Anul XLIII **1998**

S T U D I A
UNIVERSITATIS BABEŞ - BOLYAI

STUDIA EUROPAEA

1-2

Editorial Office: 3400 Cluj-Napoca ♦ Gh. Bilaşcu no. 24; Phone: 19.43.15 ex. 167

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STUDIA UNIVERSITATIS BABEŞ-BOLYAI, STUDIA EUROPAEA, XLIII, 1-2, 1998

THE EUROPEAN HOUSE OF EDUCATION: EDUCATION AND ECONOMY A NEW PARTNERSHIP?

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Conference of the Ministers of Education of the EU Member States and the Phare States held in Budapest from 24 to 26 June 1999
(Published with author's consent)

The whole world today is involved in a debate over education. Even the G8- Summit, originally named World Economic Summit, recently adopted in the Köln Charter a resolution on lifelong learning.

Changing scientific, technological and economic environments challenge the existing educational systems everywhere. This situation is not new. Education and society have always been and always will be in conflict. Because in education we deal with a moving target. With changing social environments there will have to be changing educational answers. But society is living body - and education widely an institutionalized system. Thus, its changes are generally slow. Educators tend to believe that it is education which forms and changes society. But it is the changing society which challenges and finally changes content and structures of education. And eventually even a retarded educational system is going to adapt: Social evolution respects no exceptions. The politics of education always faced three simple questions, difficult as they are, of course, to answer:

(1) What are the educational needs of today's society?

(2) Does our educational system today reflect those needs?

and

(3) How will society change in the future and what do these changes mean for the educational system?

Europe's educational systems have been built top-down: There were excellent universities for the very few a long time before there were even simple and sufficient grammar schools for the great majority of the people. Almost all sectors of society developed without or with only a minimum of *formal* education. Crafts and practical skills were not taught in schools, but transferred from master to apprentice, and the apprentice paid for it, "Lehrgeld" as we still call it in an old German word. Masters created in their firms and studios informal "schools", as we still call the production environment of great artists, craftsmen or even manufacturing units of weaponry.

"Teaching" occurred on the job and many of the great craftsmen in European history, whose work we admire today in city architecture, furniture design, painting or sculptures, were, "illiterates" by today's standards. Yet their skills were absolutely sufficient to achieve professional perfection and eternal fame. Practice in the family, practice in household and work was *the* school.

At the same time, there lived highly educated and widely literate people. Churches and the courts, their administrations and their ambitions in the arts as well as in sciences, and some private education of the upper classes, were the major sources of abstract learning, of reading and writing demand. This demand supported the universities, where students paid for lectures and board. "Hauslehrer", home-teachers, cared for the preparation of the "happy-few". Then medicine and mechanics moved in. But again, business itself did not yet really need these ways of learning. In my home town Hamburg, for example, a rich city of long history, the self-governing citizens rejected a university as recently as the decades before World War I, arguing that in a successful merchant city the merchants office should be the place of learning.

The evolution of today's institutional education system was the result of two dynamic developments: The growing division of labour as the result of scientific and technical progress, asking for basic communication skills: writing, reading and calculating; "Kulturtechniken" as we call them in German. And there was also growing need by business for systematic scientific research and training. At the same time a broader integration of the people in a strategy of equal rights called for better general education for an otherwise unmanageable political process.

Looking back, however, there were never times in which the professional and the social goal were met perfectly by any European educational system, or by any other educational system for that matter. At least up to the World War II in Europe, universities and the schools leading to their entrance (broadly called Gymnasiums in Germany), were very successful scientifically and economically, but remained primarily schools for the upper classes; only particularly gifted children from the peasantry or working classes got their opportunities, primarily through the churches or later on also by state-financed fellowships There still was a long debate in this century about obligatory common grammar school (4 years) for all children of all classes, a goal which for Germany the Weimar Republic reached only by 1922.

Industry and business in general, of course, needed ever more sophisticated scientific research and university educated personnel and administration. Universities therefore grew larger and larger and gained more and more "vocational" character. They moved closer to business needs and trained now for professions. But when the universities tended to neglect basic research, new research organizations, such as the Kaiser-Wilhelm-Gesellschaft (in 1911), today Max-Planck-Gesellschaft, or the Princeton Institute of Advanced Studies (1932), were created.

The second half of the 20th century saw these trends further strengthened. Applied sciences became more and more the basis of all professional faculties; educational requirements rose; specialization grew constantly; and division of labour reached international, global scales. At the same time the need for

adequate education and training grew accordingly, broadening the share of cohorts between the age of 20 and 30 with the right to attend and attending universities in Germany from 5 % until the 1950s to about 36% today.

While up to the 1970s the growing sophistication of manufacturing processes and the respective services created an ever growing demand for deeper and broader vocational training and for professional academic education, today an ever larger portion of this work has been substituted by machine automatization. The information technologies of electronic chips, whereever installed, have substituted manpower in the very sense of this word. And there is no end of this trend in sight: In fact, we can assume that in the coming decades, this process will gain speed since certain key technological developments, for example the language activated computer, are just waiting for a break-through.

All this resulted from rapid progress in the communication industries. Communication, however, is not just transportation of words or signals: it is transportation in general. Thus the important changes are not only those from rail to air, from wired telephones to mobile phones, from mail to E-mail or from business travel to video-conferences: Also transportation related products, such as miniaturization or the packaging and cooling industries, should be included.

This means a change from material value to knowledge value, or as a competent analyst says: "from brawn to brain"[1]. The impact of the new technologies are being felt in all areas of life. There are, in my opinion, three key critical consequences to be dealt with in our debate on education:

(1) The changing importance not only of *knowledge, but also of character and human imagination*;

(2) The consequence of *disintermediation*, meaning a tendency to eliminate hierarchies in all organisation, thus increasing the responsibility of the individual in all social processes;

(3) The tendency to increase the income gap between highly paid employment and laid-off workers, thus creating in all societies a widening gulf between "knowers and know-nots" and thereby of "haves and have-nots" with dangerous consequences of social tension.

We often hear that the economic future today is less predictable than ever before.I want to postulate the opposite: I think scientific, technological and economic developments are probably more predictable today than they were 25 years ago, because we already experience some mojor impacts of information technologies and knowledge industries on society.

All professional forecasts for the consequences of the information society therefore join in *one* conviction: What we now see coming *is* going to come. It would therefore be wise for educators not to hope that there might be a place to hide for any nation or society. The fatal collapse of the Comunist system in all European regions should be a warning to every leader who hopes that his nation could escape from certain consequences of the information and knowledge economy and from globalization.

[1] Don Tapscott ,"The Digital Economy", McGraw Hill, New York.

I personally recall how 30 years ago when we began as members of the Brandt cabinett in Bonn to define targets and steps for a major reform of education, the student movement and their political supporters argued and pressed for a clean segregation between the forces of business or industry on the one side, and the universities on the other: They did not want to accept the inherent truth that a free society will also be a market society. But the political movements were powerfulon public opinion and finally succeeded in blocking all reasonable reforms in education and its institutions not only in Germany.

Today we are here together to look for ways to move the economy and education as closely together as possible! Therefore let us be clear: Peaceful evolution in any free society is propelled by markets; and these evolutionary forces will always be stronger than any political force trying to block them. Steering the markets - yes; blocking the markets - no. Thus pursuing our (sometimes contradictory) goals in education means that they must be achieved *whitin* the framework of market economies and globalization and not in a naive opposition to them.

Lets face it: If one analyzes the social consequences of the new information technologies they show a dual face. On the one hand, speed, volume and analysis capacites of these technologies theoretically seem to permit a growing centralization of control. George Orwell belived that by, "1984" (which was than only 35 years away from the date of publication of this famous book) huge organizations would exist, controlling and manipulating individual citizens behaviour. On the other hand, however, if we look at the realities the opposite seems to be the case: Systems with highly centralized structures have collapsed and contemporary state or business organizations are much more flexible than their predecessors were 50 years ago. Individuals on their working places and in their personal life enjoy much more individual freedom diversity, flexibility and responsibility than before. Democracy has made impressive progress. What is happenning?

It seems that the complexity of modern society and all its institutions forces the respective leadership everywhere to give more leeway for decentralized decision-making on the periphery of their organizations. If you produce one type of car and everybody can choose his car's colour - provided it is black (as Henry Ford I is frequently being quoted) - then you can have a highly centralized control system which sets rigid working hours and rhythms. But if you produce a couple of hundred variations of one car model in one factory during the day, you better decentralize some decision-making down to the working place, you might even create group-work and have outside supplier-teams take responsibility for car completion and part - quality.

This tendency to decentralize requires a different personality on all levels and in all kinds of work than the economy was looking for at the beginning of the 20th century: Today the ability to pass personal judgement, to take on responsibility, to reach decisions, to improvize if necessary and even to motivate within the respective working group, have become of growing importance. This is not because we are so terribly democratic: If it would not be more effective for competition I doubt that such organizational changes would have taken place. It is

the progress of information technologies that lead to the increase in decentralized responsibilities and which changes societies accordingly - and not an autonomous democratic urge. The great sociologist Norbert Elias has described the basic elements of this process already in the 1930s in his famous work "The process of civilization".

The same development can be found - and I must make this brief- in our political system. I think we are in agreement that society calls more than ever before for a well-informed, critical, responsible, enterprising and courageous citizen: apparently, just what business is asking for on all levels of organization. It is true: The information society threatens to "homogenize" human beings, to subject than to a rubber-stamp personality formation. But at the same time the information society pushes individuailism and calls for strong personalities in a network society, where competition favours the "survival of the fittest".

Thus, the formation of character is becoming a job of increasing importance for all social institutions. And here formal education has gained a major role since families are more and more retreating from this function.

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There seems, however, to exist a contradiction between society's two demands on education: On the one hand there is an apparent and growing need for character-building. The individual in the information age and in a knowledge based economy must be enabled to pass judgement, to make decisions and take on responsibilities. On the other hand we must accept a growing specialization. Thus, the ever geeater mass of specialized knowledge would seem to call for an education which produces ever more specialized technocrats in the future.

But this seeming contradiction can, at least, in part be dissolved. While man's knowledge is expanding and growing and thus specialization becomes inevitable, at the same time the number of connection points to other fields of specialization grows in the process. This means: The division of knowledge - quite similar to the division of labour - requires on all levels constant coordination and communication with any other specialized field in order to keep up with the general evolution of the field as well as of society. Thus, in order to be able to move ahead in your own specialization, you must be able to deepen *and* to transgress the borders of this specialization at the same time. Or, in other words: to be a real good specialist nowadays you must be also a good generalist. You can be really good in your specialized field only if you are also good at having general knowledge of most of the neighbouring fields of specialization. If *knowledge* has "become the basis of value", *imagination* has become the basis of future value. And what else is imagination in our work but the ability to deviate from linear developments and to combine various fields of specialization?

Let me try to summarize.

Whereas one could still believe in the second half of the 19th and in the first half of the 20th century that general forming of a responsible character and an independent personality may be less important than excellency in professionalism and specialization, today's and tomorrow's social demand will not only politically, but also from point of view of economics require both: to enable people to act at the same time as responsible and imaginative individuals *and* as excellent professionals in different even growingly smaller fields of specialization.

The rapid changes in the thus specialized working sphere, however, largely created by a science based information economy and international division of labour (called globalization), these rapid changes occur *during* our working life. No school, no university no apprenticeship can teach in detail today, what we will be required to know tomorrow. Yet people cannot leave for school every six months to catch up. And if we say, we might have to learn for three different jobs in a lifetime, we should not create the impression as if we can interrupt our work life three times to learn from scratch. The truth is different we hardly notice while we work how we move from one learning field to another because we learn on the job. In view of rapidly growing specialization the working place - whether in business, science or education itself- is again, as it was in the earlier ages of the European societies, the most important institution of learning. Of course, we require a lot more formal preparation to be able to learn today continuously *during* our work. But what we then really know to *do*, that we learn in work.

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We have noted that business leaders today look for specialized generalist, as democratic politics is looking for responsible, successful individuals: very slinilar desiderata. As the requirements for successful employees and responsible citizens begin to merge again, the cooperation between the state as provider of educational institutions and business as well as public administration as the *places* for lifelong learning, will have to develop a wide concept of public-private-parnership.

