers" or "New Hungarians", were forced to take on military service and craft apprenticeship; the Roma children were taken for upbringing in non-Romany families.

[4] What is that „Roma inclusion"? Inclusion of whom? Into what? Inclusion of Roma into the society? Into the "mainstream society"? Are Roma supposed to be, currently, outside the society? Are they outlaws? Upon my opinion, Roma are, definitely, inside the society – the real issue being the relative disadvantaged position most of them are occupying, in all known societies.

watch of the enlighten leaders from Brussels. The key-word is "mainstreaming".

The other school of thought regarding the Roma situation in Europe is the so-called "the racial discrimination" one, largely embraced by the most radical Roma activists, and with special roots into the fertile soil of Romanticism. By contrary to Illuminism, the Romantic attitude toward Roma will put much emphasis on the "liberty" of their lifestyle; for example, nomadism was meant to be the equivalent of freedom of movement, of the courage to contradict the feudal rules, but also the *bourgeois* ideal of *surete* and prosperity[5]. The origins of such a perspective are coming, of course, from pedagogical theories of Jean-Jacques Rousseau and the Romantic idea of the *bon souvage.* People like Roma were considered to be uncorrupted by the "decadent" civilization, and, as such, to be the repositories of some "natural" qualities (beauty, artistic talent, wisdom, healthy life, family values etc.). From this perspective, Roma represent the Salt of the Earth: Roma ladies are the most beautiful (and elegant) in the world, Roma men are the embodiments of freedom (and, eventually, of musical talent), they are very intrepid, gifted (by Mother Nature) with multiple craftsmanship, busy as the bees, the traditional structure of a Roma family is the best, the forced (and underage) marriages are welcome etc. From this perspective, the "Roma problem" is not a "problem of Roma". Unfortunately for the mankind, these wonderful Roma are living among various peoples, and all these peoples are *deeply racist*. Because of such racism, Roma are unable to attend school classes, or to have a decent employment (into the formal sector of the economy); only because of this racism, Roma are, supposedly, overrepresented into the prisons[6], and because of this racism Roma have to move Westward from

---

[5] *Carmen*, by Merimee/Bizet, is a perfect illustration of this attitude, typical for the second half of the 19th century. See also the film *Shatra*, by the Moldovan director Emil Lotreanu, for the same attitude in late 20th century.

[6] This is not true, at least in Rumania; all the researches and data are showing a "proportional representation" of Roma in penitentiaries. The issue of increased Roma *visibility* in areas like infractionality or migration was already researched in some countries (e.g.: Rumania, Germany, France, Austria etc.). On migration, cf. ICMPD (project financed under EU Odysseus Programme), *Current Roma Migration from the EU Candidate Countries. The scope and features of Roma irregular movements,*

Central and Eastern Europe. In short, the lack of self-esteem (= in Rumanian: *stima)* will conduct to a widespread stigmata *(= in Rumanian: stigma)*, to use a couple of words very much preferred by radical Roma (and non-Roma) activists. The same *mantra* sustain that Roma are severely underrepresented into central and local institutions; regarding the political representation[7] of Roma, they appeared to be only objects (of manipulation) and *victims*, and not also active players and, sometimes, *perpetrators* (especially against Roma women and children). Only racism is criminalizing Roma *ab initio*, and it is making being Roma a stigma, instead of high esteem. And this stigma, caused by racism, is making so many Roma not to declare themselves as Roma in different national censuses, and is the main reason for which many (if not all!) Roma high-achievers prefer not to present themselves as Roma. For this school of thought, some unpleasant issues (like domestic violence, the lower status of women, child-marriages etc.) are just "traditions", to be kept even if they are conflicting with the more general human rights. Everything coming from tradition is just right. The key-word is "discrimination".

Of course, these two approaches are not fundamentally incompatible; into my opinion, they are more complementary than contradictory. Corresponding to these two main perspectives, there are two sorts of Roma NGOs (and Roma activists): 1. focusing on community development, and 2. criticising the authorities for not providing enough opportunities for Roma. The first way is very comfortable with the social integration school of thought; the second is closer to the racial discrimination way of understanding Roma issues. The first ones are cooperating with central and – especially – local authorities (e.g.: in building social houses etc.), the

---

the reactions of the host countries and the effects on the EU Candidate States, Wien, February 2001.

[7] See Zoltan Barany, *Romani Electoral Politics and Behaviour*, in "JEMIE" (*Journal of Ethnopolitics and Minority Issues in Europe*, Flensburg, Autumn 2001 (see also www.ecmi.de). The most important book written by Zoltan Barany (professor at the University of Texas in Austin) on this issue is *The East European Gypsies: Regime Change, Marginality, and Ethnopolitics*, OUP, 2001. Also, see *Roma Political Participation in Romania*, report issued by the National Democratic Institute for International Affairs, Washington, DC, February 2003.

second ones will try to contradict, criticise, mitigate and even litigate the decisions of the authorities[8].

Loans vs. grants (or: World Bank vs. European Commission)

World Bank (= WB) is, indeed, a bank; it is making loans (sometime, even so-called soft-loans). Nevertheless, with a few exceptions[9], it is loaning money, and expects the money back, plus a decent interest. But the WB is not an ordinary one: it has to loan money only to governments. As such, it has to convince foreign governments of the absolute necessity and urgency of some issues in order to borrow the funds to tackle difficult problems, for example the situation of Roma in Central and Eastern Europe. Since late '90s, WB produced several reports on Roma, all with a similar conclusion: governments of Central and Eastern Europe have to pour a lot of money into Roma, in order to significantly improve their life, in a reasonably short period of time. The same conclusion is shared by other major donors, like the European Commission and George Soros[10]. Because of the general Illuminist *cum* interventionist attitude, most of the governments of the region are fully agreeing with this perspective, which has also the advantage (for them) of putting the blame not on lack of political will, but on "objective" situation, like the poverty, the difficult communist past, the lack of funds etc.

The real question about the Decade of Roma Inclusion is: why make a loan, when the European Commission in Brussels is only too happy to oblige on making grants (e.g.: in 2005, only in Rumania, and only on PHARE projects, there are over 11 million Euros to be spent on Roma).

---

[8] Following this logic: because central and local authorities are elected in a democratic way, with majorities of free votes, they have to express the innate racism of this majorities …

[9] Notably, the Roma Education Fund, an initiative of WB in preparation of the Decade of Roma Inclusion. The grants from WB are, generally, a preparation for a major loan.

[10] Cf. Ina Zoon (2001), *On the Margins,* New York: OSI. See also OSI, *Monitoring the EU Accession Process,* Budapest and New York, 2002 (also, on www.eumap.org).

Secondly, the general experience in CSEE is that the real and huge issue is not exactly the lack of money, but the extremely limited *capacity of absorption[11]* of foreign and national money. As a rule, the most dissadvantaged is the local community, the lower its capacity of absorption; this is the very reason for which the good (and bad) practices of different projects[12] are so important for future major, strategic approaches. This is the reason for which it is much more important to receive expertise and skills in designing, implementing and evaluating projects and programs, than simply to receive lots and lots of money.

Annex (optional):

Some (useful) papers (and Internet sites) on Roma in Central and Eastern Europe:

1. Antonio Gomez Alfaro (1999), *Marea prigonire a Rromilor. Incarcerarea generala a Rromilor in Spania anului 1749,* trad. Camelia Radulescu, Centre de recherches tsiganes (Paris: Rene Descartes University,) and Bucharest: Editura Alternative, collection Interface, 126 pp.
2. Open Society Institute, *Minority Protection in Romania. An Assessment of the Strategy of the Government of Romania for Improving the Conditions of Roma,* EUMAP, Budapest, 2002
3. Institute for Peace Research and Security Policy at the University of Hamburg (ed.), *OSCE Yearbook 2000,* Nomos Verlag, Baden-Baden, 2001, 508 pp.
4. L. Nastasa and L. Salad (ed.), (2000), *Interethnic Relations in Post-Communist Romania. Proceedings of the Conference "The Romanian*

---

[11] By *capacity of absorption* it is generally understood the capacity of imagine, write down, implement, monitor and evaluate projects and programs. In Rumania there are special bodies (like the Rumanian Fund for Social Development, which started, in late '90s, on a loan from the WB and with a little help from the Government) dedicated to increase this capacity of absorption, especially in waiting for the so-called structural funds of the EU.

[12] Irrespective of the funds (private, governmental, bilateral, multilateral etc.) and implementing authorities (governments, NGOs, international bodies etc.)…

*Model of Ethnic Relations. The Last Ten Years, the Next Ten Years",
Bucharest, July 7-8, 2000,* Cluj: Ethnocultural Diversity Resource
Center, 402 pp.

5. Institutul National de Statistica (2004), *Recensamantul populatiei si al
    locuintelor. 18 martie 2002. Vol. IV: Structura etnica si confesionala,*
    Bucharest, xx + 864 pp. (see also http://www.insse.ro).

6. UNDP (Amartya Sen, Will Kymlicka et. al., eds.), (2004), *Human
    Development Report 2004. Cultural Liberty in Today's Diverse World,*
    New York, xiv + 286 pp. (see also: www.undp.org).

7. UNDP (2003), *Avoiding the Dependency Trap,* Bratislava, January

8. UNICEF, Ministry of Education et al. (eds.), (2002), *The Participation
    to Education of the Roma Children. Problems, Solutions, Actors,*
    Bucharest, 240 pp.

9. European Roma Rights Center (ERRC) (2002), *Barriers to the
    Education of Roma in Europe, United Nations Special Session on
    Children, May 8-10, 2002,* Budapest, 30 pp. (see also: http://errc.org –
    on the same site, see "Roma Rights", a quarterly journal of ERRC).

10. European Roma Rights Center (2001), *Roma Rights in Europe. World
    Conference against Racism,* Budapest, 22 pp.

11. Ina Zoon (2001), *On the Margins. Roma and Public Services in Romania,
    Bulgaria, and Macedonia. With a Supplement on Housing in the Czech
    Republic. A Call to Action to Improve Romani Access to Social Protection,
    Health Care, and Housing,* New York: Open Society Institute, xx + 234
    pp. (see also: www.soros.org/romaandpublicservices).

12. General Secretariat of the Government of Romania (dr. Laszlo
    Murvai ed.), (2003), *The Dimensions of Education for National
    Minorities in Romania. Jubilee Edition 1993-2003,* Cluj: Editura
    Studium, 200 pp.

13. Government of Romania, *Report on Progresses Made in Implementing
    the Government Strategy for Improving the Condition of the Roma,*
    Bucharest, April 2003, 144 pp. (in Rumanian and English).

14. Catalin Zamfir et al. (eds.), (2002), *Indicatori privind comunitatile de
    romi din Romania,* Bucuresti, 56 pp.

15. Ioan Marginean et al. (eds.), (2001), *Cercetari cu privire la minoritatea
    roma,* Bucharest: Editura Expert, 80 pp. (see also www.rroma.ro).

16. World Bank (Dena Ringold et al., eds.), *Report No. 23492-RO. Romania. Local Social Services Delivery Study, Vol. 2: Main Report,* January 16, 2002, 96 pp.

17. World Bank (Dena Ringold), *Roma and the Transition in Central and Eastern Europe: Trends and Challenges,* Washington, DC, 2000

18. World Bank (Dena Ringold ed.), (2003), *Roma in an Expanding Europe: Breaking the Poverty Cycle,* Washington, DC.

19. European Commission (2002), *Report on EU Support for Roma Communities in Central and Eastern Europe,* Brussels.

20. Csaba Tabajdi et al., *Improvement of living and social conditions of Roma/Gypsy population in order to decrease possible Romani migration from the countries of Central and Eastern Europe,* Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe, Strasbourg, doc. 8830 of September 22nd, 2000

21. Consiliul National pentru Combaterea Discriminarii (2003), *Legislatie in domeniul nediscriminarii,* Bucuresti: Editura ALL Beck, xxii + 446 pp.

22. Departamentul pentru Relatii Interetnice (2004), *Minoritatile nationale din Romania. Aspecte legislative si institutionale,* Bucuresti, 300 pp.

23. www.eumap.org

24. www.divers.ro

25. www.romanicriss.org

26. www.edrc.ro

27. www.romacenter.ro

28. www.undp.org

29. www.osi.hu

30. www.worldbank.org

31. www.osce.odihr.org

32. www.osf.ro

Nota bene: these pages were written into my quality as Dan OPRESCU, and not as a senior advisor with the Government of Rumania. Moreover, the ideas of this paper represent just a personal point of view, and do not engage, in any way, any governmental authority.

NORMAN MANEA AND THE NEW EUROPEAN FRONTIERS[1]

Mihaela Mudure[*]

Abstract

This paper focuses on Norman Manea, a contemporary Jewish-American who was born in Romania, in 1936, in a family of Jewish intellectuals. As a child, he was deported with his family between 1941-1945. In the 1980's Norman Manea immigrated to Western Europe, first, and then to the USA. Once in the US, Norman Manea had difficulties finding his own voice in the new language, in the new reality. Forever marked by his East European roots, he had to redraw his inner and outside frontiers in order to function in another existential universe.

In his book, The Return of the Hooligan, Norman Manea describes one of his post-1990 voyages back to Romania, in Bucharest, Cluj, and Suceava. The voyage becomes a liminal space relevant for a self-mediating between several cultures and for the place of the Jewish intellectual at these new frontiers of Europe.

---

[1] We have not used Norman Manea (2005), *The Hooligan's Return. A Memoir*, trans. Angela Jianu, (New York: Farrar, Straus and Giroux). All quotations were translated by Mihaela Mudure. Actually, in an interview published in *Observator cultural* Norman Manea deplores the clumsiness of Angela Jianu's translation. Cf. Sean Cotter, "Interviu cu Norman Manea – Textul nomad I," *Observator cultural* no. 172 (2003): 18. "The translator, selected by the publishing house after a competition, a person of Romanian extraction and having lived in England for a long time, gave a translation faithful to the original. Its faithfulness to the original made the English version seem timid, inhibited, from the stylistic point of view, but it allowed one to understand the author's intentions and afterwards it allowed the laborious editing where I cooperated with an experienced 'doctor' of texts". ("Traducătorul ales de editură prin concurs, o persoană de origine română, trăind de multă vreme în Anglia, a furnizat o traducere fidelă originalului. Fidelitatea față de originalul românesc făcea ca versiunea engleză să pară, stilistic, timidă, inhibată, dar permitea înțelegerea intențiilor autorului şi a permis, apoi, laborioasă redactare la care am conlucrat cu un experimentat 'doctor' de texte".)

[*] Michaela Mudure is associate professor at Babes-Bolyai University, Cluj, Romania. Dr. Mudure teaches courses on American multiculturalism, ethnic literatures in the US, gender and sexual identity in American culture. She has published extensively in Romania and abroad.

Motto: "Yes, the country has become more remote and excluded me at the same time. This has a double effect, a geographic and a political one. … But the remoteness of the country also has a healing effect. My critical stance towards my country, I feel it as a patriotic stance of a man who has not snatched himself completely from the place he left. But the more remote the country becomes, the bigger a certain feeling of indifference grows. The far away country is slowly disappearing from my imagination and could one day become fiction itself. I know I was born there and Romanian will be my language to the end of my life."
Norman Manea[2]

Norman Manea, a contemporary Jewish-Romanian-American was born in a family of Jewish intellectuals in Romania, in 1936. As a child, he was deported with his family beyond the Dniester between 1941-1945. As an adolescent he was attracted by the Communist ideology. After studying engineering, Norman Manea turned to literature. He made his literary debut under the guidance of Miron Radu Paraschivescu, a gifted Romanian poet. He was awarded literary prizes (in 1979 and in 1984) but also had to confront the Communist censorship. In the 1986 he went to Germany with a DAAD scholarship and then decided to defect. Finally, he immigrated to the USA where his books were very well received. Up to now Norman Manea has been translated into 10 languages and favorably reviewed in several prestigious literary journals.

In spite of these literary successes, Norman Manea experienced the trauma of searching for his own voice in the new language, in the new reality. Forever marked by his East European roots, he has had to redraw

---

[2] From an interview taken by William Totok to Norman Manea: „Da, ţara s-a îndepărtat şi m-a exclus în acelaşi timp. Acest lucru generează un efect dublu, unu geografic şi unu politic. ... Depărtarea ţării are însă şi un efect tămăduitor. Ţinuta mea critică faţă de ţara o simt în ultima instanţă ca una patriotică, ca cea a unui om care nu s-a smucit încă definitiv de locul părăsit. Însă cu cât se îndepărtează ţara mai mult, cu atât mai mult creşte un oarecare sentiment de indiferenţă. Ţara din depărtare dispare încetul cu încetul din imaginaţia mea şi ar putea să devină într-o bună zi însăşi ficţiune. Eu ştiu că m-am născut acolo şi că româna va rămâne limba mea până la sfârşitul vieţii mele." http://www.poezie.ro/index.php/press/75781/index.html. Accessed on 1 April 2006.

both his inner frontiers and the outside frontiers of his former homeland in order to function in another existential universe.

This paper focuses on one of Norman Manea's best books *The Return of the Hooligan* (*Întoarcerea huliganului*, in the original). This narrative where the memoir becomes fiction and fiction questions the brutal separation between memory and reality can be considered a book of the Romanian Holocaust, but also a book of the Jewish minority in Romania, a book of post-communist Romania, now a country at the frontier of Europe as defined by the globalizing structure which is the European Union. According to the writer himself "[T]he Holocaust was for me a landmark-warning, not a seizing theme".[3]

Critics have noticed in *The Return of the Hooligan* either the drama of the exile and its consequences for he who lives in a language where he cannot return or the drama of the return to an East where the dregs of the dictatorial order and the emergent signs of a consumerist society mix in a saddening, revolting, and sometimes vital carnival. Alexandru Fillon talks about Manea's "cold nostalgia"[4], Antonio Muñoz Molina considers the inevitable returning: "After escape, there comes the return"[5]. Antonio Tabucchi considers that Manea's return was a Virgilian voyage - a descent into the post-communist Hades, may we wonder? – where the most important presence is the mother and where posthumous memory is the most important factor in reconstructing a history[6]. Lourdes Rubio

---

[3] "[H]olocaustul a fost pentru mine un reper-avertisment, nu o temă acaparatoare." (Norman Manea, "Nu sunt un scriitor al Holacaustului" ("I am not a Holocaust writer"), *Familia (The Family)* (Oradea), no. 2, (February 1999): 59.

[4] "nostalgie rece". Alexandru Fillon, "O operă demnă de un Nobel" (A Work Worthy a Nobel Prize"), *Observator cultural (Cultural Observer)*, Bucharest, year VI, new series 51 (308), (16-22 February 2006): new series 51 (308): I.

[5] "După evadare, vine întoarcerea". Antonio Muñoz Molina, "Europa pierdută a lui Norman Manea" (Norma Maneas' Lost Europe"), *Observator cultural (Cultural Observer)*, Bucharest, year VI, new series 51 (308), (16-22 February 2006): new series 51 (308): II..

[6] Antonio Tabucchi, "Norman Manea, eternul străin" ("Norman Manea, the eternal foreigner"), *Observator cultural (Cultural Observer)*, Bucharest, year VI, new series 51 (308), (16-22 February 2006): new series 51 (308): III-IV.

appreciates the subtle irony and the writer's vision[7] whereas Paul Cernat talks about the presence in Manea's work of this margin of Europe singled out by a "Communist <u>fin de siècle</u>"[8]. Cernat considers that "return means, in this case, recognition"[9]. Anca Băicoianu appreciates the novel as "[t]he confusing Babel of recent history in an Esperanto of the narration"[10]. *The Return of the Hooligan* is, therefore, an exquisite combination of nostalgia, wit, and intelligent, sagacious melancholy. Undoubtedly, this acme of Manea's fictional work reinforces subtle comments that predate this book by many years, sometimes. For instance, before 1990 Dorin Ştefănescu analyzed the relationship between the real and the fictional in Norman Manea's work and considered "the imaginary act a figure of creative fiction"[11], whereas in the early 1990's Alexandru Vlad noticed the writer's amazement at "the strange, disconcerting collaboration between the good ones and the evil ones"[12] in post-Communist reality as well as the advantages of Norman Manea's inside out position. "Through Norman Manea we had the opportunity to explain ourselves to the West as we are"[13]. Last but certainly not least, Ion Simuţ notices in a pervasive article the many cultural and ethnic allegiances of the writer and his profound humanity[14].

---

[7] Lourdes Rubio, "Cronica dezrădăcinatului" ("The Chronicle of the Uprooted"), trans. into Romanian Gabriela Ionescu, *Observator cultural (Cultural Observer)*, Bucharest, year VI, new series 51 (308), (16-22 February 2006): new series 51 (308): V.

[8] Paul Cernat, "Dificila întoarcere a scriitorului" ("The Writer's difficult return"), *Observator cultural (Cultural Observer)*, Bucharest, year VI, new series 51 (308), (16-22 February 2006): new series 51 (308): VI.

[9] Cernat, "Dificila întoarcere a scriitorului" ("The Writer's difficult return"), VII.

[10] Anca Băicoianu, "Norman Manea – memoria istoriei" ("Norman Manea – the memory of history"), *Observator cultural (Cultural Observer)*, Bucharest, year VI, new series 51 (308), (16-22 February 2006): new series 51 (308): VII.

[11] Dorin Ştefănescu, "Punctul de inflexiune" (The Inflexion Point") *Dialog (Dialogue)*, Iaşi, April-July 1985: 10.

[12] Alexandru Vlad, "Amurgul clovnilor" ("The Sunset of the clowns") *Vatra (The Hearth)* (Târgu Mureş), April 1993: 7.

[13] Vlad, "Amurgul clovnilor" ("The Sunset of the clowns"), April 1993: 7.

[14] Ion Simuţ, "Un scriitor evreu, roman, şi om deopotrivă" ("A Jewish writer, a Romanian and a man"), *Familia (The Family), Oradea*, February 1999: 47-57.

Unlike most of the above interpretations, our approach will be less literary and more ideological focusing mostly on the idea of Romania as part of Europe, Romania as aa frontier constructed both by the insiders and the outsiders of Romanian culture with defensive or avant-guard purposes.

The Return of the Hooligan is Norman Manea's relation of and his meditation upon his own relation of two return trips to Romania. Exactly as the writer feels that he is inside out the Romanian language, the Romanian people, his own narrative position samples this complex epistemological position where you belong and do not belong at the same time. The former return occurred when the narrator was a child. He returned from the deportation beyond the Dniester. The latter return occurred in the early 1990's when he returned unreturning from exile and visited Bucharest, Cluj, and Suceava. In both case, the voyage, imposed or not, becomes a liminal space relevant for a self mediating between several cultures and for the place of the Jewish intellectual at these new frontiers of Europe.

The Return of the Hooligan makes use of the metaphor of the "hooligan" firstly used in Romanian literature by the Jewish-Romanian writer, Mihail Sebastian in his 1935 polemical novel *How I Became a Hooligan?*(*How I Became a Hooligan?*). In that context, the hooligan was "the trouble maker" who disturbed the established the world order. Sebastian's metaphoric use of the word signified his alienation at being still considered an alien although he wrote in Romanian and with a view to a Romanian readership. The term is resumed by Petre Pandrea, a remarkable lawyer and diarist, in his 1958 *The Memoirs of the Wallachian Mandarin* (*Memoriile mandarinului valah*) and used in connection with the sequence of dictatorships in contemporary Romanian history. Pandrea notices the relationship between the extreme right and the extreme left and calls hooligans all extremists hungry for power and neglecting human values [15]. In recent Romanian public discourse the word got a very special connotation when Ion Iliescu, the then President of Romania, used it to

---

[15] "The son of the dead was in the same cell as the assassins, the hooligans of the nationalist right, punished by the leftist dictatorship, which quickly took some hooliganic aspects as well". ("Fiul celui mort stătea în celulă cu asasinii, huligani de dreapta naționalistă, pedepsiți de dictatura de stânga, care a luat repede şi ea anumite aspecte huliganice"). Petre Pandrea (2001), *Memoriile mandarinului valah (The memoirs of the wallachian mandarin)*, Bucharest: Albatros, 132.

label the 1991 anti-Communist protestors in the University Square in Bucharest. In his partially autobiographic, partially historic literary reconstruction, Norman Manea elaborates on the "the hooliganic war" which brought Communism and "a hooliganic peace."

Besides these political values, *The Return of the Hooligan* is also the return of writer who is in a creative unreturning space for ever located within the Romanian language, the writer's language. Longing to belong, suffering because of aggressive exclusionary movements, the narrative voice confesses to being: "just a poor nomad, not a renegade"[16]. The freedom of non-belonging is exhilarated in the New World, a traditional privileged space for the immigrants and the exiles. Norman Manea elaborates on the pain and the enrichment brought about by this space. "The joy to be a stranger among strangers. The statue and the limitations of freedom and its masks, new lands and syntaxes, not only around, but in oneself, the trauma of dispossession, the new diseases of the soul and mind, the shock of dislocation, the chance to live one's Posterity?"[17]. Living among strangers intensifies existence: "… every year in the exile of freedom has been worth four conventional years"[18].

Themes overlap, they separate, and then they meet again creating a genuine saga of exclusions. The author quotes in support of his position another famous Romanian in exile. Emil Cioran reiterates and reinforces the idea that "[t]o be excluded is the only dignity left to us"[19] An imaginary confraternity of the excluded and the exiles empowers Mania's own considerations about his own condition with regard to this European frontier.

Not a moment does Norman Manea forget his Jewish identity which has implied for centuries multiple allegiances and inside out

---

[16] "Sânt un biet nomad, nu un renegat." Norman Manea (2003), *Întoarcerea huliganului (The Hooligan's Return)*, Bucharest, Iaşi: Polirom,. 13.

[17] "Bucuria de fi străin între alţi străini. Statuia şi limităruile libertăţii şi măştile ei, ţinuturi şi sintaxe noi, nu doar în jur, ci şi în el inşuşi, trauma deposedării, noile boli ale sufletului şi minţii, şocul dislocării, şansa de a-ţi trăi Posteritatea?" . Manea, *Întoarcerea huliganului, 47.*

[18] "… fiecare an în exilul libertăţii valora cât patru ani convenţionali". Manea, *Întoarcerea huliganului, 47.*

[19] "[a] fi exlus este singura noastră demnitate". Manea, *Întoarcerea huliganului*, 51.

positions which allowed perceptive observations upon identity movements and evolutions. *The Return of the Hooligan* is also a questioning about such a Jewish identity as the author's, who remains Jewish in spite of the absence of specific religious and linguistic parameters.. "When doctor Freud asked you: what is left Jewish in a Jew who is not religious, nor nationalist, and cannot speak the language of the Bible, you have jabbered the answer he himself had formulated: *a lot*. You have not explained what the term means, nor had he had the imprudence to explain"[20].

Norman Manea recreates his Moldavian childhood and his family's ordeal during the Transdnistrian Holocaust. Memory is a necessity, and forgiveness is out of discussion because "[w]e do not have the right to forgive on their behalf. Neither can God forgive on our behalf, this is everybody's business…"[21]. In bitter ironical words, Norman Manea records the tragic success of the Transdnistria camps. Only 50% of the deportees died. It cannot rival with Auschwitz. "The performance of Transdnistria remained ambiguous, as everything that is Romanian"[22]. The most important value in the camp was life. "Nothing was more important than survival, so said the mother trying to encourage her husband and her son. Death must be rejected by all means. Only so are we worth surviving, reiterated the female responsible with survival"[23].

After 1945 Communist attachments seem to be a solution. But not for long. The teenager Norman Manea realized that: "[t]he chaos of the free market and the chaos of the free word had been replaced by the schizophrenia of taboos. The forced complicity had culminated in the

---

[20] "Cînd doctorul Freud te-a întrebat: ce rămâne evreiesc într-un evreu care nu este religios, nici naționalist, şi nu cunoaşte limba Bibliei, ai bâlbâit răspunsul formulat de el însuşi: *mult*". Manea, *Întoarcerea huliganului,* 226.

[21] "[n]u avem, însă, dreptul să iertăm în numele lor. Nici Dumnezeu nu poate ierta în numele nostru, asta-i treaba fiecăruia…" Manea, *Întoarcerea huliganului,* 201.

[22] "Performanța Transnistriei a rămas ambiguă, ca tot ce este românesc". Manea, *Întoarcerea huliganului, 213.*

[23] "Nimic nu era mai important ca supraviețuirea, aşa spunea mama, încercând să-şi încurajeze soțul şi fiul. Moartea trebuia, cu orice preț, refuzată. Doar astfel merităm supraviețuirea, repeat responsabila cu supraviețuirea." Manea, *Întoarcerea huliganului, 214.*

perversion-symbol: the red membership card[24]"[25]. The death of Stalin is recorded with sharp irony which includes the narrator himself. Everybody received the red ribbon with a black stripe. "I also wore it on my left arm, there where the ancestors used to bind their phylacteries, which would have given me back to the chosen people"[26]. Gradually, the narrator would realize the deadly cancer in "[t]he tumours of duplicity"[27] and the evil encapsulated in the very essence of the new society. "The exploitation of man by the state did not prove to be more attractive than the exploitation of man by man. Abolishing private property had fractured the economy and had gradually imposed the property of the state over its citizens"[28].

Norman Manea mercilessly uncovers the inescapable cruelty of the communist system and destroys any possible leftist illusion. What makes Communism unique in its evilness is "[t]he drastic difference from the Conservative dictatorships where private property allows a last chance of independence"[29].

The tragic swings of dictatorships in Romania's contemporary history make the necessity of *alia* even more poignant for many Romanian Jews. However, for the author, this option has been unacceptable for quite a long time. Norman Manea is able to catch the peculiarities (namely, ambiguities) of Romanian communism like few other writers, if any. He sees communist realities as a carnivalesque set up where "[t]he clichés of propaganda served the jugglers of the Totalitarian Circus"[30]. The essence of

---

[24] The sign that you were a member of the Communist Party

[25] "Haosul pieței libere şi haosul cuvântului liber fuseseră înlocuite de schizofrenia tabuurilor. Complicitatea forțată culminase într-o perversiune-simbol: carnetul roşu". Manea, *Întoarcerea huliganului*, 222.

[26] "O purtam şi eu pe brațul stâng, acolo unde străbunii îşi legau filacterele care m-ar fi redat poporului ales." Manea, *Întoarcerea huliganului*, 146.

[27] "[t]umorile duplicității". ." Manea, *Întoarcerea huliganului*, 222.

[28] "Exploatarea omului de către stat nu se dovedise mai atrăgătoare decât exploatarea omului de către om. Defiinșarea proprietății private fracturase economia şi impusese treptat proprietatea statului asupra cetățenilor". Manea, *Întoarcerea huliganului*, 221-222.

[29] "[d]rastica deosebire față de dictaturile de dreapta, unde proprietatea privată permite o ultimă şansă de independență." Manea, *Întoarcerea huliganului*, 149.

[30] "[c]lişeele propagandei serveau jonglerilor Circului Totalitar". Manea, *Întoarcerea huliganului*, 223.

Romanian communism is duplicity which affects both "the sly masters and the even slyer servants …wearing, as masks, their own faces"[31].

However, a moment comes when departure cannot be avoided any longer. "Finally I left, but not from the language where I lived, but from the country where I could breathe no longer"[32]. The language became the "wound"[33]. The language became nomadic. Paradoxically, it is the "exile and its ambiguities"[34] which make Norman Manea realize the fundamental reality of the Romanian language for his ego. "I had finally found my true whereabouts. Language promises not only the re-birth, but also the legitimation, the true citizenship, the true belonging. To be exiled from this ultimate refuge also meant the most brutal de-centralization, the burning which reaches the very core of the being. … Nothing was left for me except to take my language, my house with me. The snail's house. Wherever I was to shipwreck, this was to remain, I knew it, the infantile refuge of survival"[35].

In a crazy, vibrant, almost neurotic world globalizing at unbelievable speed, alienation is inevitable. "What else do we possess but exile? The exile before and afterwards the exile"[36].

The last part of the novel records a post-1990 visit to Romania. Communism has collapsed but some of the old duplicity is still there, on the same faces. Recognition, animosity because of Norman Manea's courage to point to some Fascist slippage of an important Romanian

---

[31] "stăpânii vicleni şi sclavii încă mai vicleni … purtând, drept măşti, propriile lor chipuri". Manea, *Întoarcerea huliganului*, 251.

[32] "Am şi plecat, până la urmă, dar nu din limba în care locuiam, ci din țara în care nu mai puteam respira." Manea, *Întoarcerea huliganului*, 257.

[33] "rana". Manea, *Întoarcerea huliganului*, 257.

[34] "exil şi ambiguitățile sale". Manea, *Întoarcerea huliganului*, 209.

[35] "Găsisem, iată, în cele din urmă adevăratul domiciliu. Limba promite nu doar re-naşterea, ci şi legitimarea, reala cetăţenie şi reala apartenenţă. A fi exilat din acest ultimo refugiu însemna cea mai brutală des-centrare, arderea care atinge miezul însuşi al fiinţei. … Nu-mi rămânea decât să-mi iau limba, casa cu mine. Casa melcului. Oriunde urma să naufragiez, aceasta aveasă rămână, ştiam refugiul infantil al supravieţuirii. Manea, *Întoarcerea huliganului*, 195.