What are the respective tasks? The task on the public side is unquestionable to supply excellent institutions of formal learning on all levels. It is education, which enables people best to deal with the growing challenges of a rapidly changing working environment. And it is formal education, general school, aprenticeship and all levels of higher education, which must lay the ground work. In a recent paper which Chancelor Schröder and Primeminister Blair published together they emphasized that "frist priority must have the investment in human and social capital" and they continued: "It is the governments which have the responsibility to create the conditions which permit each individual to enhance his (or her) qualifications and to make full use of their abilities". "Similar words are being used by the G8 Köln Charter.

We all know that there is not one educational system in the world which meets perfectly these standards: The inherent conflict between general, character-forming education on the one hand and the requirements for highly specialized professional training exist everywhere. Also the conflict between the rigid requirements of practical day-by-day job performance on the one hand and he need for lifelong learning on the other will always exist; compromises are necessary everywhere. And here enterprises in industry and services, but also all administrations have a central task of organization.

To reach constructive compromises, experiences must be shared. There can be no doubt anymore today that we generally increase the enablement of our citizens if we give them a chance for more years in formal school and general education. Of course, there are exceptions from this thesis; There are some personalities who no more benefit from formal school when they reach their teens; there are personalities, who need the challenge of practical life already at an early age. But as a rule the opportunity to attend a challenging and interesting school - two words difficult to fill in practice, I know - during the teens helps the great majority of our youth to prepare for broader responsibilities later on in life. Sufficient school years lay the foundation for a more productive lifelong learning potential and they permit a broader judgement also on the job and better professional opportunities. And this general education must include two prerequisites to deal with modern working life: basic English and basic IT-competence.

Experts, of course, disagree how many years of general education in formal schools are optimal. I believe that the answer depends on what is being offered thereafter. If after 10 years of primary and secondary school youngsters would have to join grown-ups' working life without additional formal training, the 10 year school period is most probably too short. Then the US-American model of 12 school years before college would be preferable. If, however, the years following 10 school years are filled with a learning period really close to a future job, as we handle it for roughly two thirds of the youth in Germany today, the situation is of course, very different.

But I must admit: As well as the German "Dual System" of apprenticeships seems to work, its future also depends upon the flexibility with which it will be handled. Today,more than 350 "specialization" are being trained in a cooperation between business and accompanying state schools, even though only about 10 % of these "specialization" absorb a large part of the apprentices. Whereas the accompanying schools try to supply general knowledge and a future base for continuous learning, those youths who shift to their apprenticeships after 9 or mostly 10 years of school, neverthless have a significantly smaller chance in their working future than many of those who nowadays complete 11, 12 or even 13 years or formal school and then come to apprenticeships, sometimes even with the formal right also to attend universities. Any apprenticeship-system is founded on a close cooperation between the state and the commercial institutions, in Germany also including the unions. But in view of the rapidly changing business world I described above, it is extremely important that such systems give business enough leeway for quick and experimental changes in the practical curriculum. And it is also very important that the pay for the apprentice is not so high that small enterprises away from offering such learning opportunities.

It would, of course, be totally insufficient for an effective and socially fair educational system of the future if one would limit the flow of business and/or industry experience to those areas of education, which are directly, or even exclusively connected with job training. In a modern society, where market forces play a growing role in all fields, it would seem important that the knowledge of the world of business respectively industry (including its service areas) should be made known to everybody early enough if children live in a commercialized world but learn neither about the requirements of entrepreneurship nor about the challenges of a rapidly changing working environment, they are not well prepared for life. This applies even more, of course, to all areas of higher education.

It would be impossible to describe in this introductory note all the possibilities to get the real world of working life and its needs closer to the various levels of formal education. From the organization of meetings between school classes and local business to the inclusion of entrepreneurs on the board of universities: all should be considered. And the rule should be: do not imitate - innovate. Experimental changes, which requires that state or community control is being transferred in part to the institutions of education themselves, are the answer of the future.

A final word on lifelong education: This is well under way in the economy. It is done there day by day on the job. But enterprises also organize such opportunities formally for their personnell. Mostly, however, this is limited to the best who are selected for such extra-opportunities. But public-private-partnerships are here particularly important for those, who are not naturally selected in the firm for such priviledge and yet could benefit greatly from such extra job opportunities. To broaden this base of lifelong learning is an important job for policy-making in education.

If I should answer the three "eternal" questions on education which I posed in the beginning I would say:

What we need today is that all formal institutions of education get again closer to life and that means also to the realities of the working world. But that in order to achieve that goal, we must significantly improve the character forming elements also of formal education. Young people have to learn in school to accept and bear responsibilities, and that means also risks. They should more frequently operate in teams and team sports - sponsored perhaps by local business.

What we need for tomorrow Is a highly flexible system of education, giving the individual institution more leeway for decisions and variations within the general direction. Because even though the challenges of the future are forseeable, we never have enough experience to know how to meet them best. Only experience will tell.

We know: The best chance for the future in a globalized and digital world is to create *learning organizations*. And this applies probably to no other organization as much as it applies to the system of education itself.

The major systems of education in the world today root in Europe's education history. The task today is that tomorrow Europe's world of education will be again a model for others to admire.

STUDIA UNIVERSITATIS BABEŞ-BOLYAI, STUDIA EUROPAEA, XLIII, 1-2, 1998

I. POLITICS, POLICIES AND LAW

LES ATTRIBUTIONS DU PARLEMENT EUROPEEN

CARMEN LAZĂR

RÉSUMÉ *A la différence d'un Etat, fût-il national ou non, dans lequel le Parlement représente l'organe législatif suprême ou du moins principal grâce à sa légitimité démocratique - il est élu par suffrage universel direct -, le Parlement Européen n'a pas les mêmes pouvoirs bien qu'ayant la même légitimité démocratique. Cela est dû à la structure spécifique et à l'origine de toute organisation internationale , elles étant créées par des traités conclus par les exécutifs des Etats, ce qui fait que le rôle principal de décision est détenu par l'organe composé des membres de leurs gouvernements. Le Parlement Européen a quand même des pouvoirs législatifs mais limités, exercés conjointement avec le Conseil et dans quelques cas (procédure de codécision et procédure budgétaire); du reste, il est seulement associé au processus de prise de décision par le biais de la consultation, de l'avis conforme et de la procédure de coopération, la dernière renforçant le rôle du Parlement.*

En dépit de son appellation, le Parlement Européen n'est pas du tout l'organe législatif suprême ou au moins principal des Communautés Européennes et de l'Union Européenne, plus précisément ces attributions législatives ne sont pas les plus importantes de ses attributions et datent depuis peu de temps.

Si on considère l'adoption du budget comme une compétence de ce type - et on devrait la considérer ainsi -, alors le Parlement Européen a reçu en 1975 le droit d'adopter le budget communautaire[1]; il est vrai qu'il n'en est pas le seul auteur, les pouvoirs se partageant entre lui et le Conseil: le Parlement a le dernier mot concernant les dépenses non-obligatoires, le Conseil concernant les dépenses obligatoires (imposées par les traités)[2]. Mais le Parlement peut aussi rejeter le budget - ce qui a comme effet la présentation d'un autre[3] - et, de tout façon, le budget émane formellement de lui.

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[1] J.V. Louis et D. Waelbroeck, "Le Parlement Européen", Editions de l'Université de Bruxelles, Bruxelles, 1989, p.39-40.

[2] J. Boulouis, "Droit institutionnel de l'Union Européenne et des Communautés Européennes", Ed.Montchrestien, Paris, 1995, p.185-186.

[3] *Ibidem.*

A l'exception du budget, le Parlement n'a plus eu d'autres attributions législatives jusqu'à l'Acte Unique de 1987; il était seulement associé à ce processus par le biais de la consultation, celle-ci aboutissant à un avis facultatif[4]. L'Acte Unique a introduit la coopération et l'avis conforme. La première ne peut pas être considérée quand même plus qu'une autre modalité d'associer le Parlement au processus décisionnel, du moment que celui-ci n'a pas le dernier mot. La procédure se déroule de la façon suivante: après avoir reçu la proposition préalable de la part de la Commission et après avoir consulté le Parlement, le Conseil adopte une "position commune"[5] qu'il transmet au Parlement; si celui-ci l'approuve telle quelle ou ne s'en prononce pas, la "position commune" est considérée adoptée et devient un acte juridique. L'approbation avec des amendements a comme effet l'obligation de la Commission de les transmettre au Conseil[6], celui-ci en décidant selon les règles habituelles de quorum (donc en fonction de l'attitude de la Commission envers les amendements)[7]. Enfin, le rejet de la part du Parlement entraîne la nécessité de l'unanimité au sein du Conseil si celui-ci veut enteriner sa "position commune". Donc, le pouvoir du Parlement est similaire à un veto suspensif[8] auquel on peut passer outre par un quorum plus élevé que d'habitude.

L'avis conforme peut être assimilé à un veto décisif[9], le Parlement bloquant par un avis négatif le processus de prise de décision. Ceci regardait au début les accords d'association et les accords d'adhésion, depuis le Traité de Maastricht se sont ajoutés: les accords ayant des conséquences financières importantes, les accords introduisant la procédure de coopération et ceux modifiant des actes adoptés par la procédure de codécision, des mesures concernant la libre circulation des personnes, l'adoption d'une procédure électorale uniforme pour l'élection du Parlement, la modification du Système européen des banques centrales, des mesures concernant les Fonds structurels et le Fonds de cohésion[10]. La procedure de codécision demeure l'expression la plus importante du pouvoir législatif du Parlement, même si ce pouvoir s'exerce conjointement avec le Conseil et dans peu de cas. Elle a été introduite par le Traité de Maastricht, soucieux de combler le déficit démocratique dont on accusait si souvent l'Union Européenne[11]; le Parlement lui-même avait demandé plusieurs fois qu'on révise les traités en ce sens, son rôle étant considéré en déséquilibre avec la légitimité qu'il détenait du fait de son élection par suffrage universel

[4] Ph.Manin, "Les Communautés Européennes, l'Union Européenne", Ed.Pedone, Paris, 1993, p.181.

[5] J. de Ruyt, "L'Acte Unique Européen", Ed. de l'Université de Bruxelles, Bruxelles, 1989, p.128.

[6] I d e m, p.131.

[7] I d e m, p.131-132.

[8] Ph.Manin, *op. cit.*, p.182-183.

[9] Y.Doutriaux, "Le Traité sur l'Union Européenne", Ed.Armand Colin, Paris, 1992, p.168.

[10] I d e m, p.173-174.

[11] J.V.Louis et D.Waelbroeck, *op. cit.*, p.87-88 et 327-329.

direct[12]. Finalement, le déficit n'a pas été comblé de manière très satisfaisante: on est loin d'avoir attribué au Parlement le rôle qu'il a dans tout Etat démocratique - bien qu'en déclin -, c'est-à-dire celui de législateur sinon unique du moins principal et en tout cas l'exerçant seul. On n'a pas voulu enlever ce rôle au Conseil, ce dernier étant jugé l'expression des Etats souverains[13]. En même temps, la procédure de codécision est lourde et compliquée: après la proposition préalable de la Commission, la consultation du Parlement et l'adoption d'une "position commune" du Conseil, celui-ci la transmet au Parlement qui peut l'approuver expressément ou ne pas se prononcer sur elle. Jusqu'ici il n'y a pas de différence avec la procédure de coopération. Si le Parlement propose des amendements - que la Commission est obligée de présenter au Conseil[14] - et ceux-ci ne sont pas acceptés par le Conseil, et également si le Parlement rejette la "position commune" du Conseil, alors s'ouvre la phase de conciliation par le biais d'un Comité de conciliation composé des membres du Conseil et d'un nombre égal de membres du Parlement. Le Comité a la tâche d'élaborer un projet commun dans un certain délai[15], projet qui sera à nouveau soumis aux deux institutions; si une d'elles le rejette, la procédure est définitivement close. Au cas où la conciliation n'aboutit pas à un tel projet, le Conseil a la possibilité de reconfirmer sa "position commune" initiale[16]; s'il le fait, le Parlement devra se prononcer encore une fois sur elle en l'approuvant ou en la rejetant, sans pouvoir apporter encore une fois des amendements. L'approbation transforme en acte la "position commune", le rejet met fin à la procédure de même que si le Conseil n'en fait rien[17].

Les actes adoptés par cette procédure s'appellent des "actes du Conseil et du Parlement"[18].