[36] "Ce altceva posedăm decât exilul? Exilul dinainte şi de după exil." Manea, *Întoarcerea huliganului, 230.*

personality[37], a voyage back into the childhood and teenage time located in Suceava, "this impertinence of the banal which is life itself"[38], these are the narrative matter of this third part. Norman Manea changes Hannah Arendt's banality of evil into the banality of life. The survivor of all dictatorships, whatever their color, realizes that he must adapt to life, to its overwhelming banality because one needs to survive communism in order to testify against it. The Bakhtinian carnivalesque clown testifies against dictatorships where everybody is clowning. This is not empowerment in the sense of the glorification of the temporary seized liberty and let go frustrations, but rather in the sense of overwhelming survival, overwhelming resistance by survival, survival, by all means, because of the atrocity of the dictatorships.

The new post-1990 Romania is obsessed to receive exterior legitimating signs. Romania joining NATO "is perceived as a test of national worthiness, and the West which had betrayed either at Yalta, or at Malta was passing its decisive test"[39]. Some kind of identity fragility as well as some unease with modernity and the new world order turn into almost aggressive need to belong, to join in.

An unfulfilled promise to come to the mother's funeral takes the author to Suceava and to his own beginnings. A local prize will pay for minor repairings necessary to the local Jewish cemetery. The headquarters of the Jewish community are at nr. 8 Armeneasca Street. No sign or anything, "They have broken our windows a couple of times…. It is better like this, without any sign"[40], says the President of the local organization. Anti-Semitism has not died out. On the other hand, the new world has already sent its harbinger signs even to Suceava: Pepsi Cola and fast food advertisements are everywhere. Cheap commodification and the

---

[37] Mircea Eliade (1907-1986), prominent historian of religions and famous Romanian writer.

[38] „acea impertinență a banalității care este chiar viața". Manea, *Întoarcerea huliganului,* 223.

[39] „"este văzută ca test al valorii naționale şi al viitorului tării, iar Occidentul care trădase România ba la Yalta, ba la Malta, dădea proba decisivă." Manea, *Întoarcerea huliganului,* 236.

[40] "- Ne-au spart de câteva ori geamurile... Mai bine aşa, fără firmă". Manea, *Întoarcerea huliganului,* 341.

implacable force of the market are felt everywhere and consequently, they are astutely recorded by Norman Manea: "the experience exchange between the expert in the pathology of constraint and the expert in the traumas of freedom would not have been useless"[41].

The beauty of the authorial expression often reaches a sophisticated climax, as in the following sample: "For the tenant-of-time passenger, the space of the hotel is the best"[42]. The lyrical value of the text alternates with the strict medicalization of the discourse, which is symptomatic for the transformation of the whole Communist society in a lunatics' hospital where nurses and doctors impose their treatments upon the clowns feigning power or submission. With Norman Manea, irony and sentimentality can never lapse into lacrimosity because they are controlled by intelligence. Wit goes hand in hand with the exquisite quality of emotion which does not sentimentalize, it is only expression, the need to share with the reader.

Lyrical, melancholic, lucid, and ironical both with the others and with himself, the author does not miss a chance to whip his own creative ambitions and ironically invert a well known cliché: the found manuscript. For the authors of the eighteenth or the nineteenth centuries, the found manuscript initiated the work. For the postmodern Norman Manea, the lost and probably never recuperated manuscript initiates the writing. His blue notebook, the repository of his latest Romanian impression, gets forgotten on the plane. The threat that the fallible human memory will be once again the only reliable source of information is incumbent upon the author. He calls up the airport in despair. Yes, if found, the notebook should be sent to his home: "in New York, of course. Yes, Upper West Side, Manhattan"[43]. In spite of language tensions, choices seem to have been made.

---

[41] "schimbul de experiență dintre expertul în patologia constrângerii şi cel în traumele libertății nu ar fi fost inutil". Manea, *Întoarcerea huliganului,* 223.

[42] "Pentru chiriaşul pasager al timpului, spațiul de hotel este cel adevărat". Manea, *Întoarcerea huliganului,* 274.

[43] "din New York, fireşte. Da, Upper West Side, Manhattan". Manea, *Întoarcerea huliganului,* 360.

"Time has gone by, you have learnt the joys and diseases of freedom, you have accepted the honor of exile"[44]. The new frontiers of Europe become the new frontiers of the authorial self that will forever belong and not belong, return and not return. Something of the conquering frontier spirit of the Americans seems to have converted the author who bravely defies stereotypes and occasional personal disappointment in an effort to construct institutional bridges between the East and the West (see the visit to Cluj and Manea's effort to create academic links between Bard College and Babes-Bolyai University).

Unfortunately, the end of the communist circus is not the end of all traumas. *The Return of the Hooligan* is relevant in this respect. Firstly, it is a book about "… Byzantine communism and its ambiguities. Then about exile and its ambiguities" [45]. Masquerade is globalizing the world. The transnational flows of information, capital, intelligence and talent make the hybridisation of good and evil, the mimicry of freedom even more hideous because they are almost instantly on-line and they become tragically easily available.

Nomadic language becomes one of the few constants. The only inner private space left to the uprooted writer, the re-routed writer is his mind, his language. The only private space exterior to the writer's personality is the cold and unfriendly hotel room in downtown Bucharest or in Cluj, or elsewhere. Manea is a Bakhtinian realist writer who does not rely on the geometry of the typical but on the sad irony of the outsider-insider clowning the injustice and the abuse. Norman Manea returns to the new frontiers of Europe to find a world not yet fully healed and not yet fully recovered after the abscesses of totalitarianism, but a dynamic world rich in its potentialities which can bring new solutions to the clowns of the world and against the clowning of the world.

---

[44] "A trecut timp, ai învăţat bucuriile şi bolile libertăţii, ai acceptat onoarea exilului". Manea, *Întoarcerea huliganului*, 231

[45] "… comunismul bizantin şi ambiguităţile sale. Apoi despre exil şi ambiguităţile sale". Manea, *Întoarcerea huliganului*, 209.

ROMANIA THROUGH AMERICAN EYES
A CULTURAL PERSPECTIVE

John Sorensen[*]

Abstract

How do cultures communicate themselves to one another? Even more difficult to answer: how do they <u>re</u>-communicate or re-define themselves once an image has been set in the consciousness of another people? And, specifically, how might Romanian culture – which has, for so long, been ignored or misunderstood in the United States – be healthfully, productively re-defined and communicated to the people of America? Here are some thoughts from one who is engaged in that very effort.

When we speak of Romanian culture, we often speak of those who emigrated <u>away</u> from their country – but the first known figure in literature from the "Romanian lands" was one who immigrated <u>to</u> the area – albeit reluctantly: the poet Ovid or, as the Romanians say, "Ovidiu." So let's start with a quote from Ovid's book, <u>The Metamorphoses</u>, which might serve as the "tonic" note for this talk. Ovid opens that book with the sentence:

> "My purpose is to tell of bodies which have been transformed into shapes of a different kind."

And, in a sense, that is what we are discussing here today: the transformation of a cultural image.

If you say the word "Romania" to an American – what will they think of? Recently a colleague told me of being in Bloomingdale's

---

[*] John Sorensen is a writer, director, and producer of media projects and public events. He is the Founding Director of the New York Public Library's "Four Corners" World Culture Series, of the Abbott Sisters Project (concerning the history of the children's rights movement in the U.S.), and of the Enescu Project (concerning the life and work of George Enescu, and the culture of Romania).

department store in New York and mentioning that she was from Romania. The clerk replied, "Isn't that near the Dominican Republic?"

This is, unfortunately, a not atypical remark. And, even "at best," most Americans tend only to associate Romania with a miscellany of very sorrowful things: orphanages and AIDS; dictators and vampires.

So let's trace, for a moment, the history of the "bad press" about Romania that's already out there – and, for this, too, we may start with Ovid. The writer Ovid – the "playful poet of tender love" as he called himself – was exiled from Rome in the year 8 or 9 A.D., by the emperor Augustus, to the village of Tomis (now the city of Constanța) on the Black Sea. To make a modern-era comparison, imagine Marcel Proust being exiled from his fashionable Paris society to the Wild West of Texas. It was certainly not where the man wanted to be.

When Ovid settled in Tomis, he became a kind of "artistic-correspondent" – writing poetic letters home, complaining of the barbarians in his new area who attacked Tomis inhabitants with poisoned arrows; of wild tribes "whose hairy faces were covered with icicles in winter"; of regular sword fights between neighbors in the city forum; and of the human sacrifices that Tomisians practiced ... a custom that (I assure the Americans in the audience!) the present-day Constanțans have stopped.

In a sense, these writings by Ovid are the beginning of the dispatches and reports from Romania to the West, creating a picture that has too-often been decidedly off-putting and negative. (By the way, we can see the tradition continued even up through the James Bond adventure Casino Royale, the first Ian Fleming novel about agent 007, in which we read that Bond's first case as an agent was against a gang of Romanian crooks who were cheating and winning large sums at gambling. Fleming writes, "He [Bond] sat in the casino at Monte Carlo for two months watching that Romanian team work their stuff with the invisible ink and the dark glasses.")

The perpetuation of negative Romanian images has been noted by the writer Mircea Eliade who asserted, in 1935, that it should be a major goal of his countrymen to have the world relate the word "Romanian" – in his severe terms - "not to political hopelessness and to an easily bought conscience, but rather to the works of Brâncuşi and Enescu."

The distance between Ovid's early reports and Eliade's aspiration makes for a fascinating map, from which we may learn many things that apply not only to Romania, but to all cultures who wish the world to know what is best in them – but who are dogged by reports of only what is most difficult or painful in them.

I would like to share with you now a quote that has had a great influence on my own work concerning Romanian culture. It is from Queen Marie of Romania – the granddaughter of England's Queen Victoria, and a great beauty and public figure of her day.

At the end of World War One, an important conference was held in Trianon to draw up the new borders of many different countries. At first, as I've read, the Triple Entente powers looked as if they would not be very generous or fair to Romania. And so it is said that Queen Marie swung into action. She traveled to the Conference, announcing: "Romania needs a face, and I have come to show mine."

Well, hers was a beautiful face – one that, more importantly, had a powerful mind and a strong will-power behind it -, and the result of her trip was that, in 1920 under the Treaty of Trianon, Romania something-like doubled its territory and population.

Such is the power of the right face shown in the right way at the right time.

It may still be true that, as Eliade suggested, Enescu and Brâncuşi are the best faces (and the best voices and the best stories) that Romania has to show to America and the world. But they are certainly not the only ones – and their power to persuade will only be enhanced by a better understanding of the compatriots who may be called into service with them.

This brings me to the core of my own fascination and experience in communicating Romanian culture to America, and I would like to share with you today some of my particular discoveries and experiences in this work.

My "Journey to Romania" began in earnest when I was commissioned in 1999 by the New York Public Library to create a World Culture series – eventually called Four Corners – to celebrate the "unity in diversity" that may be found in the music, literature, theater, dance, and visual arts of widely disparate peoples from the "four corners" of the globe.

The starting-place for me in this work was a quote from the historian Arnold Toynbee, who wrote in "The Unification of the World":

> "The histories of our living contemporaries – Chinese and Japanese, Muslim and Hindu – are going to become part of our Western history in a future world, which will inherit all the cultures brewed together in a single crucible. Our own descendants are not going to be just Western, like ourselves. They are going to be heirs of Shankara as well as Jesus Christ; heirs of Gandhi as well as George Washington. From the beginning, mankind has been partitioned; in our day, we have at last become united."

As Toynbee was well aware, we live in a time filled with incredible divisions between nations and peoples – but also one filled with great opportunities for learning, for understanding, for union. We can ignore these opportunities only at considerable risk to ourselves and to our own future. And as the world struggles today with the dangerous tensions between West and East, we Americans might find a particularly good place to start our work of cross-cultural understanding by getting to know something of substance about this country of Romania – which has, for so long, been a cross-roads place: a place where the West begins to become the East.

In making new connections, it is sometimes useful to see if there may already be unknown old ones – as when we meet an apparent stranger on a train and then slowly discover, through questions and conversation, that a cousin-of-a-friend's-brother of ours went to school with the friend-of-a-brother's-cousin of the stranger ... or that both of our hometowns – thousands of miles apart – share the same wildlife or have common musical traditions or cuisine.

I came to Romania via my work on the <u>Four Corners</u> series for the New York Public Library. The initial four programs in that series were concerned with the cultures of Greece, China, Senegal, and Brazil. Then, in finishing my work on these events, I began looking for a "Fifth Corner" to add onto the popular series.

While initially investigating the possibility of a program on India, I recalled a record that I had enjoyed as a boy in my home state of Nebraska – it was an album of music combining the talents of the Indian sitar-virtuoso Ravi Shankar and the American violinist Yehudi Menuhin. The first side of the l.p. was filled with music from India – but the second side featured something that, as a child, was equally new and exciting to me. As Menuhin wrote in the liner notes:

> "I have chosen as the Western contribution to this recording the remarkable and haunting 'Sonata in the Popular Romanian Style' by George Enescu. Although it is a Western composition in the purest sonata form, the piece ... is a rare and authentic example of improvised folk music giving birth to a composition in an evolved Western form. ... The Sonata could only have come from the mind and heart of one born and bred of a union between the intuitive world of the East and the crystallized and consolidated world of the West."

This statement – and, even more, the music itself – intrigued me, and set me "on my way." I soon began to study the music and life of Enescu. Then, looking for other artists who might be honored in a possible Romanian event, I turned to the sculptor Constantin Brâncuşi and the playwright Eugene Ionesco.

I would like to add, at this point, a later confirmation that I received as regards this choice of focusing on the "creative face" of Romania in the Library programs. At the premiere event of the Romaniana series, we were honored by the presence of the Romanian Ambassador to the U.S. – Mr. Sorin Ducaru. At the end of that inaugural show, Ambassador Ducaru came to thank me for assembling these Romanian cultural events – and, most especially, for having put forward such a "positive" image of his country.

I asked him what he meant, and he replied, "I'll put it this way: I'm always trying to emphasize the positives of Romanian culture to Americans – but it seems that, over and over, the media here wants to dwell only on our problems, and not on our successes. An example: a short time ago, I

received a phone call from the offices of the TV newsmagazine <u>60 Minutes</u>. Of course, I was quite excited – seeing this as an opportunity to communicate the positive image of which I speak. But when I returned the reporter's call, the first thing he said to me was, 'About the orphanages ….' Well, of course, the orphanage situation is very serious and important. But when this is all the Americans ever hear of Romania – what kind of image does that create? An inaccurate and distorted one. One which, in the end, is not at all helpful." Perhaps not even to the orphans themselves.

In any case, when preparing the <u>Romaniana</u> event, it had seemed to me that in Brâncuşi, Enescu, and Ionesco I had found the "face" of Romania that I wanted to show to New York – and that my next job was to get to know that face more intimately and completely.

I began to look for past links between America and Romania – and some of the bonds that I found delighted and amazed me. There were sweet little things, such as the well-known poem by Dorothy Parker, of the famed Algonquin Circle, who wrote:

> Oh, life is a glorious cycle of song
> A medley of extemporanea
> And love is a thing that will never go wrong
> And I am Marie of Roumania.

Too, there were the important figures of the classic American film and theater who had "Romanian connections." Actors: Edward G. Robinson, who was born in Romania; Lauren Bacall, whose mother had come over; and John Houseman, Orson Welles' partner, who was born in Bucharest. Of course, all of these brilliant individuals were far more American than Romanian – but, even so, there is a link here that is worth remembering and reminding both Americans and Romanians of.

I even discovered that a show with songs by George and Ira Gershwin – <u>Rosalie</u>, including the famous song "How Long Has This Been Going On" – had a plot inspired by Queen Marie's 1926 visit to New York; and that a Jerome Kern musical called <u>The Cat and the Fiddle</u> was about a fictional Romanian composer named Victor Florescu.

Well, there were so many other Americans with Romanian roots – from the <u>New Yorker</u> cartoonist Saul Steinberg to the writer Elie Wiesel to

the baseball giant Hank Greenberg. There were important Yiddish Theater personalities and great klezmer musicians, too, such as the violinist Abe Schwartz. And the flow of travel was by no means only one-way. Two of the most important American photographers of the twentieth century – Lee Miller and Paul Strand – did some of their best work in Romania ... work that is overdue for re-discovery.

Most strangely of all, was a link – perhaps apocryphal but still quite tantalizing, as myths sometimes are – that went back to the earliest days of American history. I discovered a story that the celebrated American colonist John Smith – he who was supposedly saved from death by Pocahontas (a tale that continues to be re-told by the Disney Company and in Terrence Malick's film, The New Country) – also may have had a Romanian connection.

As I read, "It was near Sighişoara that our own [American] soldier of fortune, John Smith, in one of the paid armies of Europe, fought bravely and distinguished himself in the Battle of Three Turks' Heads." For which, the "Duke of Transylvania, Wallachia and Moldavia" [i.e. the great leader Mihai the Brave] knighted him in 1603, issuing a decree that stated how "We have ordained and give him on his shield of Armes, the figure and description of three Turkes heads, which with this sword before the town of Regall, in single combat, he did overcome, kill and cut off." As I read this anecdote, it occurred to me that perhaps John had flashed his little Romanian award when he was first trying to impress Pocahontas. Who knows?

The point is: there are many unknown connections between our countries. Connections that I feel we need to bring forward – to show that America and Romania are old acquaintances, and that we have some important and wonderful friends and experiences in common.

I have my personal favorites: a woman from my own New York neighborhood, the legendary Romany Marie, who was known as "The Queen of Greenwich Village" and who held court in her numerous bohemian cafes and restaurants from the 1910s to the 1950s. Romany Marie (who was, as she said, "born in an inn on the fringe of a great forest in Moldavia") was a friend and confidante of artists such as playwright Eugene O'Neill and painter John Sloan, and she had a terrific impact on the bohemian artistic scene in New York in the 1910s and '20s.

Another hometown favorite for me is the remarkable experience of the Romanian Pavilion at the 1939 World's Fair, held in Queens in New York City – which presented the greatest assembly of Romanian cultural figures yet to have congregated on American soil. Enescu conducted the New York Philharmonic, Brâncuşi was there, "hanging out." Maria Tănase sang and the violinist Grigoras Dinicu (composer of the famous "Hora Staccato") played.

Since she is a particular fascination of mine, I'll add a little bit more concerning the time in New York of Maria Tănase, the important interpreter of Romanian folk-songs. This is from a news report at the time, which says:

> "One night, Maria went to listen to jazz music in a New York club. At one point, Maria started singing a doina [Romanian song], and the pianist spontaneously accompanied her in a jazz rhythm.
>
> "Maria's success in New York was immense. She gave performances in front of the ex-president of the United States, Herbert Hoover, Andre Gide, Yehudi Menuhin, and 'some others,' she says, 'whose names I forgot!'
>
> "Maria recalled, 'I had an offer for fifteen appearances at Radio City Music Hall - for Romanian music, transposed into American jazz rhythms ... but I wouldn't do this, since I couldn't be sure that the musicians would keep the feeling and the purity of our songs.'"

This last quote is particularly interesting – recording the quandary that Tănase confronted, with an offer from Radio City that she felt she couldn't accept, for fear of how it might affect the purity of the cultural gift that she was bringing from Romania to the U.S.

The anecdote reminds me of a statement from the poet Ana Blandiana:

> "As for us Romanians, the science of presenting ourselves to
> the world has more often than not been unknown to us.
> More than once, we chose to welcome our guests not with

tears, but with bread and salt - and to heal our wounds in silence and loneliness."

A central question in all cultural communications is how a people may make their story accessible to "the other," without – at the same time – compromising or cheapening the story. This is something that I struggle with constantly in my own work with Romanian culture - while, at the same time, trying to not forget George Enescu's oft-expressed ambition that,

"The world must know what my country is really like. Wherever I may be, I never forget that this is my foremost duty."

This Enescian edict has served as a guide for me as I have continued my own Romanian cultural work – beyond the New York Public Library events and into new terrain. For the Library series soon led me to the founding of the Enescu Project – an on-going effort to raise awareness in the U.S. concerning both Enescu and Romania: two tasks that I find necessarily connected.

In addition, I have been influenced in this developing work by another comment of Ambassador Ducaru, in which he indicated the need for "follow-up." As the Ambassador pointed out, too often a major public event promoting Romanian culture is done in isolation, as a "one-shot," and – without follow-up – it is quickly forgotten by the general American public ... whose interests need to be gently but firmly maintained and developed through a series of on-going, inter-related endeavors.

Accordingly, the current activities of the Project include: Tales of Enescu: a radio series concerning the life and work of Enescu; The Romanian Possible: a book-length record of my own cross-cultural experiences; and Brâncuşi and Enescu in Romania: an hour-long television program that will be a kind of "cultural travelogue" of the places in Romania that are most deeply connected to the lives of these two geniuses.

In beginning this new work, I have taken three trips to Romania – this is my fourth – so that I might meet the people and see the places for myself; so that I might have a better sense of the truth of the culture and

avoid the compromises that Tănase feared, while working to fulfill the aspirations that Enescu embraced.

A radio reporter recently asked me: "Why was it necessary for you to come to Romania to write a radio show about George Enescu?" I told her, "How is it possible to write about Enescu without first tasting ciorba?" I was joking – but, also, I wasn't.

The point is: these trips have been an education for me, and – although I am speaking today mostly about the past links between America and Romania - I am mindful that it is of vital importance that we bring equal or greater attention to the Romania of the present-moment and the future. That is the purpose of the book that I am preparing – The Romanian Possible: to make a record of the "conversation" that I have begun to have with Romania, and that I would like to broaden to include many more Americans and Romanians.

That idea of "conversation" is an important one to me - for, in the end, communication is, as the word implies, a "communing," a sharing of spirit and dialogue. So long as we stick to monologues on the part of one party or the other, we are experiencing only a form of dictatorship, and not union.

This idea, of "The Life of Dialogue," is one that was of profound importance to another person well-known to American culture, who (once again) had strong Romanian ties: the writer Martin Buber.

Buber recalled, "In my childhood, I spent every summer on my grandfather's estate in Bucovina. The nearby village of Sadagora is the seat of a dynasty of zaddikim - that is, of Hassidic rabbis."

Buber has written beautifully on the importance of the communion of spirit – of the recognition of "the other" – in a way that has deeply affected my experience of Romania and the work that I try to do. In his essay, "Dialogue," he writes:

> "The basic movement of the life of dialogue is the turning toward the other. That, indeed, seems to happen every hour and quite trivially. If you look at someone and address him, you turn to him ... you direct your attention to him. But what of all this is an essential action, done with the essential being? In this way: that out of the incomprehensibility of

what lies to hand, this one person steps forth and becomes a presence."

In respect of this notion – the ambition for two cultures to become "a presence" to one another, I will add a few last mentions of earlier communions in the dialogue of Romania and America - works by two of America's greatest poets, both of whom were touched by Romania in their own ways.

The first is by Carl Sandburg – who is famous for his tributes to Abraham Lincoln, but who also paid homage to another great man in a prose-poem of 1922 titled, "Brancusi."

Before presenting the poem to you, I'll mention that Sandburg uses an American slang term in his first line – calling Brâncusi a "galoot." Perhaps an equivalent known to Romanians for this word (which, I believe, Yosemite Sam used to apply to Bugs Bunny!) would be "hooligan" or, as I'm told by a Bucharest friend, the Romanian term "îcurcâ-lume." In any case, here's the Sandburg poem:

> Brancusi is a galoot; he saves tickets to take him nowhere; a galoot with his baggage ready and no timetable, ah yes, Brancusi is a galoot; he understands birds and skulls so well, he knows the hang of the hair of the coils and plaits on a woman's head, he knows them so far back he knows where they came from and where they are going; he is fathoming down for the secrets of the first and the oldest makers of shape.
>
> Let us speak with loose mouths today not at all about Brancusi because he has hardly started nor is hardly able to say the name of the place he wants to go when he has time and is ready to start; O Brancusi, keeping hardwood planks around your doorsteps in the sun waiting for the hardwood to be harder for your hard hands to handle, you Brancusi with your chisels and hammers, birds going to cones, skulls going to eggs – how the hope hugs your heart you will find

one cone, one egg, so hard when the earth turns mist there among the last to go will be a cone, an egg.

Brancusi, you will not put a want ad in the papers telling God it will be to his advantage to come around and see you; you will not grow gabby and spill God earfuls of prayers; you will not get fresh and familiar as if God is a next-door neighbor and you have counted His shirts on a clothes line; you will go stammering, stuttering and mumbling or you will be silent as a mouse in a church garret when the pipe organ is pouring ocean waves on the sunlit rocks of ocean shores; if God is saving a corner for any battling bag of bones, there will be one for you, there will be one for you, Brancusi.

In 1908, Carl Sandburg had married the sister of the photographer Edward Steichen – who was himself a close friend and colleague of Brâncuşi –, and that was probably the beginning of Sandburg's own human connection to the Romanian.

A little more mysterious is the link between the poet Wallace Stevens and George Enescu – but, however that connection came to be made, we have evidence of its importance through a poem that Stevens wrote in 1952, near the end of his life. It is called "The World as Meditation," and the epigraph that he chose for the work is a quote from Enescu:

"I have spent too much time working on my violin and traveling, but the essential practice of a composer – meditation – nothing has ever halted in me ... I live a permanent dream which ceases neither night nor day."

Here is "The World as Meditation" by Wallace Stevens:

Is it Ulysses that approaches from the east,
The interminable adventurer? The trees are mended.
That winter is washed away. Someone is moving

On the horizon and lifting himself up above it.
A form of fire approaches the cretonnes of Penelope,
Whose mere savage presence awakens the world in which
      she dwells.

She has composed, so long, a self with which to
      welcome him,
Companion to his self for her, which she imagined,
Two in a deep-founded sheltering, friend and dear
      friend.

The trees had been mended, as an essential exercise
In an inhuman meditation, larger than her own.
No winds like dogs watched over her at night.

She wanted nothing he could not bring her by coming
      alone.
She wanted no fetchings. His arms would be her
      necklace
And her belt, the final fortune of their desire.

But was it Ulysses? Or was it only the warmth of the
      sun
On her pillow? The thought kept beating in her like
      her heart.
The two kept beating together. It was only day.

It was Ulysses and it was not. Yet they had met,
Friend and dear friend and a planet's encouragement.
The barbarous strength within her would never fail.

She would talk a little to herself as she combed her
      hair,
Repeating his name with its patient syllables,
Never forgetting him that kept coming constantly so
      near.

There is something wondrous in this poem that brings together, for me, many of the points that I've touched upon today. Most importantly, there is a hint in it of "things yet to be" – and this idea, of the yet-possible, is at the core of my Romanian fascination.

I'll now balance my American quotes with a Romanian quote, which may prove to be the epigraph of my own book. It is actually a "quote-within-a-quote" from an essay by the philosopher Constantin Noica. He writes:

> "Mircea Eliade said, 'I believe in the future of the Romanian culture more than in that of European culture.'" We may find there is some truth in Eliade's pronouncement; that the element of the <u>real</u>, the historical and the actual in most European countries is superlative when compared to our [Romanian] unfulfillment, but that we are still left with a margin of the <u>possible</u> that all other countries have lost.
> "The Romanian possible ... has always floated like a spirit over the waters of this real."

In my opinion, this is still very much the case: Romania remains a place that allows one to experience the thrill of the "possible."

As the noted writer Sacheverell Sitwell put it in his 1938 book, <u>Roumanian Journey</u>, Romania is filled with wonders that "allow themselves, still, to be discovered." It's true even today, seventy years later: from the voice of Maria Tănase to the painted churches of Bucovina (which, let's face it, if they were located in Western Europe, you wouldn't be able to get a parking place anywhere near to!).

In a personal and professional sense it is my privilege to share some of these wondrous discoveries – and this great "Romanian Possibility" - with my fellow Americans.

I'll conclude now with a heartening "punch-line": letting you know that even poor, frustrated, old Ovid - by the end of his life - came to love the future Romanian territories. He was, by that time, writing back to Rome much sweeter letters of his new homeland, saying, "So dear is Tomis to me; ... It remains hospitable and loyal to the present time."

Encouraging news.

INTER-ETHNIC RELATIONS AND THE CONSTRUCTION OF IDENTITY

Simona Branc[*]

Abstract

This paper is based on the qualitative sociological research of the inter-ethnic relations in the Banat region during the 20th century. It will discuss the mechanisms that form the ethnic identity, the way in which this identity is negotiated during social interactions and the relationship between national, regional and ethnic identity.

The inter-ethnic relations have changed during the last century under the influence of the socio-political context. The analysis of the interviews taken with people belonging to different generations and ethnic groups emphasizes ethnic and regional prejudices and stereotypes. It also reveals patterns of the intercultural socialization and the role of various social institutions in the development of the inter-ethnic tolerance.

The representatives of the sociological movement known as symbolic interactionism believe that the identity is not an objective fact, but it is built through multiple interactions between the social actors. In the interactionist view, the concept of self is built and changed within our social life. Cooley, considered as the first representative of the symbolic interactionism, introduced the theory of the *"reflected self"* or the *"looking-glass self"*. Cooley came with the theory that the Self develops in relation to the other people as part of the social environment (MacDonald, 2002: 91). This process starts during childhood, the concept of self being developed and modified according to the way the others relate to us. Not everybody we encounter has the same influence on the reflected self. The close members of the social community we belong to have a much greater influence on the self image than strangers do.

---

[*] Simona Branc is a teaching assistant at the West University of Timisoara.

Berger and Luckmann consider that people are not born but they become members of the society by internalizing the social world. In the complex process of socialization the individual understands the world he lives in and the fact that this world becomes his own. During the process of primary socialization, the individual sees the outside world through certain people called „*the significant others"*. These people select those aspects of the objective world which are in conformity with their social status.

The individual does not take upon himself only the roles and the attitudes of others but also their world. According to Berger and Luckmann, gaining an identity means establishing your place in the world. In the conscience of the individual, during the primary socialization there is a progressive withdrawal from the roles and attitudes set by the others and an undertaking of general roles and attitudes. Thus the *"generalized other"* represents not only an identity towards a certain other or a certain significant other, but also an identity in general (Berger and Luckmann, 1999: 155). This very important step of socialization marks the internalization of the objective reality and the subjective founding of an identity. According to the two authors, the childhood world is defined by the trust the child gives to the significant others and the way they define his reality. Doubts regarding this first reality may appear, but this will happen much later. However, the childhood world remains "home" no matter how far off the individual may get along his life. The learning sequences included in the primary socialization are socially defined. There is a certain chronological order in the social learning as there are significant differences regarding the essence of socialization from one society to another or from a historical era to another.

A multiethnic, multilinguistic and multicultural space, Banat is an especially fertile field for researching the way interethnic relationships contribute to the formation of identity. The methodological approach that was chosen is qualitative and implies the analysis of "life-story" interviews from the archive of the Cultural Anthropology and Oral History Group of "The Third Europe" Foundation in Timisoara, coordinated by Smaranda Vultur. Through a multigenerational research of family education models

and of the socialization types from different periods of the 20th century, I tried to show the mark left in the identity portrait of Banat people by the interaction with "the Other".

The life-story is an active construction of the respondent's view of his life. Maurice Halbwachs noticed that:

"we preserve memories of each epoch in our lives, and these are continually reproduced; through them, as by a continual relationship, a sense of our identity is perpetuated" (Halbwachs, 1992: 47).

In order to understand an interview text, one has to do an analysis of the text itself. Analysts will follow different procedures depending upon which of the three approaches to the biographical perspective they adopt. The realist approach (the grounded theory approach) follows a process of induction, moving from empirical observations toward abstract concepts. In contrast, the neo-positivist approach uses a deductive, theory – testing logic. The narrative approach recognizes that the responses given by the interviewee can vary upon the interview situation. The content of the life story will be dependent upon how the respondents see their life at that particular moment and how they choose to depict that life view to the person carrying out the interview. The purpose of the narrated life-story is the reconstruction of the present meanings of experiences. The most crucial information resides not in the answers given to specific questions, but rather in the narrative organization itself.

The particularity of the Oral History comes from the fact that the autobiographical discourse is a result of the interaction between the researcher and the interviewee, having the influence of the connection established between them, the researcher's abilities and the social context of the interview. The life project is not abstractly elaborated, through an isolated existence, but it is built, negotiated during the community life. The present perspective determines what the subject considers biographically relevant, how he or she develops thematic and temporal links between various experiences, and how past, present or anticipated future realities influence the personal interpretation of the meaning of life.

A feature of the analyzed life-stories was the tendency to idealize the past – what Bourdieu called "the biographical illusion". Halbwachs named this phenomenon "nostalgia for the past". Present time becomes a comparison term, being most of the time devalued in relation to the past. The world of today is less interesting or less colored than it was in the past. While the history of life is a passive reconstruction of factual events, the life story is an active construction, presenting the interviewed person's opinion about his own life.

One of the themes used every time in the autobiographic story of people from Banat is the interethnic relationships. By analysing the interviews of people who spent their childhood in the interwar Banat we could outline certain general characteristics of the socialization of that period. The ethnic structure of Banat in that era was much more diverse than the present one. Contacts between people of different ethnic groups were more frequent and were described in most interviews. Most of the times, the referrals to the interethnic relationships were positive. The "good relationship" with other ethnics is often mentioned no matter what ethnic groups those persons belonged to.