On remarque la diversité des modalités d'association du Parlement au processus décisionnel, mais les attributions législatives proprement dites sont limitées. On attend beaucoup plus du Traité d'Amsterdam, les propositions faites à la Conférence intergouvernementale en ce sens étant très hardies: que le Conseil devienne une chambre du Parlement - la chambre des Etats, comme dans les structures de type fédéral - et que celui-ci ait, donc, un rôle législatif complet. Mais il ne faut pas s'attendre à un résultat trop spectaculeux, les réticences des Etats envers une structure qui serait trop proche du fédéralisme étant encore grandes.

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[12] J. de Ruyt, *op. cit.*, p.133.

[13] I d e m, p.135-136

[14] I d e m, p.131; J.V.Louis et D.Waelbroeck, *op. cit.*, p.75

[15] J.Boulouis, *op. cit.*, p.159

[16] *Ibidem.*

[17] Ph.Manin, *op. cit.*, p.183

[18] *Ibidem.*

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STUDIA UNIVERSITATIS BABEŞ-BOLYAI, STUDIA EUROPAEA, XLIII, 1-2, 1998

COMPARATIVE POLITICAL SYSTEMS IN TERMS OF POLITICS, GOVERNMENT AND LAW

VALENTIN NAUMESCU

ABSTRACT. This paper deals with the concept of polity and its consequences. Generally speaking, the concept of polity refers to politics, government and law. The polity or the public system is the major frame in which individuals and groups agree to solve their problems and differences and try to achieve both their separate and common interests.

The polity's basic functions are to protect societies against foreign enemies, maintain internal order, facilitate the adaptation process to new conditions and, last but not the least, give legitimacy to power relations.

A Famous Definition

The polity refers mainly to the struggle (politics) by power groups in a society to control the public mechanisms such as legislature, government and courts. According to the Laswell's famous formula: *"Who gets what, when and how!"* (Laswell, 1936).

Polities: legitimate and illegitimate

In his masterpiece, "The Politics", Aristotle classifies polities in two main categories: legitimate and illegitimate, depending on the *power relations' type*. Legitimate power is the situation when rulers and ruled population agree on the relationship. A monarchy can be a legitimate form of power, and so can be considered an aristocracy or the "constitutionalism" (government by established law). A monarchy or other system that no longer serves the common interest and moves the accent dramatically from consent to coercion becomes a "tyranny" (illegitimate power).

The reason why polities succeed or fail, argues Aristotle, consists in the nature of the relation between economy and political institutions. He thinks that monarchies and aristocracies are governed *by and for wealthy people*, while democracies are governed *by and for the poor*. The best and the most durable form of polity, according to Aristotle, is constitutionalism, w*hich represents government by middle-level property groups.*

The wealthy and the poor tend to become radical (extremist) and rules in their own interests, so the best polity belongs to a large number of relatively equal citizens, moderating and balancing the problems of different groups within society.

As we all know today, the historic basis of American democracy had the same "center of gravity": a large mass of small property owners and middle income earners.

Weber's Types of Authority

Max Weber developed a slightly different theory of legitimate power than Aristotle, that it is frequently used today in sociology and political science.

Weber refers to three types of authority:

a) *Traditional* authority, when a static agrarian society is ruled according to customary, informal principles (age, birth, race, religion, sex). Traditional rulers have power because they represent the "status-quo" that have always been.

b) *Charismatic* authority, where power belongs to individuals whose personal qualities attract followers. This form of power is essentially emotional and appears in disorder, crisis or changing societies and has usually a short life.

c) *Rational legal* authority, when political and social problems are tackled rationally and legally by individuals who reach positions of decision through a selection process based on achievement criteria.

Parliamentary and Presidential Systems

Both systems are forms of *representative government*. In the United States, the representative government took the form of a presidential system, while the parliamentary one is settled in the United Kingdom, Canada and most of Europe.

Under the parliamentary system, electoral districts choose among candidates representing political parties. The result is a law –making body. The party (coalition) which gained the majority forms a government that can use its majority to promote laws.

The American presidential system separates better executive and legislative functions, because the President and the Congress are elected separately. The result is often a more complex political formula, where the President and the Congress can represent different political parties. In this case, the country will be ruled by a mix of economic and social interests (Rossides, 1990).

The American polity is further complicated by its federal nature. Though the constitution has a clear function for central government, the 50 states also perform significant political and legal functions.

Comparative Legal Systems

The legal system refers to a special body of reglementations, rules and laws destined to uphold or realize a variety of social purposes. "Law serves to integrate society by establishing public order and by maintaing rights and duties. It also facilitates interaction between diverse groups by enforcing rights. Law expresses a society's moral and ethical ideals and confers legitimacy on the holders of power insofar as it seems to pinpoint responsibilities and provide some measure of benefits to all" (Rossides, 1990).

In pre-modern society, the legal system was based on a *consensus* about the world. As we know, law and religion, law and morality, law and philosophy were not well separated.

Durkheim explained that law in modern societies no longer enforces consensus (mechanical solidarity) but have to restore rights and interests *(organic solidarity).* Law also reflects a society's level of industrialization and the route it took toward industrialization. "Western societies, for example, developed for over a long period of time and experienced a protracted struggle among property groups, workers, and minorities… In contrast, Japan's development was imposed from above and its people and culture remained homogenous- in consequence there was little need to develop elaborate legal solutions to problems of social integration and adjustment" (Rossides, 1990).

Three main legal systems were described among the developed countries (see Dair and Brierly, 1978):

1. *Romano-Germanic Law*- following Roman Law, continental European countries that tried to establish an integrated, comprehensive code of law based on legal principles;
2. *Common Law*- emerging in England and spreading to the United States and other former British colonies. The law in these countries is thought to be the result of individual court decisions.
3. *Socialist Law*-developed in the former USSR and in its "satellites", in order to promote a socialist order. This system didn't accept anytime the "bourgeois" concept of ownership (property) and also refused "the sharp distinction made in Western law between private and public sphere or between individual and society" (Rossides, 1990).

Political culture and subcultures

In studying any political system, we need to know its *underlying propensities* as well as its actual performance over a given period of time. "Political culture consists of attitudes, beliefs, values and skills which are current in an entire population, as well as those special propensities and patterns which may be found within separate parts of the population". (Almond and Powell, 1966). Regional and ethnic groups or even socio-professional categories within society may have

special propensities, concentrated on particular subcultures. These may be traditions and current attitudes reflected in different roles, structures and subsystems of the political system.

Conclusions

The political system includes not only public institutions such as legislatures, courts and administrative agencies, but *all structures in their political aspects* (parties, interest groups, media of communication). The political system is not only system that makes rules and enforces them, but it also deals with compelling obedience or performance.

According to some famous definitions, we can understand the polity as "*power, rules and authority"* (Dahl, 1963), *"authoritative allocation of values"* (Easton, 1953) or even *"severe deprivations"* (Lasswell and Kaplan, 1950).

Max Weber, in his "Politics as a Vocation" considers that "legitimate force is the thread that runs through the action of the political system … The political authorities, and only they, have some generally accepted right to utilize coercion and command obedience upon it". (Weber, 1946)

All systems in the nature imply the interdependence of their parts and also a boundary of some kind between them and their external environment. If the first dimension is self-evident, the second means that the system must somewhere starts and somewhere stops. In dealing with social systems, of which political ones are only a category, the problem of boundary is not so easy. The political system is made up of the interacting roles of nationals, subjects, voters etc with legislators, bureaucrats and judges. "The same individuals who perform roles in the political system perform roles in other social systems such as the family, the economy, the religious community and the voluntary associations" (Almond and Powell, 1966).

As individuals exposing themselves to political communication (information or desinformation), participating to interest and pressure groups, voting or paying taxes, they shift from non-political to political roles. "One might say that on election day as citizens leave their farms, their plants and their offices to go to the polling places, they are crossing the boundary from the economy to the politics" (Almond and Powell, 1966).

During wartime the boundaries become greatly extended, because of military recruitments, business severe regulations and internal security measures. During election process, the boundaries are again expanding due to the fact that all voters become politicians for one day. With the return to normal conditions, the frontiers of the political system are rolling back.

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STUDIA UNIVERSITATIS BABEŞ-BOLYAI, STUDIA EUROPAEA, XLIII, 1-2, 1998

LIMITS OF THE FUNDAMENTAL RIGHTS AND LIBERTIES STIPULATED BY THE EUROPEAN CONVENTION OF HUMAN RIGHTS

MARCELA RAD

ABSTRACT. *The article treats the problem of limiting the fundamental rights and liberties stipulated by the European Convention of human Rights. Concerning the modality of application of the individual's rights, the Convention tends to assure a normative percentage of flexibility, with the aim of interpreting the protected rights in accordance with the cultural values and with the juridical national specific character. In this respect, the Convention contains clauses that permit the states to resort to restraints in the freely exertion of the rights, in formulating reserves or interpretative declarations and even in the derogation from the Convention's provisions under special circumstances. The state's interference in the Convention's application is not absolute, but is supposed to the European juridical control.*

The European Convention of Human Rights within the European Council foresees common rules and standards concerning the fundamental rights and liberties, which have to be guaranteed by the states- parties at the treaty to each person under their jurisdiction. But, the concrete application of the conventional provisions is left at the national authorities' will, whose task is to reconcile between the European exigencies and the realities specific to each country. In this respect, the Convention enables the states to particularize the provisions of the Convention operating restrictions in the rights exertion, formulating interpretative reserves and statements or even by almost entirely suspending the applicability of the Convention in exceptional cases.

1). The rights and liberties protected by the Convention can be restrained under certain conditions imposed by the necessity of protecting some values and interests that are related to the national public order and to the prevention of right abuse. The Convention stipulates two forms of interference:

a. within the rights' content
b. in the rights practice.

The first category of restraints is formulated in precise terms, together with the statement of some rights in the content of the Convention. For example, art. 2 of the Convention, after asserting the right to life, presents imitatively the exceptions, the concrete cases where the resorting to force which has as a presumptive effect on a person's life suppression is authorized, only if such measure is absolutely necessary and according to the viewed goal. Thus, the breach of the right to life is not incriminated when the resorting to force views the

defense of any person against illegal violence. In this case the legitimate defense is authorized under the circumstances of a direct and imminent violence, the murdering of the aggressor being the only way to save the victim's life. The resorting to force is also permitted in the case of a legal apprehension or to stop one person's escape. Also it is admitted for the legal repression of a revolt and insurrection which wants to overthrow the democratic order of government. Another example is that of article 4 of the Convention, where, after the statement of the individual right of not being kept in slavery or servitude and of not being submitted to forced or compulsory labor, are presented the exceptions, respectively the activities which are not considered "forced or compulsory labor". Art. 5 of the Convention, which protects the persons' right to liberty and safety, especially stipulates the cases where a measure depriving of liberty can be disposed by the national authorities of the state without being considered that it would affect the stated right.

Any exception of the state from the especially provided in the mentioned article exceptions is considered an infringement of the rights protected by the Convention.

The second category of restraints can be found in the provisions that provide a larger power of intervention from the part of the public authorities of the state, in exerting the fundamental rights and liberties. The purpose why the state was allowed this "percentage of appreciation" while applying the rights written in the Convention is that of putting an end to the abusive exerting of these rights, which can endanger the values of a democratic society. But the state's freedom of interfering with the freely exerting of certain rights is not absolute, unlimited. The institutions in Strasbourg are authorized to exert the European control of the national measures of restriction, under three aspects: that of legality, of finality and of the necessity of these.

Any restrictive measure concerning the exerting of a right guaranteed by the Convention, must have, necessarily, a legal base in the national legislation of the state. In order to be legal, it is thus imposed, that the restraining action be based on an internal right rule. The judiciary analyze made by the European institutions supposes, in the first place, the investigation of the internal legal base pre-existing the right's restriction. It has no relevance if it is about a law or of any other type of internal rule, or of "common law". It is important that the rule be accessible to the individual, meaning that this should dispose of sufficient information on the content and concrete applicability of the law. Another condition of the imitative measure legality is that the law justifying the rights' restriction is in force at that moment in that state.

While exerting the international control, the European institutions also pronounce themselves concerning the concordance of the restrictive measure with the invoked finality of the national authorities. The limitation of the action sphere of a right must correspond to a legitimate aim, that is, to have in view the protection of some fields considered defining for a democratic society, as: national security and safety, economical stability and prosperity, the prevention of infringements, health and morality, the judicial system's authority and impartiality, the rights and liberties of other individuals, etc. The rights and liberties accompanied by such restrictive

clauses are stipulated in the European Convention of Human Rights in articles 8-11: the right to respect the private and family life, the right of thinking, consciousness and religion, the right of free expression and of peaceful meeting and association. The national interests are considered- in these cases- to have priority compared to the European ones. Like this, a good-faith presumption is created in the favor of the "national judge" who is the one who knows best the national realities and needs. So, like that, the overthrowing of this presumption is the task of the individual, by the evidence shown to the European instances.