The Banatian identity of the interwar period is built by referring to the "Other" ethnic. The content analysis of a sample of interviews taken from the oral history archive allowed the uncovering of certain identity portraits built on ethnic features (Gavreliuc, 2003: 220). For example, the identity portrait of the German ethnics includes hardworking, cleanness, honesty as positive features and selfishness and social isolation as negative characteristics. The interviewed persons' opinions about their own ethnic group are also interesting:

> *"The German is stiff: do this, do that, work, no matter if you're sick, no matter what, you have to work…"* (B. T. "The Third Europe" Foundation Archive)

According to the interviewed people, the regional identity of Banat includes a series of features borrowed from the German ethnics:

"This area […] had very many Germans and of course this is the reason why people from Banat were always on top, because they copied everything that was beautiful and good and that is why they thrived. They evolved as human beings and that is why Banat was the leader." (G.I., "The Third Europe" Foundation Archive)

The inevitability of interethnic contacts determined a certain emancipation of people living in Banat. The learning of several languages is valued since the first years of childhood and encouraged by the family:

„*My parents insisted that we should learn foreign languages. They realized the importance of speaking other languages. My mother used to say: Today we shall speak German in our house. And all day long we had to talk to each other only in German."* (X.M. "The Third Europe" Foundation Archive)

It meant a good education if one greeted and spoke using the language of the person one met. Here is a behavior rule which the young girl received from her mother, in order to acquire the good-manners language of a young lady:

„*Smile while you greet. It does not cost much. Be friendly. If you know the mother tongue of the person you meet, greet in that language. It will do him good."* (E.C. "The Third Europe" Foundation Archive)

The study of the foreign languages, especially French and German was carried out by private tuition or by attending private kinder gardens and schools. This way, the knowledge of several languages became one of the defining characteristics of the old times inhabitants of Banat, which the interviewed persons were very proud of.

Religious education had an important role in the interwar period. Responsible for this type of education was not only the family, but also the school. The presence of several nationalities in Banat region also meant the existence of several religions. Religious practices of certain ethnics are

different from others. Following this point of view, the situation is very interesting in the case of a mixed family. When parents belonged to different religions children were taught to respect the traditions of each religion. One of the interviewed persons presents us with a special situation where the mother was Orthodox and the father was Greek Catholic. In this case, the daughters that could have resulted from this marriage were going to be baptised in the Orthodox religion (following their mother's religion) and the sons were going to be baptised in the Greek Catholic religion (following their father's model).

The feast had a special role for the interethnic relations in Banat. It was in the same time a way of maintaining the ethnic identity, but also a way of establishing the interethnic relations. Because the religions of the people were different, the feasts were different in a certain degree. One example would be the Easter holiday, celebrated on different dates by Orthodox and Catholics. Being practical, the Banatian ending up celebrating Easter twice a year, especially when his friends belonged to both religions. A specific German tradition, celebrated on the second Easter day, was the sprinkling of the girls with perfume by the boys. With the passing of time, this custom spread through the entire region. If the Easter day separated the Catholics from the Orthodox, the Christmas data is different for the Romanian Orthodox and Serb Orthodox. In spite of this, the spirit of Christmas is strongly evocated, regardless the ethnic group. As an interviewed person confesses, „*Christmas is the holiday of the family and of reconciliation.*"

Regardless of the ethnic affiliation, the inhabitants of Banat valued work and diligence. Almost every interviewed person mentions the fact that he was accustomed to work since childhood. Nevertheless, none of them complains about it; on the contrary, they consider that the habit of working was useful later in life. For the inhabitants of Banat, prosperity and wealth were a direct consequence of work. There are many mechanisms that generated such a powerful valorization of work. One of these would be the wish to be like the others.

„The way of not making a fool of you, of subscribing to a pattern, of not putting yourself forward... these are the characteristics of the people from Banat." (K.S. "The Third Europe" Foundation Archive)

In a community in which the inter-human relationships were very close, neighbors had a strong influence, punishing any deviation from the community rules:

„If you hadn't painted the wall for Easter, everybody would have laughed at you. That is the others had their houses painted, and you didn't... So you are the laziest person in the village." (K.S. "The Third Europe" Foundation Archive)

And these were not the only consequences, even more, „no young girl *should get married to a lazy man..."* Thus, the reasoning that the inhabitant of Banat had to learn as a child was very concise: if he works, he will be accepted and respected as a member of the community; if he is lazy, he would simply be marginalized, even excluded from the community, as it becomes impossible for him to raise a family. Another mechanism which contributed to the foundation of the work valorization in Banat could be an outcome of the interethnic contacts. Many of the interviewed persons are convinced that the Banat's prosperity is due to the best features of each ethnic group, from the agricultural tools or techniques to the sense of duty and discipline.

The stories of interviewed people belonging to the third generation (persons born in the '70s) show the existence of regional stereotypes. Although the fact of being a member of an ethnic group is rarely mentioned, the regional identity is well outlined and marked by the referral to the regional "Other". The elements that make up the regional identity of Banat youth are mostly regional stereotypes present in the collective mind for a long time. One of them is the higher economic status of this region compared to other parts of the country. While the explanation given by the first generation was the presence of certain qualities among the people of Banat, like: hardworking, disciplined etc, characteristics which were innate or acquired through contact with other ethnic groups, in the case of the last

generation, the higher socioeconomic status is explained by the geographical position of this region, meaning its closeness to the west. While during the interwar period, the people of Banat had a better life because they worked harder than those in other regions of the country, in the '80s the Banatians felt less deprivation of material things because they were able to buy certain products from foreign countries. The socioeconomic differences are exaggerated through comparisons to other parts of the country.

The local pride is another characteristic mentioned in the interviews. The analysis of interviews shows that this pride is a feature present more frequently in rural rather than in urban areas. The competition between villages, the imperious need to be just as good, if not better than the others, are elements often mentioned by the interviewed people.

Another element of the regional identity is currently the Europeanism. Just like in the case of the other generation, we can see now the cosmopolitism of people of Banat and their conformity to the European standards. However, recent research has shown that this is more of a stereotype than an identity element.

Bibliography

1. Berger, Peter, Luckmann, Thomas (1999), *Construcția socială a realității*, București: Ed. Univers.
2. Gavrelic, Alin (2003), *Mentalitate şi societate. Cartografii ale imaginarului identitar în Banatul contemporan*, Timişoara: Ed. Universităţii de Vest.
3. Halbwachs, Maurice, (1992): *On Collective Memory*, University of Chicago Press
4. MacDonald, Geoff, (2002), *Handbook of Self and Identity*, Guilford Press, Handcover.
5. Miller, Robert L., *Researching Life Stories and Family Histories*, London: SAGE Pub.,

6. Vultur, Smaranda (coord.) (2000), *Lumi în destine*, Bucureşti: Ed. Nemira.

7. Vultur, Smaranda (coord.) (2000);*Germanii din Banat*, Bucureşti: Ed. Paideia.

8. Vultur, Smaranda (coord.) (2001), *Scene de viaţă. Memorie şi diversitate culturală, Timişoara, 1900 – 1945*, Iasi: Ed. Polirom

9. *** The Oral History Archive of The Third Europe Foundation, Timisoara;

BEYOND THE GATES – ETHNICITY, CLASS, GENDER AND LOCAL IDENTITY IN A LIFE-STORY FROM BACIU

Zsuzsa Plainer[*]

Abstract

Dominant discourses about "being a Hungarian in Romania" usually claims ethnicity to be a central, "overarching" category of minority identity. Hungarians usually appear in the public sphere as mere agents of nation-building processes, deeply involved in shaping their ethicized social places like Hungarian schools, Hungarian university, Hungarian NGOs in order to discern themselves from the Romanian society. Although in minority mass-media a special attention is given to political and ideological struggles about ethnicity or nation, these representations hide other types of socio-cultural differences like local identity, class or gender. By analyzing the life-story of a middle-aged Hungarian woman from Baciu, a quite large village near Cluj-Napoca, I'd like to go beyond these discourses. In doing so I let one member of the Hungarian minority group speak in her own voice, free to construct and narrate her life for the anthropologists who enter the gate of her house.

Ethnicity–an anthropological approach

Recent anthropological theories of ethnicity go back to Frederick Barth's definition denoting it as cultural form of organizing the social world (Barth, 1969). In other worlds, ethnicity is a cultural tool for social categorization that "helps" to create and maintain social borders, the differences between "we" and "them". Taking into account that every social group is somehow based on (some) cultural similarities that make them different from the others, ethnicity as cultural category should hold some "special" features. The distinctiveness of culturally defined ethnicity–as scholars show it–is not embedded in the cultural content itself, because the outward categories

---

[*] PhD Student in Anthropology at the Faculty of European Studies, Babeş-Bolyai University Cluj-Napoca.

of it such as language, culture, history, religion or territoriality could vary from a group to another (Eriksen, 1993). Some American immigrants for instance may not speak their ancestor's language and only occasionally perform their traditions, ethnicity for them means a demand for building up social relations within the group. Many Jewish communities living outside of Israel do not speak a language of their own, or have only few contacts with the church, although in some situations they label themselves as Jews.

According to Max Weber and his followers the distinctiveness of ethnicity lays in a subjective belief in the existence of a kinship, a sort of common history, but these claims of being regarded as members of a kin or sharing the same past need not to be founded, or, in other worlds, need not to be "true" (Cornell–Hartmann, 1998). This definition does exclude neither the variance in performing ethnicity nor the existence of cultural flows: ethnic groups should not necessarily share (only) a common culture moreover they are members of different cultures, thus "not all ethnic groups are necessarily cultural groups, too" (c.f., 19).

Besides focusing on the social situations of eternally changing ethnic borders instead of the fixed and well-shaped cultural material of them, the anthropological approaches of ethnicity also pay attention to the individual as a member of the ethnic group. Drawing into the light the ethnic experience–that could be analyzed so well through narratives– anthropology claims to look behind the discourses, public narratives about ethnicity, sometimes even questioning their general value. According to Barth, border-maintenance has three levels (Bart, 1996): the first, that of the individual, where ethnicity is strongly embedded in everyday life and practices, attitudes, expectations, emotions; ethnicity seen from this level becomes a form of human experience. The second one is that of ethnic entrepreneurs: a social category that helps individuals to regard themselves as members of an ethnic group. By creating symbols, narratives, stereotypes, ethnic entrepreneurs work out the forms of representing ethnicity in the public sphere. This image the entrepreneurs offer stress upon common group-features, thus they help the individual to identify himself with "us" and discern it from "them", in other terms to maintain ethnic borders. The third level of this Barthian model is that of the state where policies are shaped, resources distributed and discourses could be

perceived by a larger audience. All three levels–points out Bart–are permanently interrelated so the analytical distinction of them becomes important for empirical analysis. Hiding the variety of individual ethnic experience, discourses are biased by their nature, although they claim to represent and speak in the name of the whole group. There could also be a distinction between state-discourses and the redistributing power and means of it. All these discrepancies may contribute to the weakening of ethnic ties, ethnic solidarity and may cause inter-ethnic tensions and conflicts.

Narrating experience

The essentialist concept of identity regarding the subject as unchanged socio-cultural entity (Hall, 1982) was radically reframed by the appearance of the new social movements in the 70-ies, 80-ies; its agents (women, green party members, sexual and ethnic minorities) claimed a new politics of representation for the social group they belonged to instead of material resources. (Calhoun, 1986) These movements brought into the light the changing face of identity perceived as fluid, negotiated, culturally embedded: "I act because of what I am."–as Sommers and Gibbson puts it. (Sommers–Gibbson, 1986).

Introducing narrativity brings new issues in the theories of identity. At one hand this framework accepts the presence of cultural variables in constructing identity such as race, class, gender, but–on the other hand–tries to avoid taking them as fixed categories. Instead of a well-built definition of what gender, class, race and ethnicity should be, the narrative approach prefers to construct them through time, space-structures and relationness occurred in narratives. (Sommers–Gibbson c.f.) As opposed to the sociological concept of life-stories, narrative approach sees them not just a mere form of representing identity but an ontological category, the general framework of experience: by linking sequences, episodes, in other worlds by emplotment, social actors give meaning to their lives.

> " […] social actions should not be viewed as a result of categorizing oneself ('I am 40 years old; I should by life

insurance') but should be seen as emerging in the context of
a life-story with episodes ('I felt out of breath last week, I
really should start thinking about life insurance')"
(Polkinghorne, 1988:21, in Sommers–Gibbson, c.f. 59)

A methodological toolkit for an empirical analysis of narrative
identity is offered by the biographical and interpretative method. Based on
the methodological principles worked out by Gabrielle Rosenthal, Fritz
Schütze and others a narrative interview begins with an opening question.
This ment to define the topic of the interwiev for the interviewee, or–in
epistemological terms–the criteria of selecting among his/her narratives: if
identity of migrants is the topic of investigation, the interviewee is asked to
tell his/her narratives relevant for him/her as a migrant. This part, called
main narration should not be interrupted or directed by questions in order
to assure the freedom of the story-teller to select those stories, episodes he
himself (or she herself) considers relevant. By these guarantees of narrative
freedom researchers avoid to use pre-constructed socio-cultural meanings,
categories, themes. At the end of main narration interviewers feel free to
put up questions in order to introduce events and data or clarify details
important for the research.

The analysis of life-stories is based on a general hermeneutic model
and that of thematic field-analysis. They both claim that related experiences
as well as their emplotment are fluid and changing, but nevertheless totally
occasional: cultural factors do mediate the identity we just have to find out
how; it is to be answered by the empirical analysis. Future expectations,
past experiences, the interrelation of socio-cultural variables may shape the
narrative body, both there is certain coherence within it. Therefore the
analysis goes as follows:

"The empirical datum to be explained is seen as a part of an
empirical process constituted by a *sequence* of data to be
explained. From each of the alternative explanatory
hypotheses of the datum D, a prediction is made about what
later data are likely to follow if the general rule embodied in
that hypothesis about datum D were true. Every explanatory
hypothesis about datum D is then tested by looking at the

> following data as evidence for or against the hypothesis about datum D. Some of the alternative explanatory hypotheses will be falsified by the subsequent data and will be dropped. Others will not be falsified […] and will therefore be kept in play as possible explanations of the whole sequence of data." (Breckner, 1996:3)

The principle of sequentiality is followed through the analysis of biographical data shaping life-history, the chronological steps of life-events, as well as through the representation of life-course in narratives; the letter being also called life-story (for methodological issues see also Rosenthal, n.d.). For completing the analysis the comparison of life history and life story is needed. This final step pays attention to the relationness itself claiming that life-story taken as a Gestalt conveys meanings: the means of selecting and combining narratives is an important data about the self.

The case study made "beyond the gates"

The interview analyzed below is one of a series of life-stories made in Baciu, a village nearby Cluj-Napoca. Initially the research this interview belongs to was a part of a larger, applied anthropological project entitled *Investigating Cluj*, a research designed to highlight the cultural aspects of the so called "metropolitan plan". Being about to be applied last summer, the metropolitan plan aimed to unite around five villages near Cluj-Napoca with the city. By making narrative interviews in Baciu, one of the villages selected for being united, I'd like to make the first steps to define what "rural" and "urban" identities mean? In other terms: if the metropolitan plan is applied, what would be the cultural costs of this integration? When the plan was dropped or delayed by the local council, the research turned into a two week-long fieldwork for first year students of anthropology.

Although this interview was made to analyze local identity and class structure, this paper will stress on narratives about ethnicity as well. This shift–an interview made with a given purpose and being used for another–in our case is not as strange as it seems. Due to dominant media discourses that give models of "how to be a Hungarian?" members of the

minority group when asked to present themselves "as Hungarians" usually ethicize episodes of their lives they usually feel non-ethnic.[1] Thus diminishing the ethnic element in an interview-situation gives much better result for investigating Hungarian identity.

Born in 1964 as seriously ill baby, July's[2] life starts to be a troublesome one, physicians give her no big chances to stay alive, but she recovers. At the age of ten gets a cutaneous disease, four years after her sight has been weakening. In the same year, 1978, starts trade school in Cluj and lives Suceag, her native place, a village for about 40 km from the city. After graduating the school four years later in 1982, July fails to pass the entrance exam for the University, and starts to work. Being an inhabitant of Suceag, she is forced, according to those times' labor-politics, to take a job at the village she comes from; as every villager she needs the approval of the local authorities in order to enter employment in the city of Cluj. She gets the approval then starts to work in a factory she does not like. Helped by a fellow-villager July is employed at Clujana tan-yard at Cluj some month later. She starts working in Clujana in 1983. Next year July meets her future husband, a car driver from Fizeşu Gherlii, in a ball organized in a village neighboring hers. They get married in about a year after staying together some month in a rented room from Cluj. After some attempts to find a living place in Cluj and negotiations about the village they will settle, the couple decides to buy a house in Baciu in 1985. In December the same year July gives birth to twin sons, one of them dies in April 1986; she goes back to work in 1986. Her youngest son was born in 1988, after his birth July decides to give up working. The two sons begin to attend the kindergarten in the same year; the younger is only 2 and a half. In 1990 her

---

[1] An example of "blowing up" ethnic identity's place and role in everyday life could be brought by a documentary of Zsófia Vitézy entitled Made in Romania. The shooting begins with the gesture of the Hungarian film director, who hands the camera to some ceangău children to let them make a film about their community in Bacău county. The children – under the impact of the elite's nationalizing progarm, ment to „Hungarize" the people of the region – collect images about preserving the Hungarian culture, instead of their everday lives.