The relevance of the restriction is also appreciated according to the measure in which this corresponds to necessity in a democratic society, or is justified by the public interest, being imposed by an urgent social need. In achieving this appreciation, the European Court is resorting to the "proportionality technique", which represents a juridical technique instrument used in order to identify the elements of equilibrium between the "percentage of appreciation" of the relevant European states and standards. Thus, the European control has, as objective the evaluation of the "adjusting" degree between the foreseen means for restraining the right in cause and the viewed legitimate objective.

To be in accordance with the provisions of the Convention, the restrictive measure has to fulfil cumulated the three mentioned conditions.

The examining of the restrictions are made also according to the provisions of art.17 and 18 of the Convention, where it is stipulated that the provisions of the treaty cannot be interpreted in the sense of justifying one state, a group or an individual to develop activities that have in view to destroy the recognized rights or to limit more these rights than those stipulated by the Convention (art.17). Also, is not allowed to use the restrictions in other purposes than these stipulated in the Convention (art.18).

Example.

*In the case **Lingens against Austria**, the European Court pronounced itself in connection with a measure restraining the right of free expression., guaranteed by art.10 of the Convention. In this respect, the journalist P.M. Lingens publishes two critical articles addressed to a Federal Counselor, who subsequently calls him in court for press defamation, the journalist being obliged to pay a fine. The Court appreciates "the interference of the public authorities" in the freely exerting of the right under the three aspects: that of legality, of finality and of necessity, seeing that the first two conditions are fulfilled. The interference was stipulated by the law (Penal Code) and the viewing of a legitimate purpose by the intermeddle of art.10 par. 2 of the Convention (the protection of the others' reputation or rights). Concerning the proportionality of the sanction with a viewed legitimate purpose, it remembers of the essential character of the freedom of expression in a democratic society which is valid also for the information and ideas that shock and disturb, underlining the important role of the press in communicating information concerning the political and of general interest problems. The Court considers that the limits of the admissible critiques have to be larger for a political man than for a simple individual, so that the penalty applied to*

Mr. Lingens should constitute a censorship, which hinders the function of information, and control that the press must have. The Court concludes that the restrictive measure was not necessary in a democratic society, being a breach of the right to the freedom of expression.

2). As any multilateral treaty, the Convention gives to the states-parties, the possibility of formulating some interpretative reserves and statements, by which they can divert from the obligation of total application of the contractual provisions in their internal order. The provision of such clause permits a large adherence of the Convention's states because it stimulates also those states whose internal legislation is not in fully accordance with the European conventional norms at the moment of ratifying the treaty. The compatibility of the national legislation with the Convention's provisions implies the giving up from the part of the states of the initially formulated reserves.

The reserve defined in the Vien Convention concerning the treaties right in 1969 of being a unilateral declaration of a state made on the occasion of signing, ratifying or adhering to a treaty, by which the state intends to exclude or modify the juridical effect of some provisions of the treaty concerning their applicability on the territory of that state.

By trying to define the juridical nature of the interpretative declarations, the European Commission appreciated, in the Temeltasch deal (the Commission's Report from 05.03.1982), that, if one state formulates a declaration and presents it as condition of its consent expression to be connected by the Convention, the declaration having as purpose the exclusion or the modifying of the juridical effects of some conventional provisions, this is going to be assimilated to a reserve, in the sense of art.64 in the Convention. In similar terms the European Court has pronounced itself, in the Belilos against Switzerland affair, by its Decision in 29.04.1988, specifying that, "in order to see the juridical nature of a declaration, we have to look behind its title and to show interest more in the circumscription of its material content." In this case, the Swiss State understood to subtract some of the categories of litigation out of the incidence of art.6 par.1 of the Convention (the right to an equitable process) and to assure itself against an interpretation, too large in its opinion, of this provision.

So that a reserve formulated by the state is admissible, this has to fulfil two conditions, according to art.64 of the Convention:

a) The reserve be determined by the existence of an internal law, in force, which is not in conformity to the Convention; the issuance of a reserve supposing a short exposure of the law in cause, which "should constitute in the same time an element of evidence and also a factor of juridical security". (the case Belilos against Switzerland)

b) The reserve should not have a general character, that is it should not be drawn up in too vague or large terms so that the precise applicability sphere of it should not be determined.The reserve is formulated concerning a concrete provision of the Convention.

A state can emit the following types of reserves at the Convention: reserves *ratione temporis,* reserves *ratione loci,* reserves concerning the provisions that the state rejects, contests or defines in its own way and reserves that have in view the limitation of the European institutions competencies of human rights protection. For example, Turkey, accepting art. 25 of the Convention (the right of individual recourse) restrained the role of the European Commission, by formulating a *ratione loci* reserve: "Admitting that the right of individual recourse refers only to the petitions that claim actions or omissions of the Turkish public authorities, committed within the states frontiers, or in the territories where the Turkish Republic Constitution" is applied. In addition, the Turkish State makes allusion to its own Constitution for the interpretation of several conventional provisions. In the majority of the cases, the reserves have a provisional character, the states giving up them while shaping their national legislation to the European standards.

3). Another way of limiting the rights and liberties comprised in the Convention is that of derogation. The first paragraph of the art.15 of the Convention specifies the field of applicability of the derogation and the conditions under which it can be disposed. The disposals of this article give permission to the states-parties to suspend almost entirely the treaty's effects concerning the respecting of certain principles (Ergec, 1998):

a) The principle of the exceptional circumstances

In the text of the article it is specified that the derogatory measures can be disposed only in case of "war or another public danger that endangers the nation's life". The institutions in Strasbourg have defined this notion as being a crisis situation or an exceptional and imminent danger which takes over the whole population and which constitutes a threat for the organized life of the state community. The Court stated some situations like this in the *case Lawless against Ireland* (Decision from 01.07.1961) and in the *case Ireland against United Kingdom* (The decision from 18.01.1978), considering that the events that took place on the territory of Ireland, where there was a secret army which acted violently and out of the constitutional order, justified the British government to dispose of exceptional measures, suspending the application of the Convention on the basis of art. 15.

b) The principle of proportionality

The derogation measure must have an absolutely necessary character, the possibility of resorting to this measure being restraint to the concrete situation that claims it. *(the Lawless against Ireland case*).

c) The principle of notification

The 3rd paragraph of article no.15 stipulates the obligation of the state which resorts to derogatory measures to fulfil as urgently as possible an informative procedure of the other states parties of the Convention, through the General Secretary of the Europe's Council, concerning the content of the measure and of the term in which it will operate.

d) The principle of conformity of the derogatory measures with the other obligations of the states that come from the international law

Even if they resort to suspension, the Convention's states have to respect the obligations they have assumed on the basis of other international treaties they are part of. It is about those state obligations which come from other treaties concluded in the field of human rights (as for example the ONU) and especially in the humanitarian right.

The second paragraph of article 15 shows the Convention's provisions, which can constitute object of derogation. Even under special circumstances, as those stipulated in this article, the states have to respect a minimum standard of rights and liberties, which assure the very existence of the human individual in a society. It is about the intangible rights, absolute rights, accepted as imperative norms (*jus cogens*) by the international community and which are: the right to life, the right not to be tortured, inhumanly or degradingly treated (Art. 3), the right of not being held in captivity, servitude or to be subjected to forced or compulsory labor (Art 4, par.1) and the right to the non-retroactivity of the penal law (Art. 7). Next to the 4 absolute rights stipulated by the Convention, in art.4 of the 7 Th Protocol of the Convention there is as a non-derogatory right, the right not to be pursued or convicted twice for the same deed. The enumerated rights are common provisions from which it is impossible to derogate, and in other representative international documents regarding the human rights protection: The international Agreement concerning the civil and political rights, adopted within UNO and the American Convention of the human rights. Numerous authors (R. Ergec, 1998) add to this list explicitly non-derogatory rights, a series of rights that they consider implicitly non-derogatory. It is about the rights stipulated by the Convention in art.14, respectively the principle of non-discrimination, at art. 17,18 and60, which refer to the conventional provisions' interpretation and to the application by the states of the restrictions. These conventional provisions don't have an autonomous character, they cannot be applied or invoked independently, but only in connection with other rights protected by the convention. Although out of the Court's practice comes out the granting in the favor of the sates of a percentage of appreciation when disposing of the derogatory measures, the interpretative clauses stipulated by the articles above mentioned fix the purpose and the limits of the applicability of art.15, in the sense of forbidding the embezzling of the rights and liberties and of respecting the democratic order.

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STUDIA UNIVERSITATIS BABEŞ-BOLYAI, STUDIA EUROPAEA, XLIII, 1-2, 1998

ON THE ETHNOLOGICAL AND ANTHROPOLOGICAL TRENDS IN EASTERN AND CENTRAL EUROPE

ALINA CUCEU BRANDA

ABSTRACT. In the process of evaluation of different European Ethnological and Anthropological trends, the contribution of Central and East European countries (especially the ex-communist countries) remained almost unobserved, unnoticed. The old and the more recent volumes of History of Ethnology and Anthropology treat this topic in few words.

The national synthesis of socio-human sciences are limitative, first of all in what concern the framing of trends, ways of thought and also because these are written in the languages of reduced circulation of the Eastern and Central Europe.These languages are spoken by roughly 10-12 millions of inhabitants or less than this cipher (Hungarian, Czech, Slovakian, Serbian, Croatian, Bulgarian, Macedonian, Latvian, Estonian). Only the Romanians and the Polish people were even during the interwar period about 25-30 millions of speakers. But even these languages didn't become approachable for the western specialists.

The few ethnological and anthropological studies, published by East and Central European researchers the last 50 years in famous reviews from Occident, or those published by foreign specialists who performed their fieldwork in this part of the Europe (especially after 1960) did not change the situation. The image of ethnological and anthropological sciences was damaged in this way.

The decades of marxist ideological domination, when the scientifical traditions couldn't continue, were definitely dark in what concern the domains debating the social, structural, cultural, interethnic aspects of rural and urban communities. Even the Sociology was strictly forbidden for a long period of time and, of course, the anthropological approaches.

Another possible explanation for the poor communication between Occident and Eastern and Central Europe may be that of the fluctuation of the languages of large circulation.

Until the 1-st World War, the German language had a central role as language of socio-human sciences. After the War, the significance of this language decreased.

The French and English languages started to be used, due to different traditions.

From a comparative view, the ethnological researches are poor, without an evident impact upon the European science, being marked by the very strong ethnographic and folkloristic traditions of different Schools. Thus, in the slavic countries of the North-Eastern group, the supremacy of the German Ethnological School persists, even if the influence of historical philological trends (the Russian Schools from Sankt-Petersburg, Moscow and Harkow) is also an evidence.

This supremacy is visible in the process of delimitation of the domain through the option for *Volkskunde* - the science of people - in which different branches have an integrated position and, also, in what concern the theoretical vision, methodology and investigation procedures (techniques).

The profound knowledge of the own traditional cultures and the attempts of an exhaustive revaluation of national cultural patrimony were the obsessions of the interwar period reserchers.

In 1919, an *European Bibliography* was published, having as contributors german and Swiss scholars. Beginning with 1920-1930*, Internationale Volkskundliche Bibliographie* integrated the scientifical contributions of Central and East European Countries, where were created scientifical societies, specialized institutes, University Chairs, periodical publications.

The ethnographical and sociographical national schools were directed towards a cumulative and introspective direction (T. Hofer, 1968), opposed in a way to the comparative direction (trend), proposed by the Western Anthropology, which has the obsession of studying the "Cultural Otherness".

Many Western anthropologists, interested in Central and East European topics (Chris Hann, M. Mesnil, K.Verdery,P.Nixon, A. Buckley) noticed that in these countries, the anthropological work was performed by scholars specialized in other socio - human domains - philosophers, historians, sociologists, psychologists and mostly, by ethnographers and folklorists. Their scientific contributions have to be considered by a History of Socio-Cultural anthropology.

Thus, it is compulsory to mention the contribution of *Ethnological School from Cracow, the Sociological School from Bucharest and The ethnographical School from Budapest.* These are enough arguments to prove an image of an unjustly ignored continuity of the regional scientific traditions.

The problems related to a redefining of a New European Ethnology, as distinctive anhropological direction, created during the last decades of the century, was treated by professor M.Mesnil in her recent book *The Ethnologist between Snake and Dragon.* It is a book of great interest, especially in the perspective of a necessary critical reevaluation of some anhropological trends from Central and Eastern Europe.

The achievements of the sociological and ethnographic Schools from Central and Eastern Europe were based on ideological projects of substantiation of national identities (the 19-th century and at the beginning of this century).

The way was that of sustaining the differences and distinction from Otherness and the attempt to motivate historically this approach and then, to legitimate it ideologically.

But we don't have to forget that, in the framework of different nationalisms of the 19-th century, the comparative cultural studies were also published (*Sankt-Petersburg* and *Moscow*). It is compulsory to mention the contributions of *D.Nikolaevici, A. Veselowski); Lazar Saineanu* and *B. P. Hasdeu - in Romania; Ian Karlowicz*, the founder of modern anthropological science and Rector of Polish Comission for Ethnology and Anthropology.

A veritable comparative trend started to assert in Austria (Viena), around The University and The Museum of Ethnology. In fact, this is the only one mentioned by the European Histories of Ethnology and Anthropology. The very beginnings of this historical-cultural trend is related to the name of the ethnographer M. Haberlandt, the researcher of the ancient indo-european forms of culture of the nations which belonged to *The Habsburgical Empire*.

Wilhelm Schmidt, Artur Haberlandt, Leopold Schmidt and Mathias Friedwagner were other names belonging to this school. Their contributions have regional comparative characteristics.

The interest for ethnographic and sociographic investigations increased and it was manifested also in other University Centres from this part of Europe: Budapest, Prague, Bratislava, Brno, Zagreb.

In the framework of this trend *Kulturhistorische Schule*, Fritz Graebner and Wilhelm Schmidt refused the theories of evolutionism in anthropology. They took over some some concepts from Ratzel's work, introducing the concept of *Kulturkreis* which is epistemological similar to that of *cultural area,*used by Clark Wissler. The theoretical vision and the comparative approach of the works, elaborated in the framework of Austrian School had to produce strong impulses and promises.The individual points of view demonstrated the importance of the empirical investigation in the process of historical reconstruction of the cultures.

The German and Austrian Anthropological schools influenced the scientifical developments from Polland, Czech Republic, Yugoslavia, Hungary and Bulgaria and also the creation and consolidation of some research institutes and of some specialized University chairs.French, Swiss, Scandinavian models were prefered in some cases.

Astra from Transylvania (1861), *The Romanian Academical Society* (1866) from Bucharest, *The Ethnological and Anthropological Comission* of Academy of Science from Cracow(1874), *The Hungarian Ethnographic Society* (1890), *The Ethnological Society* (1895), other Institutes from Lvov, The Baltic States, launched ambitious programs of systematic investigation of their own traditional cultures and of reference to neighbouring or related people.

Step by step the ethnology, sociology, anthropology try to define and limit their domains, beginning the process of institutionalizing, of perfecting the methodology and techniques of investigation.

For the Central and East European specialists, involved in different polemics concerning the influence of some cultures upon other cultures, the "originalities" and "striking roots" in the past - were a necessary changing of paradigm through promoting "a vigurous science of oral cultures of our societies".

On the other hand, the unity of the approach and the project of a more general anthropology have to be remarked. This suggested General Anthropology was defined as a general science of the human-being, through which the diferential deviations and similarities can be noticed.

We have to mention in this context, the contributions of The Sociological School from Bucharest. The approaches of the Sociological School from Bucharest are defined by some basic characteristics:

1) The interdisciplinarity and the multi-methodological characteristics of the researches. These were done by complex teams, including specialists in different domains.
2) The intensive concentration and multiple instrumented research upon a social unit (family, farm, village, city, district) or upon some distinctive social phenomena. The perspective was functionalist, integralist, vitalist.
3) The complex study of the internal social structures of the approached unit, related to the social processes, manifestations,viewed in their internal and external functions and correlations
4) The attempt to relevate the most important information, the significance and internal functionality of the phenomena in order to achieve a global research.
5) The joining of quantitative and qualitative methods, in a participative observation
6) The use of the most modern procedures of collecting data (the phonograph, cameras, the sociological and anthropological films).

After 23 years of monographic investigations, the destiny of this School was brutally interrupted. The Institute for Social Science was abolished in 1948 and any sociological "performance" (sociology as integrative science) were forbidden for almost 20 years.

The reviews *Arhiva pentru Stiinta si Reforma Sociala*, *Romanian Sociology*, The *Review of the Social Institute Banat-Crisana* and the volumes *The Library of Sociology*, *Studies and Researches* were not published any more.
A similar destiny had *The Ethnological School* from Cluj and the *School from Bucharest*(including their publications).

The specialists grown up in the interwar period found their refugee in some Institutes, desired by the Totalitarian political force. In some cases, they restarted their individual projects in The Institute for Linguistics, Ethnography and Folklore, History, Geography, Art History.

The Institute for Sociology and some Social Research Centres in Cluj, Timisoara, Sibiu, Iasi were created after 1965 and some of the Romanian Universities introduced optional courses of Sociology and Cultural and Social Anthropology.

The Centre for Anthropological Researches initiated other investigations than those of phisical anthropology and archeological investigations.

After 1972, when the contacts with the foreign ethnologists interested in Eastern and Central Europe were taken back, projects concerning a concrete investigation of social values revived. These are, usually, projects of concrete

investigations of the values in historical consituted social communities. The perspective is, of course, interdisciplinar. The coordinators of these projects - performed in Berevoiesti and Campulung Muscel, involving 17 rural places and 17 urban places from different historical districts - were social anthropologists. The Comission for Ethnology and Anthropology is reactivated and more than 80 studies and articles were published. The scientific basic purpose is to achieve an *Axiologic National Atlas* which has to emphasize the constitutive elements of Romanian people, how is this culture articulated in European and Universal context, the aspects of unity and diversity and so on.

It is necessary to notice the situation of ethnological and anthropological sciences after 1989. We have to mention, in this respect, that some Romanian Universities proposed courses with anthropological topics. These are more diverse, having better, more informed contents. Westerner scholars, interested in Romanian topics, (related either to the traditional culture or the problems of transition) intensified their fieldwork here and became involved in the process of teaching at the different Universities, as visitor professors. This unexperienced exchange (till nowadays) seems to be profitable. We have to add that this process of refreshing the anthropological life is institutionalized. Two years ago, *A Romanian Society for Cultural Anthropology* was created. The scientifical program of this society pleads for an actual, contemporary style of doing anthropology in Romania.

(paper presented at the Congress Cultura Europea, Pamplona, Spain, 1998)

STUDIA UNIVERSITATIS BABEŞ-BOLYAI, STUDIA EUROPAEA, XLIII, 1-2, 1998

POLITICAL ASPECTS OF THE AMERICAN "WORKFARE"

VALENTIN NAUMESCU

ABSTRACT. When even a democrat president says: "We have to end welfare as a way of life" (Clinton, 1995) it is obvious that America is committed to stop social benefits without work.

The concept of Workfare, contrasting with the traditional Keynesian Welfare State established in the postwar Europe, is trying to find reasonable way in which both the State and the Citizens have rights and responsibilities in order to promote acceptable standards of life. This paper deals with the political dimension of the Workfare System, regarding its consequences in terms of politics, electoral behaviour and public resistance.

New political trends, old economic assumptions

The work-enforcement trends of New-Right policy are often associated with a *more conservative political climate* in the American and British past decades. The era of classic economic theory seems to be back. After 1980 the conservative regimes of Ronald Reagan and Margaret Thatcher moved the accent in social policy from universalistic perspectives of Keynesian Welfare State to a selective approach, based on efficiency, financial constraints and work efforts. To understand these trends we have to look back, before 1980.

In the 1960s and 1970s, two American presidents made proposals for liberalizing* the welfare system. Richard Nixon and its Family Assistance Plan (FAP) than Jimmy Carter and the Program for Better Jobs and Income (BPJI) raised welfare benefits and extended coverage. After 1980, with conservative presidents in office and budget in deficit, this kind of programmes became unrealistic. The politics of welfare was turning on the right. Now many federal politicians asserted that the "*poor might need aid, but they should do more to earn it, above all by working"* (Mead, 1997). Although such approaches seem to affect seriously the interests of the poor, the main reason why work is still not fully enforced does not represent the resistance among the poor-this is the conclusion that emerged from the research program conducted by professor Lawrence Mead in the mid 1990s. "The popular attitude on poverty is receptive to enforcement. The voters typically want to help the needy, but they also oppose the abuses that are

* In this paper, we use "liberalism" in the American perspective, meaning a progressist and left-wing policy.

associated with welfare" (Mead, 1997). The *social policy's dilemma* could be defined in the following way: abolishing or time restricting welfare benefits affects the humanist principle of helping those who are needy, but increasing transfers offers the opportunity for abuses and non-work. "*Work requirements within welfare*" seems to be the most efficient formula, although this is quite difficult to implement.

Political aspects raised by welfare are connected with the problem of dependency and the abuses temptations, of which the most important is non-work. For instance, many unemployed and retired people left the bureaucracy and joined businesses, continuing to receive subsidies from Washington. But this is a happy case: the "middle-class welfare" has done something to earn social benefits. They are still working or at least they have worked. They can claim an economic function. Generally speaking, if welfare clients are receiving their benefits proving their own efforts, social programmes would become more respectable and aids to needy persons and their families would also become more popular.

"In the public mind, to have the recipients contribute to society in some way is much more important than where their support comes from. For most people in America, helping oneself and getting help from government are not opposed but go together" (Mead, 1997). The middle class justifies its social benefits on the argument that they deserve it. On the other hand, "the poor get only the scraps from the government's table, primarily because they unearned. If poor adults work at higher levels, they would qualify for more support from both the private and the public sectors than they do now"-we consider this conclusion of Mead's studies as the most relevant approach of New-Right policy, in the field of welfare debates.

Resistance to Enforcement

The political resistance to work enforcement strategy comes rather from elites than from poor persons, because the politicians give to the poverty problem a much more ideological interpretation than the public. The American national debate was always about federal spending and economic interventions and the usual controversy between Democrats and Republicans is focused on the problem of doing "more" or "less" for people through public programmes.

Social policy analysts, most of whom are liberal economists, still assume that people who fail in private business deserve help from the federal government. Liberals want government to offer people new opportunities. Conservatives want less government expenditures so that the economy can grow faster. In the past decades, first one party and than the other have tried a policy of work enforcement, but never both together. After 1980, Republicans tried to use federal rules and reglementations in order to require work within welfare, strengthening local law enforcement, and raising standards in schools. After 1992, many conservatives-now in opposition-were against the democrat version of reform that reduced aid to some categories of need.

Clinton administration proposed both to require and to guarantee work, but it was surprising to see a democrat president speaking about work enforcement. Some Democrats rejected in the Congress the "Clinton project" of welfare reforms.

Regarding the public support, the majority seems to become more and more attached to the idea of work enforcement. The American middle class wants order restored in big cities and in electoral terms this behavior encourages the Republicans.

Has the State the Right to Enforce Values?

The issue of work enforcement has also an echo in terms of political philosophy. Welfare disputes are often focused on "values", with conservatives speaking about work ethic and liberaly resisting. But liberals also regret non-work and crime. *The real devision is over the enforcement of values through public authority or not.* "Conservatives would have government tell the poor how to live, whereas liberals want to offer them only the chance to get ahead" (Mead, 1997). The underlined issue is not society in general, as much as the moral responsibility of the poor and the question seems to be if to attribute competence of poverty to poor persons themselves is justified or not. Conservatives strongly believe that one who acts rationally in his own interests can overcome any obstacle, while American Liberals abandoned tacitly the individual competence assumption.

Enforcement as a Moderate Policy?

Enforcement policies may seem to be hard line at first sight. In fact *work enforcement strategies and reglementations could take moderate forms, located between anti-government conservatives who want to abolish welfare programmes and liberals who want to rise continuously anti-poverty public expenditures.* "Enforcement also assumes that benefits recipients have the capacity to satisfy the most basic public expectations, such as working, if not to live fully independent lives. To realize a regime in which the dependent reliably do that is the best that anti-poverty policy can achieve" (Mead, 1997).