[2] In order to protect personal data but make her familiar to the reader, I gave our interviewee a name, July.

husband quits from the factory and tries to work as a private entrepreneur in delivery, in 1992-93 they buy the first track for the company. Hence the local school building is not finished the brothers go to school at the same year, in 1994 when the elder has already 9. In 1995 her mother dies, soon after her father dies as well. In 1998 the boys finish elementary school at the village and attend a well-known Hungarian compulsory school in Cluj, both graduate 8th form at 2002 and start trade school. The elder is employed now.

After doing the analysis of biographical data presented above almost every hypothesis of ours needed further affirmation: the permanent moving from village to city, the permanent contracts July keeps with both places and communities makes us uncertain about the way she constructions local identity. Could it be a "failure" they cannot find a living place in the city or not? Does she consider herself a "villager", and if so, what does it mean for her? A considerable amount of data is dealing with family and children, in other terms with gender roles, so we may expect to have a story of a woman, who has a "traditional" female life-career (flings up work, raises her children) but we have no clues about its meanings. In order to build up relevant hypotheses and be able to choose between them, the detailed presentation and analysis of life-story follows.

Main narration starts with a time-marker: "It was the winter of 85", denoting the date of moving in Baciu as well as the last months of her first pregnancy, so being settled in Baciu means for July the beginning of motherhood. Then a description of their house follows: when they arrive, the area their half-finished building was located was a marginal one, only a few people could be seen there, most of them gypsies and miners; therefore being settled in Baciu starts to be "very difficult". July presents us a narration about her pregnancy, delivering the twins and another one about the death of her son; this thematic field ends with an evaluation "it was difficult but that year was over", which makes us the impression that all sadness and trouble belong to the sphere of the past. She introduces the theme of going back to work, which causes her new problems because July gets no help either from her mother or from her mother-in-law; she keeps arguing that "it was very hard" working in the tan-yard, where the toxic

materials made her sick during the pregnancy. This theme ends with a general evaluation, "Those times were a little difficult because circumstances were difficult as well", followed by a new one: "we got accustomed, but it was hard", describing the late 80-ies when troubles of private life became more intense because of restrictions in Ceauşescu's regime. The life-story continues with the narration about her second pregnancy and the birth of her youngest son. It was "good", the fact that he was born, but–she argues–"it was also hard bringing up two little kids. After his birth she gave up work because she "had to". Then she tells a narration about living in a half-finished building that was "hard" for her, but the children liked that courtyard was full of water; July recalls in laughter her sons' enjoyed it The thematic field shows us a certain duality of perspectives: life seen through the eyes of an adult becomes full of duties and hardships, to finish building the house, to create proper conditions for living. But the same situation regarded with the eyes of a mother who is able to see the world as her children do, becomes the source of joy. July goes on with narrating how the sons got ill and recovered, which was also troublesome because she was alone with them, her husband was very often far from home because of his work. When the children "grew up and become elder" they were sent to the kindergarten. To the request of the Hungarian kindergarten teacher who probably thinks the increasing number of enrolled (Hungarian) children may assure the functioning of the institution,[3] July sends both sons in the same time to nursery school. She does not feel forced to explain the decision, making us the impression, that ethnic solidarity is a common virtue for both, able to overwrite the identity of a mother. Presentation of elementary school-events starts with a narration of the years when mother and children were waiting for the school-building to be finished, then an evaluation follows: she tells us laughing that "the school was miserable", making us the impression a funny story occurs but it does not. July keeps arguing that "the school from here [Baciu] has no value, because those pupils who have no possibility 'to

---

[3] The strategy of seeking for children and "persuading" mothers to enroll them in kindergarten or elementary school was a well-known practice during since the 80-ies to present day. School and kindergarten-teachers, as well as parents were convinced the Hungarian institutions will be closed if the number of children enrolled is not high enough.

give'[4] to teachers are not among the best"; therefore, she explains, her sons were less appreciated than their classmates, although one of them is quite clever. The theme of "arranging things" being identified later as a core concept of July's story shows a way of adjusting things, gaining and maintaining social positions. After graduating the compulsory 8 classes, "my husband said the boys have to be taken to Cluj [...] which was a lucky decision." Thus she leaves for the city with the boys and talks to the head-master of an elementary school to accept them. This narration is the first one about gender roles in July's family. The married couple seems to live in a patriarchal family, he is the decision taker and her role is to complete decision. July tells us a long narration about school-life, ending with the sentence "That's how we finished school." The next theme she presents is that of "then we bought a garden", which could be taken as a proof of growing wealthy but also a source of loneliness, because no members of her family help her with gardening. July also specifies that she is not good with gardening because when she was a single, her mother saved her of doing it. A presentation of herself and her husband follows, highlighting the patriarchal nature of their gender-roles once more: "that's my occupation, delivery and gardening. My husband is the boss; I go after things he orders." Then a long narration is told about her husband's work full of evaluation mentioning that to be an entrepreneur is "hard" because circumstances are unpredictable but it is also good because they earn more money. Then July stops, saying "what else can I tell?", and it become obvious she wants to help us by telling more. Then July re-introduces the theme of presenting herself as a housewife, mentioning from time to time, "that's me, there's nothing to say about my person". Reducing the importance of her own character is combined by a certain type of evaluation: she tells us, she is good in saving money, because a part of the food for all four is from gardening (from her work in other terms); she also discovers the advantages of heating with wood that reduces the costs of the household. The alternations in defining her position ends with an

---

[4] Expressions like "to give" or "to arrange" appear frequently in July's life-story. These two worlds familiar to both Hungarians and Romanians denote a certain form of corruption. In return of some gifts or services bureaucrats, physicians or even school-teachers let people have access to some "resources" or goods: services of higher quality, good marks etc.

argumentation ment to explain us why she isn't employed; this shows us her inferior status – doing housework – compared to her husband but also a kind of superiority to other women, she does not need to become a helper of anyone.

> "I could have been employed for 2 millions, I could do housework for others, but I don't need doing this. I am employed in our company, and if I want to do housework, I can do it for my family, no need to do it for others."

A new turning back to the question "what else can I tell?" follows, but she passes through her uncertainty and begins a narration about her mother's death, "the only person who she could relay on," followed by the death of the father that caused her less pain. July starts at once a new theme, a narration about her illnesses, working in the tan-yard that made her diseases more acute. Enumeration of her health-problems ends with mentioning her weak sight. She has been accustomed with eye-glasses since her school-years, as she says. Introducing this new theme of glasses makes her to talk about school-years, and her unsuccessful attempt to take the entrance exam for the university. July is convinced she failed because she had no one to "arrange" it. A short narration follows about getting her first job. This thematic field also contains her first attempt to describe "village people" and the differences between her and them: thus July narrates the encounter with a woman, member of the local authority from her village who, according to the labor-politics of Ceauşescu's Romania has to consent one's leaving from the cooperative. She tells us, when being rejected, she stared to cry to her, saying: „How you dare to think I would stay here [and work in a village]!" Then a long description follows about the hard conditions in the tan-yard and the situation of her, as a villager who has to travel a couple of hours each day and climb the hills to get the railway station the train for Cluj leaves from. July ends this thematic field with an ambiguous set of evaluations, mentioning it was easier for her before she was married because she had no cares, followed by a new one in accordance with it is much better staying in Baciu with her husband because it is nearer to the railway station. Then July begins a new theme with a new evaluation about her husband, who "was always able to put up

money for everything." A one-page long thematic field follows containing narrations about him as the owner of the company; the problems come out from his job. When narrating it July re-creates the gender-hierarchy that depicts her as a less active agent, a mere helper in company-troubles, while the husband seems to be "the brain." She continuous with the theme of children, a long narration about three pages is dedicated to their school-events. The permanent repetition of this theme makes us feel she has really nothing more to say, so the main narration is stopped and questions are put.

Presence of gender identity overlapping the main narration becomes obvious after analyzing it. When asked to tell her life-story as a villager living close to Cluj, she presents herself as a housewife and a mother, who begins her story with her first pregnancy and ends it with the present situation of her two sons. Living in Baciu means for her staying in the house and activities connected to it: gardening, housekeeping and helping family members to live their lives and achieve their goals: she helps the boys with homework, her husband in administrative troubles of the company. July's own life appears only for four times in the main narration: she presents her illness, the death of her mother, a failure of taking the entrance exam to university and getting a job. It could be that gender roles placing her to the area of the house and turning July into a person "there's nothing to talk about", would make her indifferent towards the local community, but it is not entirely true. Small-talk phases of the interview tell us something more: after the recorder is stopped she tells us she has only a few acquaintances in the village, she names only one woman from Baciu she gets along well with. Refusing to present us nothing about "people in Baciu" is not just because she "acts out" traditional gender roles and has no perspective on the community, she could spend her spare time with other women from the village, go to the church, chat with neighbors. Lack of narrations about local identity and rejection to present herself like an inhabitant of the village is because July is isolated and somehow alone.

Analyzing the main narration only, one might have the impression that categories like "village people: or "townspeople" are not relevant for her. At the beginning one might think these identities are not "handy" for July, because there is no such categorization and well elaborated discourses about them in the Hungarian public sphere. But July's narration about

arguing with a local bureaucrat who rejects to give her the permission necessary for being employed in the city as well as the lack of place-markers when speaking about Cluj, made me uncertain. In order to make things clear the analysis of the second narration is needed when she is asked to recall stories from her life before getting married.

As an answer to our first question, July starts this second part of the interview with a narration about meeting her husband and the way she was courted. This theme, full of general evaluations about men and women's role, may show us a sort of common knowledge about gender in a rural community – as it is presented in the next chapter. After July is proposed the couple lives in a rented room in Cluj. She evaluates this situation by negative terms, making us uncertain, whether the living conditions were "poor" or the relation itself was troublesome. July feels no need to give us arguments for cohabitation. It could be–at one hand–because she was already proposed so she might have no reason to consider herself an "easy going" woman or it may show her wish to present herself as free and "liberal". Some phrases of argumentation are to come, making clear that her relationship with her husband "wasn't a big deal, but we got along well together." It makes us think there must be a certain type of knowledge about getting married in accordance with marriage is a relationship not necessarily based on love. This is also stressed by July's argumentation presented after telling us that she made up her mind and accepted the proposal only for his request. He convinces July by telling her "we have been living together for three months" as if marriage is nothing else just a matter of "shakedown". A set of interrelated thematic fields are to come, narrations about their leaving for Baciu. July recalls the negotiation between she and her husband, who did not want to settle neither in her native village, in her "territory", nor in Cluj, because conditions there were poor. July did not want to live in his native village as well, because, as she argues–it was further from railway station. Besides–she adds–"I had everything at home" thus "it was no reason for me to get married". Baciu is a "neutral place" for both, and the nearest place to the station among all three villages. July's argumentations makes us think that being a single is a less problematic for her because she was nursed at home by her mother, whose protection she lost after having her own family, thus marriage itself cannot bring her advantages. Thus it should offer something

in turn: a great amount of comfort–embodied here by the village near the railway station–to replace the safety of living with her mother. An almost one page-long thematic field follows about her native place, Suceag. The narration about her fellow villagers is in fact an argumentation and explanation: Suceag people were learned and good dancers, social life of the village was vivid, because the Hungarians stayed together, and it was guarded by a severe social order (the young who passed confirmation were enabled to spend time together); people from Baciu are not so good with dance and are less learned. She also specifies these events belong to the sphere of past; the times of balls and fun are over, because her fellow-villagers left for town and "townspeople" bought their houses. After finishing this theme July is asked about her school-years in Cluj. She tells us she was the only Hungarian among Romanian classmates, at the beginning she did not know the language, but her mother "arranged" her to pass the exam in the11[th] form. Besides re-introducing the theme of ethnicity a new thematic field about "arranging" things appears; the interrelation of ethnic identity and distribution of resources is to be discussed later. Then she tells us how she find a work-place, it was also with her mother's help who, as a laundress "knew many people in Cluj", among them a pen repairman, for whom she did housework, and this repairman had connections to those bureaucrats who worked in the center of labor politics. Helped by them she had got her first job, but after some weeks she sought for another one, that in the tan-yard; she tells us a narration about being helped by a fellow-villager who talked to the director and convinced to hire her. The theme of "arranging things" reoccurs here, the necessity of building up a personal network that may adjust one's condition. July's mother and the fellow-villager are the ones who had the capacity of doing this. She describes the hard conditions from the tan-yard, and recalls the event when "unlearned communists who came from villages" tried to tease her. This sort of categorization–village-people being labeled by other "village people"–shows us the existence of a hierarchical categorization: she labels herself as one among "townspeople" because she considers herself learned. When she is asked if they had ever thought of living in Cluj, she tells us a narration about finding a living place in the city. The apartments they got were not very comfortable: one was in the basement another in a strange area, thus it was impossible for the couple to

accept them. Then memories about school-years are to re-appear. She uses the evaluation similar to that of "communists", mentioning that her classmates were "village-people" , unlearned because most of them did not graduate high school, they worn "red sweaters" and they went to the city for the first time when they had to have the entrance exam. The life-history ends with a narration about Cluj, the experiences she had there.

Analyzing the second narration becomes obvious the existence of such hierarchical categories as "townspeople" and "village people" but these have nothing to do with locality. Education and a personal network are the means the give someone access to resources, these factors make one "urban" and not the place he/she lives in. Identifying herself as "urban", or, at least not "rural" explains why July does not use markers of space when narrating about Cluj: she only says she was working at tan-yard, but she does not specify that it was in the city; she also tells us about going to the health insurance company "near the market" without making clear it must bee in Cluj, where the company's building is and was close to the marketplace during the 80-ies.

In the following chapters we will do a micro-analysis of some sequences in order to modulate our interpretations.

Is rural culture a "traditional" one?

As we mentioned locality itself is not relevant when the identity of a "village people" is compared with that of "townspeople", but it gains importance when two villages are matched: "life" and "people" from Suceag in July's narratives are seen different from those in Baciu. This categorization becomes important for her because Baciu gives July the opportunity to become a mother and the emotional fulfillment this status brings, but it is the place of isolation as well. Suceag instead is the place where she spent her youth and – with her worlds "had no cares." In order to identify not just the meanings, but also the cultural practices local identity is built of, we must analyze carefully July's narrations about her native place. For a young, employed woman living in a village at the late 70-ies, mid 80-ies means, first of all, a possibility to be together with people. But this form of spending spare-time is not just a "having fun"-thing. As

the following fragments show us, "being a villager" means for July the existence of well-developed, socio-culturally controlled network, where everyone knows who could be considered "grown up", and what his/her rights are:

> "We were plenty–I dunno how to explain it to you – for instance there was a generation, people four-five-six years elder than me, but were at the same places, so if someone had his confirmation was considered grown up, and all grown ups were [spending their times] at the same place … Some at 14, some at 20-21 and all together. There were many boys there, many young people. […] it was that they stayed two days in our place. Two days for fun."

Local identity gendered tells us exactly how this "rural" culture works, and whether it could be considered "traditional"? This becomes clear from the narrative about meeting her husband and his making up to her. The fragment below shows us very clearly that public occasions and family reunions serve as compulsory scenes for social interactions. These events follow given cultural patterns: it is "known" how to behave in such situations, what is proper behavior, when a man and a woman are considered a couple. The norms are gendered: boys apparently have a bigger amount of freedom; they can come to balls unless invited, while girls have to take them home.

> "[There was a ball in Vechea] and we went there with my mother and there I met my husband. Just like that, I dunno how to explain it, because we were just chatting, about factories we worked at, I dunno, so my husband told me he was working at the paper-mill in Cluj as truck-driver, I was working at Clujana, and one day I saw him there. Asked him, what was he doing, and he told he had to fetch something for the factory. After a couple of days he re-appeared *laughing*–then he came once, twice, free-times, and said he have heard from my fellow-villagers there would be a ball in Suceag before Lent, and he said 'invite me' he said.

Why you want to come there, I asked, but if you want to, there's no need for invitation, boys go wherever they want to, without being invited. And he appeared without an invitation in Suceag. On these times there were that balls there … it was that girls invited boys from other villages at their places to stay for the night. Boys they liked, they danced with several times or those who wanted to come. And so … how should I say … I thought if someone comes from Fizeşu Gherlii to see mee, I just could not invite him, it would have been improper, whoever it was. [...] and then he insisted to come with me to my cousins' wedding, and then I took him with me when a friend of mine got engaged, and after this when other relative of mine got married. And you know, when people see somebody arround you more than once ..."

But an attentive look may also show us–I formulated it as hypothesis proved to be true later–that women also have their ways to choose her spouses: taking home ball guests "they liked, they danced several times with", is also a way to explain sympathy, it's a kind of "bingo" we may say.