Obviously, the enforcement solution needs a political class willing to accept and to apply this moderate policy, taking the risk of resisting from both the conservative and the liberal sides. The American black politicians, who possess the veto right to any anti poverty strategy, have to join white politicians in order to strengthen the social integration. Neither dependency nor sufficiency can be abolished in the short run, but *a combination of personal effort and welfare benefits* could improve the social, financial and even moral status of those who are needy.

The essence of work enforcement policy consists in the assumption that needy adults *must work* much more regularly than they do now (see Table 1), because non-work is costly for poor individuals and families also in other than in income terms: it contributes to the deepening of the *culture of poverty*. This is the situation when welfare dependent people don't work and they have stopped even expecting to work, surviving with some welfare benefits. The work enforcement strategy seems to be the way in which poor citizens and the State finally find the rational consensus and the most efficient and fair solution for better standards of life.

Table 1

Employment Status Contrasting Poor and Non-Poor (1991)

% of individuals (age 15 and over)		Poor	Non-poor
Who worked:	At any time	39,8	72,0
	Full year and full time	9,0	45,0
% of family heads			
Who worked:	At any time	50,4	80,5
	Full year and full time	15,8	61,1
% of female family heads			
Who worked:	At any time	42,4	76,1
	Full year and full time	9,5	54,5
% of families with two or more workers		16,8	62,6

Source: *US Department of Commerce, Bureau of the Census, "Poverty in the United States", 1991*
Note: *Full year means at least 50 weeks a year, full time at least 35 hours a week*

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STUDIA UNIVERSITATIS BABEŞ-BOLYAI, STUDIA EUROPAEA, XLIII, 1-2, 1998

TOWARD A NEW STRATEGIC CONCEPT

CIOCOI-POP D. RAREŞ

ABSTRACT. The work is concerned with the development of NATO from the point of view of its strategic concept. The aims of the organization in the period of the Cold War were clearly stated. Once with the fall of communism in Eastern Europe and the disintegration of Soviet Union the question of NATO survival was put. The change of the strategic concept reflects the adaptation of the Organization to the changes in International Society and in European security paradigm.

NATO is the most successful military alliance in history. In more than four decades of confrontation with a powerful, nuclear armed adversary it held together a multinational coalition composed of very different countries, some recently bitter enemies. The Alliance won an outstanding victory without firing a shot.

But the victory didn't cancel the motives and the circumstances that made up this alliance. In Europe the Soviet power disappeared as well as the Marxist ideology this fact being the main reason for the disintegration of the Soviet Union itself. The main successor of the Soviet State, Russia, abandoned this ideology and a lot from the military strength of the Soviet Union. The military forces of Russia are now at 1500 kilometers of Germany and two sovereign states, Poland and Ukraine, none of them being allied with Russia.

Like others military Alliances, NATO was created as response to a threat. The definition of the Alliance's goals made by Lord Ismay, NATO's first secretary-general, is memorable: "to keep the Americans in, the Russians out and the Germans down". In spite of the changes made by the Cold War these goals are still relevant.

The Alliance was created to stand against Soviet Union because in 1949 the Western countries were too weak to resist an invasion. At this moment, Germany, which was the main economic and military power of Europe, was devastated and discredited from political point of view. The alliance wanted to defend itself by Soviet Union and in the same time to control Germany thus protecting Western Europe from both. It was the American membership that made it possible to do both simultaneously; The American presence in Europe enabled NATO to be an instrument of "double containment".

The third purpose, the one regarding Germany, even the less discussed remained a major problem in the politic of post-Cold War European security. NATO was part of the solution to what came to be known, in the twentieth century, as the German problem. German power and ambition, and Europe's inability to deal with

them had disturbed the peace of Europe for 75 years between Prussia's victory over France in 1871 and Hitler's final defeat. The German problem was the cause for two world wars. The Germany's neighbors were unable or unwilling to agree on a role for Germany that was acceptable to the Germans themselves.

After the World War II, the Germany of the Third Reich was reduced in size, its eastern provinces ceded to Poland and Soviet Union. It was also divided in two German states each side occupied by a part of the coalition that defeated Hitler. The western troops protected the Federal Republic of Germany, which have a legitimate democratic government, against threats of the armies of the Warsaw Treaty Organization. The communist troops specially the Soviet ones controlled the German Democratic Republic. This combination made that peace could not be threatened by either of the two German states.

In addition to these measures a third response proved to be more suitable for the German problem: A Germany integrated into an economic and political community of market economy democratic states. Due to the success of this solution the third goal of the Alliance defined by Lord Ismay was not mentioned anymore, at least explicitly.

But the mistrust toward Germany didn't vanish completely. This fact was obvious in 1989 and 1990 when, in the wake of the opening of the Berlin's Wall, the two German states moved toward unification. The leaders of the closest allies of the Western Germany, President François Mitterand of France and Prime Minister Margaret Thacher of Great Britain expressed very clear their doubts regarding the formation of a single German state. Neither was powerful or determined enough to stop this process but each of them express the persisting fear that a larger and more independent Germany would cause trouble in Europe.

In the opinion of the governments of the countries that belong to the Alliance even the others goals that lead to the creation of the Alliance are still valid. The Russia's situation is uncertain; the supposition that Russia won't adopt an aggressive and imperialist policy can not be rejected *ab initio*. For that reason the Western Europe countries are unanimously willing to perpetuate NATO in some form. It is still important to keep an eye on the Russians and a hand-friendly but firm-on the Germans.

Because Germany is a trusted ally and Russia is no more the designated enemy these facts are not said directly; but are said indirectly. In November 1991, NATO agreed at the Rome Summit to adopt a new strategic concept because the functioning one became obsolete due to the major changes that took place once with the fall of communism. The following document has four parts in what concerns the security.

The first, "to provide one indispensable foundation for a stable security environment in Europe"[1], was a general argument for leaving NATO in places a hedge against uncertainty. The next three points were arguments for keeping the Americans in, the Russians out, and the Germans down.

[1] The document is quoted in Edward Mortimer, "In Search of a Unifying Threat", *Financial Times*, December 7, 1994, p. 15.

The second function, "to serve … as a transatlantic forum for allied consultations", referred to the need to keep the United States actively involved in European affairs. The third, "to deter and defend any threat of aggression against the territory of any NATO member state", alluded to the possibility of resurgence of Russian imperial behavior. The fourth function, "to preserve the strategic balance within Europe", referred obliquely to Germany. Europe in this case meant Western Europe. Without the United States, the balance of political power there would tilt sharply toward its largest, richest country-Germany; and whatever Western military and political structure remained would inevitably have a large German component.

The search for insurance against a resurgent Russia is the post-Cold War version of the recurrent and understandable impulse, in the wake of a major European war, to hedge against a renewed threat from the defeated power. Like France after 1815 and Germany after 1918 and 1945, Russia remains potentially the strongest power on the European continent. In nuclear weaponry it is the strongest power. And in spite of all actual difficulties no one could say that its imperial aspirations have been extinguished for all time. After the Cold War as after the previous great European wars, keeping the winning coalition together seemed only prudent.

A distinctive feature of the conflict with the Soviet Union and the post-Cold War period provides an additional incentive for sustaining that coalition in some form: nuclear weapons.

This means that countries that share the European continent with Russia need some means of counterbalancing Russian nuclear might. During the Cold War the United States assumed responsibility for nuclear balancing. While Britain and France also acquired nuclear weapons, it was the American arsenal, not theirs, upon which the nonnuclear countries of Western Europe, in particular Germany, relied for protection.

In the post-Cold War era the United States retains that role by custom and habit as well as by treaty. There is no technical obstacle to the Europeans themselves assuming all of responsibility for their own nuclear protection. The obstacle, rather, is political and has to do with Ismay’s third purpose.

The withdrawal of United States from Europe would lead to a more powerful Germany. Without American forces, the Europeans would have to provide their own defense. In that case, Germany might well calculate, as it did during the Cold War, that British and French nuclear weapons afforded it insufficient protection, and seek to acquire its own nuclear weapons.

The continuation of the status quo for NATO is thus a form of insurance not only against Russia but also against a Germany compelled to conduct an independent security policy.

Until now neither Russia nor Germany offered reasons for concern and it is unlikely that such motives will appear in the future.

The immediate danger in post-Cold War Europe is not agression but rather the rise of circumstances out of wich agression might ultimately emerge. The response required is not deterrence per se but a measure of assurance that new threats are unlikely to arise and will be resisted if they do. The historian and

strategist Michael Howard[2] has drawn a distinction between deterrence and what he calls "reassurance", which he defines as policies and measures that instill confidence in allies so that they can conduct their domestic affairs and foreign policies without feeling intimidated.

It is obvious that after 1991 the Alliance confronted a series of problems that required a new strategic concept.

First task that NATO had to manage was the Golf crisis. The NATO action was determined and prefigured the type of actions in which the Alliance could be involved. A special note has to be done : the determination of Nato's action in Golf could be linked to the stake to be achived- the Kuwait oil reserve. If the Iraq would have kept them it would controled the international oil market.

Bosnia was the site of the alliance's most serious engagement outside the borders of its member states in the wake of the Cold War. It was the place where NATO first saw combat as an alliance. NATO played several roles while the conflict among Serbs, Croats, and Muslims was under way, beginning in 1992. But NATO's Bosnian intervention was hesitant, reluctant, limited, and only modestly successful in reaching the goals that a least some members had initially sought to achive.
Several features particular to the Bosnian conflict complicated NATO's role there. In the period leading up to the war, which was when the cost of containig was lowest, the member of the alliance were preocupied with matters more important to them: the Persian Gulf war and the ongoing disintegration of the Soviet Union. Little high-level NATO attention was available for a conflict in the Balkans. So from 1992 to 1995 the Great Britain, France and United States have not done anything to stop the fighting. Not even the bombardament of the Serb positions that stop the fighting and the deployement of 60000 NATO troops in the area could not make the NATO action to be considered successful.

The Western initiative in Bosnia in 1995 ultimately stem from the conviction that the war was becoming embarrassing, not that it was important. Bosnia was unimportant because the Cold War was over. During the rivalry with the Soviet Union, the NATO countries decidedtheir policies toward Yugoslavia on the basis of their impact on the central conflict in Europe. During the Cold War, therefore, Germany would never acted independently of its allies and on the basis of domestic political considerations, as it did in forcing international recognitio of Croatian independence.

Another issue the Alliance has to deal to was the admission of new members. The arguments brought by NATO officials in favor of the expansion are not fully convincing. First the argument that the membership will strengthen the democracy in Czech Republic, Poland and Hungary is not conclusive for two reasons. The democracy in those countries doesn't seem to be threaten in any way and the years that passed from the adoption of a democratic regime in those countries don't support such an idea. On the other hand a democratic regime is not essential to obtain NATO membership; Spain and Greece had at the moment of their admission undemocratic regimes. Second the argument that the membership

[2] Michael Howard, "Reassurance and Deterrence: Western Defense in 1980s," *Foreign Affairs* 61, no 2 (Winter 1982-83).

will repress an eventually aggressive behavior of those countries is denied by the Turk attack on the Cyprus Greeks, even though the membership to the Alliance contained the conflict.

The most reasonably explanation for NATO expansion is that so the Russian sphere of influence will be reduced. Russia recovered geopolitical quicker than from economic point of view. This can make us conclude that there is the possibility of an aggressive and imperialist Russia.

Regarding the consequences of NATO enlargement we can say that firstly it will create a new line of demarcation in Europe that might deteriorate the stability of the continent due the Russia's reaction to this process. Russia could feel threaten because the military balance is changing in favor of the Alliance and its allies. "Conventional Forces in Europe" treaty established the size of conventional forces necessary for defense when the Central and Eastern European countries were not allied with NATO or Russia. From this point of view the treaty was not respected.

The relationship NATO-Russia is a privileged one being regulated in the "Founding Act on Mutual Relations, Cooperation and Security between NATO and the Russian Federation". This relation is responsible, in great measure, for the peace and stability in Europe. Russia is no longer an enemy but a partner, the cooperation with it is the base for the concept of common security. This concept establishes the amount of conventional forces to a level enough for defense but denying the attack capabilities of an army. These restraints, all intended to convey the assurance that surprise attack is impossible, are called Confidence Building Measures (CBMs). They grew out of a series of East-West negotiations between 1986 and 1992. They began, in 1975, as part of the Helsinki Accords signed that year. A more comprehensive set of CBMs than Helsinki produced was authorized in Stockholm in 1986, paving the way for further measures agreed to at Paris in 1990 and Vienna in 1992.