In the next thematic field July tells us arguments seconding her choice:

" […] and then [after we met at the ball] he came regularly and … listen … in those times it was very seldom to find a man who was not a drunkard. And my husband did not drink in those times. I don't want to flatter myself, but he really didn't. Besides one must look carefully because one should not go out with anyone. Then I saw he is not drinking and he is after work, […]."

The theme above shows us that a choice made in a world of well settled norms and virtues is also adjusted to personal experiences, expectations, choosing her future husband is perceived and narrated to be

an individual choice, too. At the other hand we were also told about how he sued for her hand:

> " […] and then he asked my father if I don't want to get married. Father said it's only on my behalf. After making a decision I can go wherever I want and whoever I choose, he wouldn't put in."

This thematic field is also an important one about describing "traditional" culture. It seems that a culturally mediated framework of interactions prescribing how to date and how to get married may be only a background for "match-making", it is also a question of individual freedom.

Class matters

> " – **What memories do you preserve from the city?**
> **–** Well … when I was young I was happy to go there with mum. She often took me with her because she was washing … there were many she was washing for. You know, there were lady doctors, who talked to people. There was a lady pediatrician, she lives behind the ambulance, and she was nice, she had a cherry tree and she invited me when cherries came in … and she talked with us. And the woman I mentioned before she was living is Petroseni Street, now the doctor's family is living there; they bought it from the woman. My mother intervened because she was working for both. And I come there even today, I rang her door any time I pass by and we talk for a minute. […] They were all doctors, mother was washing for them and did housekeeping […] she was hardworking and my advantage from it was that people know me, and I could get a couple of things. I had a class-mate and she had to remain in Someşul Factory although she did not like it, but they know none. It

happened that I had to see a doctor and mother took me to
them."

The theme of "arranging" things–as we already mentioned–is one of
key-terms in this life-story. It discerns "rural" people from urban,
overwrites ethnicity–as it is to be seen in next chapter–and becomes marker
of class belonging. The narration above enables us to look beyond scientific
discourses that define social classes as entirely hierarchical constructions.
The washerwoman-mother does not feel herself just a simple help, but also
well-respected and praised by her upper-class employers, who convey her
a symbolical status by helping her to have access to resources, to "arrange
things", to help her daughter in passing the exam, getting a better job.

Ethnicity itself

Re-reading the narration one must observe that only a few encounters are
ethnic. In other terms for July ethnicity is only a part of her life and not a
central and overwhelming category of identification as some Hungarian
(public) discourses usually represent it. The two themes ethnicity is present
in (when ethnic labels appear during the narration, or in other worlds it is
specified who is Hungarian and who is not) are that of solidarity and that
of networks.

Existence of ethnic solidarity is also a common topic of dominant
discourses: mainstream mass-media usually claims Hungarians to show
ethnic solidarity: go and vote for the HDUR (in the name of ethnic
solidarity), do not send children in "Romanian" schools, etc. July tells two
narratives of this kind: she mentions that the local Hungarian kindergarten
teacher asked her to let her younger son to the kindergarten because the
number of Hungarian children is not sufficed. The other story is a narration
about village-life where the Hungarian intellectuals (the priest and the
teachers) organize social life: they teach folk dances for the young, make a
troupe and direct plays because "there was no other place to go". Ethnic
solidarity as a cultural practice means here the creation of ethnic networks.

While the first issue show us how mainstream discourses strain into a local society and becomes reproduced by cultural practices, the second one helps us to look behind national discourses, which have as a central element the victimization of Hungarians. Local and national daily newspapers tend to represent Hungarian minority group as being permanently oppressed by "the Romanians". July tells us about ethnic identity in the following interrelated fields:

"I wanted to be someone like everybody else, but find out later not each of us has his place. Imagine, in those times … because I attended … on that time there were few theoretical schools, such as Brassai which was something special, the Mathematics-Physics was also special, but in those times Hungarian schools were only a few. And then I was in Aramtura, a Romanian school, and I graduated there. I succeeded to finish it, but I failed the exam for university and I get employed and I did not tried once more. It is different for a Hungarian; I don't think my paper was that weak … But if you hadn't somebody to know, to give to, because my mother did not know anyone to be sure for reserving me a place. … '

"Well, in Cluj [in the school] I was there the only Hungarian among 30 Romanians, how should I tell you, I learned as better the language that I could write. On those times everyone had had a job, mine was locksmith, and we write from that. And I wrote is together and separated but worlds show no meaning to me. […]. And we had to have an exam from 10th to 11th. I passed it because mother knew a school master and she bought her that needed to be bought and she put me in the 11th form. So it was. I was very good neither at Physics nor Maths, there were compulsory subject for the exam. And there was the Romanian. It wasn't such problematic: I didn't know the language, the literary dialect, but I read a lot."

At first sight these two stories tell us about marginalizing, victimizing the Hungarians: they cannot speak the language as well as Romanians do, in Ceauşescu's Romania a huge part of Hungarian schools were closed, therefore the minority group has less chances to attend a good school than the Romanians. But an attentive re-reading shows us the dynamism of ethnic categorization, usually hidden by public representations. Ethnic identity is a handicap, but holding a position that enables "arrange things", in other terms to be a member of a network–as July's mother does–can make one's access to resources, it is able thus to overwrite it.

Conclusions

Seen as a form of individual experience, ethnicity here is proved to be different than a overarching category of mainstream media-discourses. Moreover, as it appears in July's life-story, not necessary a central one; ethnicity is present when she narrates her life, but not all encounters of hers are ethnic. The case-study made on July's life-story show us that Hungarian identity–as every social identity–is contextual, members of this minority group have several possibilities to live and present their lives: they could be spouses, parents, workers, and children. Besides–as any social agent– they could choose among their set of identities adjusting them to the social context, as July does, who presents herself as a mother and strengthens her class belonging when narrates her life.

References

1. Barth, Frederick (1996): *Régi és új problémák az etnicitás elemzésében. [Enduring and emerging issues in the analysis of ethnicity]. Regio*, 1 (7): 2-25.
2. Breckner, Roswitha (1996): *The Biographical-interpretative method – Principles and Procedures*. Working Paper. University of East London: Center for Biography and Social Policy, Sociology Department.

3. Calhoun, Craig (1986): „Social Theory and the Politics of Identity"
    in.: Calhoun, Craig: *Social Theory and the Politics of Identity*, Blackwell
    Publishing Ltd., Oxford., 9-37.
4. Cornell, Stephen – Hartmann, Douglass (1998): *Ethnicity and Race.
    Making identities in a changing world*, Pine Forge Press, Thousand
    Oaks – London – New Delhi.
5. Eriksen, Thomas Hylland (1993): *Ethnicity and Nationalism.* London
    – Sterling – Virginia: Pluto Press,.
6. Hall, Stuart (1992): „The Questions of Cultural Identity*" i*n S. Hall,
    D. Held, T. McGrew (eds.): *Modernity and its Futures,* Cambridge,
    273-316.
7. L. Moore, Henrieta (1988): *Feminism and Anthropology,* Blackwell
    Publishing Ltd., Oxford.
8. Rosenthal, Gabriele (n.d.): *Élettörténet-rekonstrukció. A történet-alkotás
    szelekciós alapelvei narratív interjúk során. Kézirat. [Life-story-
    reconstruction. Principles of selection during the process of building up
    stories in narrative interviews.* Manuscript].
9. Sommers,   M.R.   –   Gibbson,   G.D.(1986):   "Reclaiming   the
    Epistemological "Other": Narrative and the Social Construction of
    Identity", in Calhoun, Craig*: Social Theory and the Politics of Identity*,
    Oxford: Blackwell Publishing Ltd., 37-100.

Book Review

Eric Hobsbawm : *Nations et nationalisme depuis 1780*, Gallimard, 1992

Marion Subtil

Hobsbawm a vu dans les premiers combien la compréhension du terme de nation était fondamentale pour déchiffrer l'histoire des XIXème et XXème siècle. Se démarquant des études qui postulent l'existence « naturelle » des entités nationales (des écrits nationalistes surtout), Hobsbawm rétablit le caractère nouveau, non universel, et par dessus tout évolutif de ce terme. Ils démontrent tout au long de son livre combien les critères qui définissent une nation sont ambigus et changeants. Le manque d'études objectives de la nation et l'absence de tout travail avant les années 1960 lui donnent peu de matière première pour sa réflexion. C'est donc une démarche innovatrice qu'il entreprend en 1990 quand il cherche quels critères conviendraient à définir une communauté ou un groupe de personnes comme nation. Il commence par chercher l'origine du terme et se résout à séparer deux grilles de lecture pour rendre compte de la complexité de la tache. La première grille analyse la formation nationale par le haut, c'est à dire depuis l'Etat, le gouvernement, les militaires qui diffusent le « sentiment d'appartenance national » dans la société. La deuxième grille de lecture part de la société, c'est à dire « du bas », et postule le rôle fondamental joué par la volonté du peuple qui, selon qu'il se soumet à l'influence du haut, va confirmer ou non son sentiment d'appartenance à toute nation naissante. Alterner d'une optique à l'autre est justifié d'abord parce que les idéologies officielles des Etats ne reflètent pas forcément les opinions des citoyens, ensuite parce qu'une identification nationale n'empêche pas qu'elle coexiste avec d'autres identités, et enfin parce que cette identité nationale est en constante évolution.

Hosbawm propose d'analyser l'histoire de la nation et simplifie sa compréhension en divisant l'histoire en périodes. La première période qu'il

nous propose est pré nationale et postule les liens culturels, littéraires ou folkloriques qui existaient entre des personnes avant que des pionniers ne cherchent à définir plus précisément les identités nationales. Cette volonté « de ceux du haut » de construire les nations correspond à la deuxième période. La troisième période qu'il décrit correspond à la naissance des programmes nationalistes qui cherchent à acquérir un soutien de masse et sont fortement responsable du sentiment actuel selon lequel « les nations ont toujours existées » et « qu'il est naturel de s'identifier à l'une d'elle ».

Le caractère « aléatoire » des nations est directement perceptible lorsque l'on tente de répondre aux questions que se pose Hobsbawm avant son étude « Selon quelles critères on pourrait qualifier une population en tant que formant une nation ?» La difficulté à y répondre amène Hobsbawm à remonter aux origines du mot pour retrouver sa trajectoire évolutive. L'étude des encyclopédies espagnoles ou hollandaises, et des dictionnaires anglais ou allemands du XIXème siècle lui font prendre conscience des changements de signification du terme. S'il désignait simplement dans le langage courant « l'ensemble des habitants d'une province, d'un pays ou d'un royaume », ou bien servait à se différencier de « l'étranger », il correspond à partir du XIXème siècle à une nécessité des temps modernes de se différencier plus nettement d'autres groupes et d'autres territoires. Le sens moderne de la nation se complexifie alors.

L'auteur observe surtout que la naissance de la nation coïncide avec l'avènement du libre échange à l'ère classique. Il remarque que la naissance de l'idée moderne de la nation parmi les élites a des causes purement pratiques. Les penseurs libéraux ne conçoivent au départ l'Etat nation que comme une entité économiquement avantageuse. Celui ci stimule l'économie en introduisant l'image de nations en concurrence sur un marché international, en même temps qu'il garantit la sécurité des propriétés et des contrats à l'intérieur du territoire national. Le protectionnisme et la compétition économique amènent petit à petit cette nouvelle élite bourgeoise libérale à définir quelles nations peuvent être reconnues en tant que telles. Les critères de viabilité sont principalement économiques. Ces critères de richesse amènent à juger de la puissance d'une nation selon des critères tels que la taille de sa population ou de son

territoire. Ces critères sont des « conditions à l'autodétermination » qui encouragent les populations candidates à chercher à s'étendre. Les mouvements nationaux consistent alors à rechercher l'union et les opportunités d'expansion qui leur permettraient de s'affirmer sur la scène internationale. Les critères de langue ou de race sont délaissés au profit d'autres nouveaux critères : l'association à un Etat historique actuel ou « antique », l'existence d'une élite   culturelle à laquelle correspondent des traditions littéraires et qui contrôle une administration nationale, la capacité de conquête.

Une fois établie cette définition utilitariste de l'élite économique, Hobsbawm cherche ses conséquences sur les sociétés pré industrielles dans lesquelles elle se diffuse. La diversité des nations en nombre, taille, et type de communauté oblige notre auteur à proposer le concept de « lien de protonationalisme » pour caractériser les sentiments populaires qui les précèdèrent. Les Etats ou ceux qui veulent les créer exaltent chez les peuples ce qui justifieraient au mieux leur appartenance collective. Ils cherchent à établir des liens forts d'identification entre les nations modernes et l'Etat qui les représente. Néanmoins en l'absence d'organisation politique territoriale, on ne peut pas dire que ces liens protonationaux, puissent se calquer sur les formes modernes de la nation. Il est très difficile d'analyser le protonationalisme populaire puisqu'il s'agit de découvrir ce que pouvaient être les sentiments d'appartenance collective des masses illettrées, majoritaires à ces époques, qui étaient radicalement différents de ceux des élites lettrées. Hobsbawm analyse plusieurs types de critères d'appartenance et cherchent quelle influence ils ont pu avoir sur la construction postérieure des nations.

Il cherche d'abord l'influence de la langue. Il montre qu'au contraire d'unir, elle constituait plutôt à l'époque une barrière entre les populations puisqu'il en existait une multitude sur un territoire restreint. Le choix postérieur d'une langue nationale résulte donc d'une construction artificielle, née de la volonté d'harmonisation et d'uniformisation des gouvernants. Si la langue est aujourd'hui un critère central dans la définition de la nationalité, et même si elle a pu aider à la diffusion d'un sentiment commun, elle a peu servi aux premières définitions des nations.

C'est sa diffusion via l'éducation publique naissante et les premières procédures administratives qui lui permet de devenir peu à peu langue officielle du nouvel Etat nation.

Il étudie ensuite les différences ethniques et établit qu'elles jouèrent un rôle très faible dans la construction des nations. L'oligarchie pour enraciner le sentiment national dans des origines communes qui justifient des caractéristiques communes, s'est peu servi des critères ethniques. Les différences ethniques ont malheureusement davantage abouties à des dérives violentes qui stigmatisaient certaines catégories sociales ou exacerbaient les différences entre « nous » et « eux ». Encore aujourd'hui il nous semble que les séparatismes qui posent actuellement problème sont, lorsqu'ils se réfèrent à des origines communes antiques, directement héritiers de ces différences ethnico-culturelles que les nations ont voulus gommer.

Pour terminer, l'étude du critère religieux est intéressante au vue des liens étroits qui existent dans certains pays entre religion et conscience nationale (comme en Pologne ou en Irlande). Néanmoins les divergences entre les ères d'influence, d'une part des religions tribales qui concernaient des populations très restreintes, et d'autre part des grandes religions universelles qui ont tendance à diluer les différences, ne permettent encore pas d'affirmer que la religion ait été un composant essentiel du protonationalisme.

Hobsbawm conclue à son étude qu'il est difficile d'établir une relation directe entre les protonationalismes et les nationalismes modernes, car si les bases protonationales (langues, ethnie, religion) ont été utiles à la formation d'un sentiment patriotique et s'y superposent souvent, les liens entre protonationalisme et nationalisme restent obscurs, à l'image de l'idée de conscience nationale, notion finalement très abstraite.

Hobsbawm dans une seconde partie délaisse l'étude des racines populaires des sentiments nationaux et se tourne de nouveau vers « l'optique des gouvernants ». C'est à l'époque de la révolution française qu'ils définissent l'Etat nation de manière plus précise, le reliant à un

territoire continu, séparé de ses voisins par des frontières, et dans lequel les habitants se soumettent à une même tutelle étatique. Cet Etat moderne se caractérise également par la direction et l'administration directe de ses habitants via un ensemble d'instances telles que la poste, la police, ou l'école, qui créent un contact direct entre les sujets et l'appareil d'Etat. La présence de l'Etat est également renforcée par la révolution des transports qui démarrent au XIXème siècle.

La construction de ce nouvel Etat oblige ses dirigeants d'une part à réorganiser l'administration afin d'en faire un système plus efficace et présent sur l'ensemble du territoire. D'autre part, s'assurer de la loyauté des citoyens au nouveau système de gouvernement amène ces dirigeants à se demander comment justifier de sa légitimité. La démocratisation et l'octroi du droit de vote à toutes les catégories sociales viseront au départ à fidéliser les habitants à leur gouvernement. A cette fidélisation légale s'ajoute le nécessaire développement du patriotisme. L'art de mobiliser devient une condition à la survie de l'Etat, qui doit s'assurer du soutien solide et durable de son peuple.