Because the came into practice of all these treaties depends only on the good will of the signing parties it is necessary to act in such a manner to prevent the non-observance of the treaties. For this reason it is necessary to involve Russia in the European concept of security.

Further more, in adapting itself to the post-Cold War era, NATO has itself become a kind of CBM. In 1991 it established the North Atlantic Cooperation Council (NACC), in which former members of the Warsaw Pact could participate. The NACC's function is the same as the CBMs negotiated under CSCE auspices: to promote transparency.

NATO's Partnership for Peace was established in 1993 for the same purpose. Non-members were invited to work out individual programs of military cooperation with the Atlantic Alliance.

It is also obvious that NACC and PFP, where Russia is member, are promoting political and military stability in Central and Eastern Europe after the fall of Soviet Union.

Due to the major changes which took place since 1991, in order to reach twentyfirst century, NATO needs a new strategic concept. This fact was forseen since the 1997 Madrid Summit.

It is clear that NATO will have to maintain the status quo in order to eliminate uncertainity regarding security relations in Europe. In this respect the most probable kind of actions for the Alliance is out-of area mossions to stop or contain regional conflicts that might bring instability inside the alliance's borders. Another dimenssion of NATO will be the admission of new members if possible. NATO enlargement receives besides the military dimenssion a political one: the alliance becomes an instrument of integration for the Eastern European countries where special military, economic and political criteria have to be meet. The enlargement process has to be done carefuly because restraining the Russia's influence in the region might bring about its hostile reaction. Anyway after the 1997 enlargement it is highly unlikely that Russia will accept another enlargement in the near future.

At last but not at least it has to be mentioned the Alliance's concern regarding the proliferation of nuclear, biologic and chimical weapons. This issue has two aspects. First, it is followed the limitation af production of such weapons and more important the distribution of such weapons.Secondly connected with the problem mentioned above rise the the mobilization of the alliance to respond to the threat caused by the spreading of such weapons.

The position of Great Britain, an important member of the alliance, makes as belive that at 1999 Washington Summit the new strategic concept will maintain the old goals of the Alliance even that they are not said explicitly. The accent will be put on making the legal framework necessary for the out-of-area missions, in respect of international law for the resolution of regional crises capable to afect the alliance in a way or another. The Alliance will become mainly a political forum, necessary for the fulfilment of NATO goal that of being the main actor in achiving the euro-atlantic security.

The 1999 Washington Summit represents a turning point in the existence of the Alliance because offers the reason for it in the twentyfirst century.

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STUDIA UNIVERSITATIS BABEŞ-BOLYAI, STUDIA EUROPAEA, XLIII, 1-2, 1998

PLATONIC HENOLOGY AND CONCEPTUAL CRISIS

ALIN FUMURESCU

ABSTRACT. The following lines start from the premise that most of the crises which "generate" in one way or another modernity (including its last form, that of postmodernism) represent just the concrete manifestation of the impossibility to resolve the platonic "aporia" of the One and the Multiple, highlighted in the *Parmenide*'s dialog. For what comes next we will try to show that:

- not incidentally the logic takes the lead at present;
- none of Plato's "aporia" about the One and the Multiple were solved until now;
- and what is more, only our days these paradoxes were taken to the end; in other words, only at present their flourishing in the concrete starts to bear fruits.

And even more, beyond happiness or unhappiness, the fruits of this fertility cannot be - as long as their seeds wouldn't have been conscious - but of one kind: fruits of wrath.

The conflict in Kosovo stands as a good example.

We are going to deal only with one of the spectacular aspects of the impossibility to solve the platonic "aporia" of the One and the Multiple - that belonging to the political thinking sphere. If negative anallogy was actually excluded from theology, in the modern political thinking it has an almost privileged position. Essentially, the history of the last century may be looked upon as a dramatic confrontation between the positive anallogy and the negative one, and not as a confrontation between the antithesis generated inside each of them.

As regarding the spectacular we referred to, it derives, on the one hand, from the expulsion of any possibility to solve a paradox by a mystical experience, and, on the other hand, from the impossibility to choose one or another alternative, any attempt to of reconciliation being by any means out of question.

Politics as science, consequently, has nothing to do with the empiric. Deprived of factual, its only support remains the concepts. "Indeed, there can not be an immediate, intuitive political piece of knowledge, because politics never shows itself in its originality and innocent nudity. People will object saying it is the same for any scientific knowledge for as much as it aims at general, outrunning the immediate envisagement and the inborn perception of reality. Though, the difference remains untouched, because there can't be an immediate perception of politics as it lets itself being seen and it shows itself only by a conceptual device.(…) In politics I do have eyes but cannot see, and I do have ears, but cannot hear." (1)

Difficulty derives from here. Any checking from outside the system being excluded, how could the option between two internally coherent systems be possible? Supposing we have two such sets of beliefs, in contradicting each other, in one or in more points, how would we know which of the two must be accepted?

Regarding the "classic" science, the matters are simpler. There is a second criterion - that of confronting the empirical, the factual. What could it be replaced with in political sphere? "The problem here is to determine not what is true or false, but what is right or wrong, good or bad. The values are not facts, in the proper meaning of it; if there is a sense in which values may be considered facts, there is no univocal recognized procedure in order to decide which of the discordant sets of values must be considered as factual or objective." (2)

There must be added to this thematic problem two more statements specific to modern times, which have no other meaning but to bring out into bold relief the sets of contradictions which managed to stay hidden under masks up to our century.

The first one is more of technical nature. (NOTE. But if we remember Heidegger's explanations based on one of Aristotle's interpretation about the nature of *technee* understood in a specific way by the whole Occidental thinking, the matters get back to the philosophical field.) Due to the great extensions of information changing, possible on the background of the growing speed of communication and accessibility, the argumentative political discourse started to play an unimagined role to the present. To bring into operation the "mechanism" of politics the decision of just a small group of people is not sufficient. The masses are those who must be convinced, and for that it is necessary to have consistent arguments and (apparently) logicaly coherent ones.

The second explanation represents a logical consequence of the fighting for liberating the Occidental spirit from the dominance of any transcendence seen as a limitative determinism. In other words, to free it from the dominance of the One. At the same time, the acceptance of the thelological history - another specific feature of the western civilization - automatically implies transcendence or an axiom from outside the system. "If this world has a meaning, it must be from outside it. If it is inside the world, there is no meaning any more." (3)

Yves Barel considers this matter when he affirms that "modern societies, especially the occidental ones, have difficulties with what represents one of the fundamental tasks of any society - sense production, especially in its most noble form, in this case called transcendence." (4)

NOTE: Thus, transcendence becomes synonym with "fixed point", point of reference, project, etc. There may be "large" or "small", "internal" or "external" transcendences. For any form of it, there must be a possibility for support on "reasonably fixed" points. "When the crisis occurs, even the shout long live the crisis! witnesses for this imperative, because the source of the problem, in its turn, is taken for source of meaning, as if sense could be produced even in the situation of the absence of any meaning which can be designated from the dominant canons." (5)

Actually, in front of the modern society, there are two alternatives: the appeal to transcendence or the appeal to autoreferentiality. That is to the One, respectively to the Multiple. Jean Marie Donegani and Marc Sadonu get to a similar conclusion "The appeal to the notion of totality represents a solution to the "aporia" of the One and the Multiple. Only the notion of totality seems liable to award a sense to the multiple division of reality, implying in just one approach the intellectual order and the social structure.(…) Because of it, the totalitarian invention, in the political order, must not been seen as the simple monstrous achievement of a critique of a democratic representation or as the authoritative constraint of the truth over the autonomous opinion, but as the result of an unavoidable mastership of totality over the expression of every singularity.(…) Just this changing from the searching of identity to the mastership of totality lets us recognize how, afterwards, every part of this presupposed whole may come to be conceived as an unified form, being considered a prefiguration of totality." (6)

Two are the conclusions drawn from this quotation. The first one: the appeal to the One is every minute endangered by totality. The second: the appeal to the Multiple may get at its turn in the same conceptual deadlock. At this point, it's worthy to remind ourselves Parmenide's conclusions: if the One exists, "neither…nor" happens to the Multiple; if the One doesn't exist, "it doesn't seem neither…nor" happens to the Multiple.

Difficulties are not reduced to it. No matter how "badly seen" would be the One for the contemporary thinking, to avoid it seems almost an impossibility, because "in a way society transcends as man breathes" not consciously, but because it is indispensable for living and surviving. The refusal of transcendence, most of the time a simple "pose", an affectation, the expression of a love disillusion, represents the continuation of the wish to search transcendence under different forms." (7) Even the phrase "social void", used by a thinker as Barel, contains the embryo of paradox. In his vision, this term has not to be mistaken for any period of disorder or unrestness - an unrestness that, otherwise, is perceived many times as liberation, so consequently, it is positively valued. If unrestness appears, it is caused by the fact that in such a situation it seems impossible to continue living by the old collective models of organizing thought and action, and at the same time it is also impossible to abandon the old patterns because of the missing of credible solutions for changing. "From this point of view, the social void looks as an obstruction of history.(…) The shortage of transcendence, that is the need for new transcendence and the impossibility to find them - this represents another recurrent and classical feature of the social void." (8)

The dilemma seems completed. The trap was set. A society searching its sense outside it cannot avoid, in one way or another, the recovering inside it. On the other hand, an autoreferential society will never touch the point to stop completely the transcendences production, that is of sense sources, partially being outside it.

"In both cases, the sources of transcendence ask for the joint to autoreferentiality, and the success of autoreferentiality requires the join to transcendence. So, production of meaning appears in its complete paradoxical dimension, because on one hand it cannot chose between an external and an

inner source of sense, and on the other hand because it cannot keep to the end the choice it had made." (9)

The association between metaphysics and politics is unavoidable and impossible at the same time. "The debate is around the relationship between two domains, the first being eminently theoretic, and the second eminently practical, and each of them strives for subordinating the other. For metaphysics in its quality for knowing the extrasensibility, tends to subordinate the practical purpose of politics to the last aim. Politics, in its quality for elucidating the conditions of life in the city in its relationship with power, tends to subordinate the last aim to the fight for power. For metaphysician the political purposes have no meaning but in the service of a last aim which transcends them, for politician the last aim becomes abstract if it cannot be transposed in immediate purposes." (10)

Millenary Theories and Theories of the Original Sin

Up to this point there is imposed the distinction between two major kinds of explicative theories of the conceptual crisis. For an easier clarifying we called these theories of the "original sin" and "millenary" theories. Let's have a brief look at them.

1. *The theories of the "original sin"* impart with the theological dogma having the same name the creed that the real causes of the crisis must be looked for in the internal contradiction placed at the root of any approach of political philosophy, condemning it to logic inconsistency or to the fall in totalitarianism, that is complete relativism or anarchy.

All the matters presented till now in this chapter being included in the domain of the "original sin", we consider enough to register only one more application- the one referring to American "ideology". The term ideology is between inverted commas because more authors consider that in American thought these ideas do not get the form of a systematic, carefully articulated ideology, as in the sense this term is used for referring to the European systems of beliefs as conservative, liberalism, Marxism, social-democracy and Christian democracy."(11) It would be better to talk about an "American creed" for expressing the whole richness and complexity of the comportment of contradictory ideas. "The unsystematic character and the none ideological one of this Creed is reflected by the fact there is no theory to order these values in a relationship between each other and to stop at a theoretical level the conflicts which are sustained inherently between them. The conflicts occur forthwith the taking to an extreme of one value. The reign of majority against the rights of minorities, the superior law against the people's suzerainty, liberty against equality, individualism against democracy." (12) But do you remember about the Platonian avatars of the One and the Multiple?

This political "ideology" as Robert Mc Closkey observed, is not a "consistent corpus of dogmas that tend to the same direction, but a conglomerate of ideas that may be and usually are loosely logic". It is a "distinctive mark of the American thought to sustain contradictory ideas at the same time, without even trying to discharge their potential conflict." (13)

Unfortunately (or may be fortunately?) there is nothing about a distinctive mark of the American thought, but of the human. Another American, Michel Kammen, has won Pulitzer Prize with a book interpreting the history of U.S.A. from the same point of view: *People of Paradox - An Inquiry Concerning of Origins of American Civilization*. Ten years later, he was obliged to recognize his mistake: "The prolonged travels abroad in the last six years have confirmed my supposition that we, the Americans, are not a people of paradox: we are only the one among many others, even if we are the most paradoxical because of the number and the social diversity." (14) Plato for sure hadn't thought about the New World when he wrote *Parmenide*.