Mais à ce patriotisme d'Etat succède une autre forme d'exaltation de la nation : les nationalismes. Ces relations passionnelles à la nation sont d'origine populaire. Elles obligent les Etats à incorporer ces nouvelles « fiertés d'appartenir à une « Grande nation » », à leurs anciennes conceptions pratiques du patriotisme d'Etat. Ces deux conceptions de la nation, s'influençant l'une et l'autre, aident à la naissance de forts sentiments nationaux communs à l'Etat et aux populations. C'est à cet période notamment qu'apparaît l'usage de symboles et d'images qui aident à la fortification des sentiments nationaux. Il est évident que si ces opérations de précision des critères d'identité, eurent du succès dans certains cas, elles entraînèrent et entrainent toujours dans d'autres cas de graves effets pervers. L'adhésion à des théories racistes censées justifier l'exclusion de certains groupes d'intrus en est un des meilleurs exemples.

Ces tendances nationalistes qui apparaissent entre 1870 et 1918 permettent d'en finir avec les critères économiques et quantitatifs (taille du territoire et de la population) qui servaient auparavant à justifier d'un droit

à l'autodétermination pour les toutes premières nations. Des critères tels que la langue, l'ethnie, ou l'origine commune, mineurs à l'époque libérale, se convertissent alors en critères centraux d'identification. Mais les mouvements nationalistes vont poser des problèmes, notamment dans les pays « multinationaux » qui hébergent des groupes minoritaires, que l'on va alors juger selon de nouveaux critères artificiels de différenciation.

Le contexte dans lequel naissent ces nationalismes est celui de changements sociaux et politiques notables, auxquels vient s'ajouter le facteur économique. Ces changements sociaux sont la résistance de groupes traditionnels qui se sentent menacés par le modernisme, le développement de nouvelles classes et catégories sociales en milieu urbain, ou encore les diasporas qui provoquent de nombreuses migrations et la coexistence sur un même espace de groupes qui ne se connaissaient pas. Le facteur économique c'est la grande dépression que connurent les économies européennes et qui bouleversa la vie et la situation économique des catégories modestes. Ce sont ces situations de tensions nationales et internationales qui donnèrent lieu à l'apparition de friction entre les groupes. Au niveau politique, la démocratisation croissante (droit de vote pour les femmes, suffrages universaux) augmenta le pouvoir de mobilisation des citoyens et en conséquence leur influence sur les Etats.

Les migrations géographiques nouvelles et la transformation du concept de race (avec l'apparition des grandes théories darwiniste et antisémite) renforcèrent le nationalisme ethnique et introduirent les critères linguistiques et raciaux aux manifestations nationalistes. Les critères de différenciation entre les nations se précisèrent, entraînant les conflits qu'on connaît. Les liens étroits qui s'établirent entre race et langue accompagnèrent des désirs de retour à une pureté originelle soit disant bafouée.

Mais l'apogée du nationalisme a lieu plus tard. Entre 1918 et 1950 Hobsbawm observe une extension et une diversification des mouvements nationalistes. De nouvelles formes émergent dans les pays dits « du Tiers Monde ». Dans les années qui suivent la première guerre mondiale surgissent dans ces pays des mouvements de libération nationale, souvent

influencés par le marxisme et intégrant à leurs objectifs un fort aspect social. La connotation anti-impérialiste donnée à ces mouvements par leurs dirigeants s'inspira fortement d'une certaine gauche européenne antifasciste. L'anti-impérialisme devient le nouveau critère qui rassemble la population contre un ennemi commun. Souvent lié aux idéologies socialistes et communistes qui s'inscrivent alors dans une guerre idéologique internationale, il fédère des jeunes, des ouvriers et des intellectuels à l'intérieur des nations et bouleversent les anciennes nations obligées de se positionner.

Hobsbawm nomme « défi de la société pluriethnique » le nationalisme qui apparaît dans ses jeunes nations du XXème siècle qui illustrent l'irréalité quasi oubliée du découpage national dont on a oublié peu à peu qu'il n'était pas naturel. Les nouveaux Etats abritent les demandes d'une pluralité d'identité et de groupes ethniques qui les amènent non pas à rechercher à fonder ensemble un Etat national, mais à chercher chacune de son coté à être l'identité fondatrice de la nation. Les batailles interethniques pour le contrôle des ressources naturelles et des pouvoirs centraux aboutissent à des guerres civiles, qui continuent de voir s'affronter aujourd'hui des populations entières à la recherche de « leur » légitimité nationale.

Hobsbawm dans une troisième partie, fait le bilan des nationalismes à l'aube du nouveau siècle. Face à la généralisation au monde entier au XXème siècle du découpage national, il définit deux moteurs qui l'ont appuyé au niveau global et ont contribué à sa diffusion.

Le sport d'abord, puisque les compétitions internationales ont largement favorisé la projection des sentiments nationaux sur des athlètes ou une équipe censés les représenter. Ces compétitions internationales ont contribué à favoriser la distinction entre le « nous national » et les autres nations en course.

La guerre ensuite, qui encouragea des utilisations du nationalisme à des fins de propagande et de « booster populaire» lors des grands conflits mondiaux . L'Allemagne reste le meilleur exemple de dérive nationaliste,

avec la diffusion de l'idée selon laquelle seule la guerre pouvait sauver la race aryenne souillée par les autres peuples impurs.

On peut conclure avec Hobsbawm, en commentant la situation actuelle, que les nationalismes s'ils ont montré leur utilité lorsqu'ils rassemblent et unissent les peuples autour de sentiments communs, ont également leurs limites. Nous partageons l'avis d'Hobsbawm pour qui l'entre deux guerres, qui a marqué l'apogée des principes nationalistes (jamais ils n'auront été aussi forts), a également permis d'apprécier ses limites, lesquelles ont été largement confirmées depuis. Les guerres de frontières qui ont eues lieux sur tous les continents, les génocides et autres tentative pour homogénéiser par la force un peuple, les volontés de minorités de s'intégrer à un Etat plus grand, ou au contraire d'accéder à leur autonomie, les mouvements de migration de peuple « à la recherche d'un territoire où s'implanter» sont autant de phénomènes qui montrent combien les bienfaits du nationalisme sont très limités. Il nous semble que nous sommes à présent bien loin de la première conception libérale de la nation que décrit Hobsbawm dans sa première partie. Les dérives « sentimentales » de nationalismes fondés sur d'autres critères qu'économiques ou administratifs, des premiers libéraux, n'ont cessé de dérouler l'éventail de leurs effets pervers. L'évolution actuelle des nations vers une croissante diversification des identités qui cohabitent en leur sein, nous forcent aujourd'hui à rechercher de nouveaux critères d'identification commune. La mondialisation, qui remet en cause la possibilité de se réunir durablement autour de repères identitaires communs et stables, questionne la pertinence à long terme de ces découpages nationaux qui peinent de plus en plus à se régénérer. La persistance de nations dans lesquels les « recettes nationales » enviées à l'Occident, ne fonctionnent pas, explique l'émergence de nouvelles théories.

Mais entre multiethnicité et multinationalité, entre pluriculturalité et assimilationnisme, entre melting-pot et salad-bowl, on assiste pour le moment à différents endroits à l'affrontement de modèles à l'essai. Comment adapter l'aspect pratique de la nation à la nouvelle réalité (ou à la réalité qu'on a voulu nier)? Si l'on avait continué à ne considérer la nation que comme entité pratique qui permet à une « échelle raisonnable »

d'assurer à ses habitants une vie sociale (d'interdépendance) harmonieuse, les nations fonctionneraient elles ? Les populations pourraient elles comprendre que la nation n'existe que pour ses fonctions organisationnelles, mais qu'elle ne corresponde plus à une identité collective à laquelle se raccrocher? Et l'occidental habitué à voir sa nationalité comme un repère identitaire personnel fondamental, pourra t-il peu à peu s'en détacher? Est ce souhaitable? Il faut espérer que les réflexions sur les « nouvelles identités plurielles» non nationales (celle des immigrés, des « déracinés »…), pourront à long terme nous aider à accepter la nécessaire remise en question de nos anciens modèles homogénéisants. Cette fois ci les anciennes « grandes puissances occidentales »(France, Allemagne, Grande Bretagne) n'auraient elles pas intérêt à prendre exemple sur d'autres pays dans lesquels on est plus habitué à débattre de ces questions identitaires. La crainte d'une nation qui se renferme sur elle même en se raccrochant désespérément à ses grandeurs historiques passées est le signe qu'elle n'est pas encore prête à se remettre brutalement en question. Les années futures nous permettront de continuer cette passionnante histoire des nations entamées par Hobsbawm.

Le bilan actuel appelant plutôt au pessimisme, on se permet de conclure sur cette interrogation :

Si l'historien extraterrestre mis en scène par Hobsbawm au début de son ouvrage, venait réellement à rechercher sur terre les causes de la disparition du genre humain, quelle part de responsabilité donnerait-il aux nations ?

Alain Finkielkraut : *Comment peut-on être croate ?*, Paris, Gallimard, 1992

Valeska Ebeling

Comment peut-on être croate ?, ouvrage qu'Alain Finkielkraut publie en 1992, paraît pendant la guerre en ex-Yougoslavie, qui débute le 25 juin 1991 et se termine officiellement le 14 décembre 1995. Le livre se compose de deux parties constituées d'un ensemble de textes d'origines assez diverses : entretien pour la presse, articles parus dans des quotidiens tout au long du conflit, un discours prononcé à une conférence et des articles écrits spécialement pour le recueil. La question fondamentale à laquelle Alain Finkielkraut tente de répondre est de savoir « pourquoi le cauchemar du XXe siècle a survécu à la chute du Mur de Berlin » (p.27), pourquoi les Européens, premiers défenseurs des droits de l'homme, ne se sont pas émus du sort des Croates et des Bosniaques, et ont laissé faire ce « massacre ».

La première partie du livre vise surtout à « s'interroger sur les raisons profondes de cette volonté de ne pas savoir » des Etats européens, comme l'écrit lui-même l'auteur dans l'avertissement. Finkielkraut semble chercher à exposer une vision philosophique du problème, notamment à travers sa mise en perspective avec la manière dont a été traitée la présence communiste sur le sol européen. La seconde partie se présente comme une chronique philosophique du conflit, que l'auteur dit inspirée par « l'écart entre l'événement et l'accueil qu'à quelques exceptions près lui réservaient la France, l'Europe et le Nouvel Ordre International. »

L'intention d'Alain Finkielkraut est donc de sensibiliser l'opinion publique à ce qui a lieu à quelque 1000 km de là, en expliquant les raisons pour lesquelles il faut défendre les « petites nations », garantes de libertés face à une uniformité oppressive qui aurait cours au sein de la fédération yougoslave (p.40). Cette idée peut sembler d'autant plus actuelle aujourd'hui, où la mondialisation semble inexorable et peut se traduire par une uniformisation, quelle que soit l'idée que l'on s'en fasse par ailleurs. La défense des petites nations par Alain Finkielkraut repose notamment sur le

fait que, pour les grandes nations comme la France, « les petites nations des confins de l'Europe sont des entités folkloriques et vaguement ridicules dont la planète n'a nul besoin puisque les affaires se sont toujours réglées sans elles » (p.40). L'auteur pousse l'argument très loin, pense-t-on — surtout quinze ans après, un certain nombre d'Etats d'Europe centrale, dont la Slovénie, ayant intégré l'Union européenne depuis. Mais en réalité, il conserve une part de vérité lorsque, au sein de l'UE, l'avis des nouveaux membres est parfois considéré comme moins important et moins représentatif ; nous pouvons à cet effet prendre pour exemple les soutiens slovaque et tchèque durant la guerre en Irak.

Par ailleurs, Alain Finkielkraut montre l'importance de la nation dans l'intégration à un ordre international, l'importance de l'affirmation de soi après une longue période de déni de soi. « Pour accéder à la "cosmopolis", il faut former soi-même une "polis", une cité indépendante et libre » (p.41), écrit-il, cherchant à expliquer la lutte pour l'indépendance menée par les républiques yougoslaves par un désir de s'intégrer dans l'Europe, de ne pas rester enclavées dans une fédération étouffant leur particularités. Mais cela a été mal vu par une Europe qui ne reconnaissait pas cet aspect de leur quête d'indépendance à une époque où le « sans-frontiérisme » représentait la seule voie de salut (p.79). Voilà précisément le point sur lequel les républiques yougoslaves, les nations européennes, les Etats-Unis et les organisations internationales ne pouvaient s'entendre puisque ces derniers considéraient qu'il s'agissait d'un conflit entre minorités et non entre différentes nations. Mais l'auteur, en s'attelant à la question yougoslave, s'intéresse à une question plus vaste, celle des nations et du nationalisme en Europe de façon générale, à ses dangers et à ses avantages.

Alain Finkielkraut poursuit ensuite sa défense des aspirations croates en s'attaquant directement à la France, à son gouvernement et au président de la République de l'époque, François Mitterrand. Cette attaque récurrente représente une sorte de leitmotiv tout au long du livre. La critique comporte différents arguments. Tout d'abord, il compare la France de 1992 à la celle du régime de Vichy, ce qui constitue une accusation grave. Puis il reproche à Mitterrand son « mode de pensée essentialiste »,

qui consisterait à croire que le régime croate ayant été oustachi autrefois le restera à jamais (p.112). Il explique ainsi que l'on refuse à la Croatie son indépendance car on la croit fondamentalement ancrée dans la haine de l'autre, toujours dans le schéma oustachi et antisémite. Il n'est pas certain que l'on puisse formuler les choses ainsi, mais on sait que la France avait un penchant affirmé pour la Serbie dû à des raisons historiques, et que le président français n'apprécia que l'Allemagne reconnaisse en premier, et unilatéralement, les républiques croate et slovène. Cependant, même si l'on ajoute à cela la présence nazie en Croatie durant la Seconde guerre mondiale, on peine à comprendre pourquoi la France s'imaginait déjà que l'Allemagne avait pour intention de « se tailler une sphère d'influence dans les Balkans au détriment de la France »[1], et surtout on ne comprend pas pourquoi on a laissé faire sans intervenir.

A ce propos, Alain Finkielkraut va même jusqu'à affirmer que la France assistait la Serbie dans ses actions d'épuration ethnique, propos qui vont dans le même sens que ce qui a été dit précédemment sur Vichy. « Reconstituant au contraire l'axe munichois, Paris a repris à son compte avec Londres la proposition serbe d'une conférence pour la paix qui aura lieu une fois le nettoyage ethnique terminé et qui érigera les nettoyeurs en interlocuteurs » (p.127) : il est vrai que les gouvernements britannique et français ont longtemps été réticents à une intervention militaire en ex-Yougoslavie, de même qu'à une levée de l'embargo sur les armes à destination de la Croatie et de la Bosnie-Herzégovine, mais Alain Finkielkraut leur prête ici l'intention de vouloir attendre la fin du nettoyage ethnique en formulant la phrase de façon ambiguë, ce qui peut sembler malhonnête. Il reproduit ce genre de formulations hasardeuses à de multiples reprises tout au long de l'ouvrage.

Au départ, les intentions de l'auteur semblent donc nobles puisqu'il s'impose comme objectif d'informer tout en faisant réfléchir, de réveiller les consciences. Il est en effet l'un des premiers intellectuels à s'être engagé en faveur d'une intervention occidentale en ex-Yougoslavie au secours de la

---

[1] Reneo LUKIC, "Note de lecture sur *La France, la création du royaume « yougoslave » et la question croate, 1914-1929*", in *Relations Internationales*, n°111, automne 2002, p.413-415.

Croatie et de la Bosnie-Herzégovine. Son ouvrage n'est donc pas neutre et peut de ce fait être vu comme un pamphlet pro-croate, opinion partagée par un certain nombre de commentateurs. Cela se vérifie si l'on se rappelle la critique acerbe que formula Alain Finkielkraut en 1995 contre l'attribution de la palme d'or du Festival de Cannes au film Underground d'Emir Kusturica sans même avoir vu le film. Il dénonçait alors un film pro-serbe et propagandiste, accusant le réalisateur d'être nostalgique de la Grande Serbie.

Voilà peut-être ce qui nuit au propos d'Alain Finkielkraut : non pas le fait qu'il fasse part de son opinion concernant les conditions dans lesquelles la Croatie et la Bosnie-Herzégovine ont acquis leur indépendance, ni qu'il explique ce qu'aurait, selon lui, dû être l'attitude de la France — une grande partie de ce qu'il écrit correspondant à la réalité et nécessitant très certainement d'être dit —, mais le fait qu'il ait été quasiment le seul à l'époque à avoir cette position : cela a peut-être, d'une certaine manière, porté préjudice à son propos. Le lecteur peut en effet avoir l'impression que l'auteur, se sentant investi d'un devoir de messager, a ressenti le besoin de forcer le trait. En 151 pages, on apprend donc beaucoup, on découvre un point de vue, mais on n'a pas réellement l'impression que l'argumentation évolue, on ressent davantage une impression de matraquage, accrue par un ton trop souvent accusateur, un certain nombre d'imputations étant exagérées. Le propos est ainsi desservi et le lecteur devient sceptique.