2. *The millenary theories* start from the premises that we assist to a using up of any possibilities no matter what we would be. "History does not make pauses. It asks for activity and permanently imposes the coming to some decisions which compulsory is established inside a referential philosophic and ideological system. If the referential spiritual system, which we had had some time ago, were discredited at present, what would it be replaced with? The historic activism of the west civilization constitutes a security for the west searching a new justification of its wish to govern a society and to subdue the material universe. The question is just this: What's the purpose and what's the horizon of expectations? At present there is no clear answer to this question.(…) The second millenary ends with the fact that the spiritual, political and Christian moral possibilities in progress had been examined to the end and exhausted." (15)

Actually, even Fukuyama with his *End of History* ranges among the same current. Another common element imported by this kind of explanations is that in accordance with the unavoidable "end". "The generating system (of the computational process) operates until all the possibilities of combining and rearranging the sequences implied in the process are exhausted." (16)

But neither this kind of explanations can be taken out of paradox. "As it was many times remarked, after refusing a discourse about totality, discredited for being ideological, this postmodernism produces by itself an ideology.(…) The risk stands in the possibility to serve any ideology under the appearance of denying it, with no lateness. But there's another more important aspect in the context of this meditation: it is that refusing to tackle the totality, or anyway by postulating the inaccessibility of it, postmodernism makes impossible the theory. Building its discourse on the postulation of the inescapable fragmentarism of living, knowing, acting, postmodernism, from inside the discourse, obstructs the construction not only of metaphysics, but also of the theory needed for being aware of situation and action." (17)

This discussion is one of principle, in which the supporters of one side or the other interpret the millenary phenomenon from combative points of view. There are for example, the optimistic "millenary people" for whom this situation means just liberation of humanity from the chimera of ideologies and of the teleological history. Shortly, the Good News of the new prophets of optimism would be: "Be happy! There are no more prophets, no more utopias! What remained us it's the pragmatic vision and the happiness to test everything, without any nostalgia or autoremorse." "God is dead, all the great hopes disappear and all the world is

careless, these are the gladdening news." (18) Democracy becomes a fatality. The critique Pascal Brückner brings to Lipovetsky is totally founded. "Lipovetsky belongs exactly to the Marxist perspective, which he's pleased to turn it upside down, approving what it disapproves, enjoying what it cries (…) Instead of a proletarian or a party destined to destroy the existed order, it just charges man by decontraction and pacifism, to take democracy to an end. That is a new and paradoxical progressivism. History, good girl, gave finally birth to a legal child, suddenly estranging from all the bastards she brought into being other times." (19)

But the most interesting counter argument brought by Bruckner to Lipovetsky remains the appeal to paradox. It's that the liar as defined by the Cretan Epimenide. "The one who sustains that all thoughts are subdued to fashion and ephemeral condemns himself, getting to see its proper reflections subdued to the same destiny. The same, the one who celebrates indifference, versatility, doing it with passion, denies the very idea he wants to propagate; so, actually, he keeps an idea in his mind. Indifference is a dogma as all the other existing." (20)

Being tore between the appeal to the One and the appeal to the Multiple, humanity seems to have made it's opposition for the Multiple, contradicting Plato who - to remember - warned in *Parmenide*: if the One doesn't exist then we get into the domain of "it seems that" or "not even it seems that", where is no point of reference. So, all is possible, all is permitted, even the desertion. "Haunted by the image of some ferocious and furious people, our modernity has conceived such an aversion for Christianity, that it transformed the supposition in cardinal virtue. (…) How can we not see that this wisdom risks in the end to destroy the action foundation?" (21)

Indifference knocked to our doors and we let it in.

STUDIA UNIVERSITATIS BABEŞ-BOLYAI, STUDIA EUROPAEA, XLIII, 1-2, 1998

II. MARKETS AND CAPITALS

CRISES OF PROPERTY IN POST - COMMUNIST ROMANIA

DANA POPA

ABSTRACT. This paper addresses a set of issues related to the reconsideration and redefinition of *property as a concept, and property rights, as social relationships* in Romania, after the dismantlement of the communist concept of "socialist property". The social and political evolutions of the 90's resulted in conflicts and crises with respect to property and property rights. It is in the scope of this essay to suggest a typology of the crises of property that emerged in Romania. Five categories of interdependent crises have been identified, displaying a more or less formal nature: constitutional, operational, decisional, institutional and moral, the existence and relevance of each being argumented individually. In spite of their individual presentation, the paper concludes that a potential solving of these crises can be achieved only by breaking the "vicious circle" that interrelates them. However, this endeavour proves to be extremely difficult, due to the extreme weakness of the institutional framework supporting property and property rights, and to the excessive response of the legislative and administrative body to the shifts in political currents.

A fundamental challenge for the transitional process in all post-communist countries resides in the restructuring of property relations. The socialist system, through centralised planning, institutionalised a system of resource allocation which was extremely remote from the real situation of necessities. Allocation of resources was heavily mystified, due to the non-existence of property rights and to a weak definition of property, which used to be comprised within the general (and very abstract) concept of "socialist property"[1].

[1] The idea of property as a "mystification" of the social relations was introduced by Marx. Ironically, the communist experience demonstrated that the authentic mystification and alteration of the social relations took place much more successfully under the shield of the all-mighty concept of "socialist property", supported by the centralised allocation of resources. Thus, the need to re-establish property and property relations in the post-communist societies appears as an ultimate deconstruction of the Marxist normative theory.

Consequently, the political, legislative and economic segments of post-communist societies have to deal now with a set of issues related to the reconsideration and redefinition of *property*, as a *concept*, and *property rights*, as *social relationships*. In this respect, Romania's case displays a sum of contradictions and conflicting phenomena. This paper intends to present the property crises that emerged out of these contradictions. Though there are some issues specifically related to Romania (due to legal or social particularities), these crises might not be typical *only* for Romania.

The factual contradictions related to property and property rights, as many other contradictions in Romania, are, unsurprisingly, the result of the antagonisms presently underlying the society. The opposing forces are generated by the conflict between the former socialist set-up (which had its own, well-defined ideology, legislation, behavioural patterns), and the new social environment, which cannot be (yet) labelled as "capitalism", as it is still in need of subtler definitions of rights, rules and social responsibilities.

By taking part in the events of December 1989, the Romanian people expressed - being more or less aware of it - their disagreement with the socialist set of values. One conspicuous ideological change that took place during the so-called 'revolutionary' process was encompassed in the attempts to redefine and restore property, moving from its restrictive socialist meaning towards the liberal concept entailed by market economies.

Institutions that would define and secure property rights are seen as a key factor in the transitional process, meant to lead to a successful market economy: *"In the absence of institutions that reliably secure a broad range of contract and property rights, unequivocal privatisation is impossible [...] The rights of those involved are jumbled and unclear, but privatisation by itself does not generate the unambiguous individual rights needed for a successful market economy. These rights will exist only if a society has the right institutions"*(Clague, 1994).

Though new legislation, new institutions and new behavioural patterns have been formalised in Romania, the conflicting issues related to property are nowadays only partially solved.

There exist at least three "officially" acknowledged crises of property, whose potential solutions rely in the capacity of the political and legal sector to improve over time the *formal* rules underlying the society:

- The *constitutional crisis* of property - due to the lack of appropriate constitutional stipulations with respect to property and the property rights. The new Constitution (voted in 1991), provides only weak and rather contradictory guarantees of property.
- The *operational crisis* of property - the communist concept of "socialist property" transformed property into a very abstract notion. Transitional society has to solve the problem of restoration of property, in terms of its *materialisation*. This should be done both through the restitution of property, and by encouraging its development. However, this process has proved to be very difficult, and many mistakes that have been made resulted in discouragement of population, as well as in a decrease of individual trust and support for property *as an institution.*

- The *decisional crisis* of property - The State's right of decision was prevailing over the individuals' right to manage the social property, as seen by the communist ideology. Decisions related to property was viewed more like a privilege pertaining to the State apparatus than as a right of the many holders of the "socialist property". This pattern of behaviour, consisting in the State's extensive control, tends to be maintained presently, due to political rent-seeking behaviour, hindering the development of a genuine capitalist society, where individual property rights are the main 'engine'.

Some other crises can be identified, with less predictable solutions, because of their *informal* nature, much more difficult to alter with a mere set of normative rules:

- The *institutional crisis* of property - referring to the lack of ability at the executive level to enforce 'informal' institutions able to safeguard the property and to guarantee the property rights.
- The *moral crisis* of property - the socialism undoubtedly had its disastrous impact on economical and legal matters. However, it might be that its most destructive effect had been on the people's behaviour and morality. The 'socialist property', which, in fact, did not belong to anyone, 'educated' people in the idea of having no respect for property at all. The post-communist society has to create a framework of values that would allow for the development of appropriate ethics with respect to the property.

1. The constitutional crisis of property

Article 41 of the new Romanian Constitution, passed in 1991, mentions, among the fundamental rights and liberties, that the *property right* is *guaranteed*. However, according to Article 135, *property* is only *protected* by the State. This differentiated treatment applied to property and to property right generated many controversies, and was one of the reasons why many people (not the majority, though), voted against the Constitution at the Referendum organised in 1991.

Many supporters of the Constitution (covering the centre left panel of the Parliament and/or the former communists) claimed that 'protection' is a sufficiently covering term for property, and, subsequently, 'to guarantee' the property is redundant. To guarantee the property right automatically implies guarantee of property as a concept.

The opponents to this line of thinking (unsurprisingly, the members of the centre-right wing of the Parliament), argued that there is a fundamental difference between guarantee and protection of property. State should not only be a *protector* of property, but also a *guarantee* of it. Otherwise, its responsibilities would not differ essentially from those covered by the Ministry of Justice, the Ministry of Internal Affairs and the Supreme Court of Justice. State should be more than an exogenous supervisor of development and consolidation of property, by choosing to actively involve into this continuous process, which has a crucial importance for privatisation and, ultimately, for the success of the transition from planned to market economies.

Commitment of the State should refer to[2]:

- reconsideration and restoration of property (the backward looking responsibility). In this respect, very little has been done in Romania in order to correct the unfair State appropriations that took place between 1945-1947 in the process of forced nationalisation. Its painful consequences remained largely uncompensated by the new governments, and there is still a lot of vexation pending on this issue.
- preserving the actual property (the synchronic responsibility). This refers to the protection of property. However, since the State is not a guarantee of property, it cannot be held liable by law for witnessing or even encouraging abusing attempts against property.
- enhancement of property (the prospective action) - promotion of property and property rights should be one attribution of a democratic state. However, the budgetary, financial and monetary legislation maintain in Romania conspicuous discriminatory stipulations against private property, especially regarding the foreign investment.

Therefore, it can be said that, in spite of the efforts of the democratic forces in Romania, remnants of socialist mentalities and a strong resistance to reform created noticeable gaps into the new legislation, hindering or slowing down the process of efficiently assigning property rights and privatisation[3].

2. The operational crisis of property

According to Cooter (1994), "*the communist revolutions in Europe went beyond regulating private property and attempted to abolish it. Not all forms of private property were abolished, but private property as a form of organisation in large enterprises was eliminated in all communist countries [...] Property rights were diffuse. In socially owned enterprises, no one person or small group of people joined power and profit. Politics replaced discretion, collective choice replaced individual choice, and governance replaced commands".*

The indivisibility and inalienability, as characteristics of the 'socialist property', made impossible the use of any property right (except for a very restricted category of private goods, usually durable goods). This limitation of property had an obvious political justification, as it formed the ground for the restriction of individual liberty and eliminated the middle and upper class, favouring the totalitarianism.

The socialist regime, thus, succeeded in its attempt to annihilate property by encompassing everyone's property rights into the very abstract concept of 'socialist property'. Consequent to this *abstraction* of the concept of property, the Romanian society after 1989 faced a new, unexpected challenge: the annihilation

[2] This framework has been introduced by Vosganian, V - op. cit

[3] By "privatisation", I refer here to both its "narrow" meaning (transfer of property from the State into the hands of individuals) and to the "broad" one (increasing the share of private property into the total property of a nation).

of property through its *atomisation*. The populist legislation created after 1989 gave the illusion of property to people, without allowing property to become operational according to the laws of competitive markets.

The two Laws of Privatisation (Law 15/1990 and 31/1991) created several millions of 'owners' in industry and in agriculture. However, at this level of diffusion, property suffered from some important shortcomings. Mainly, it did not transform the Romanian economy from a state monopoly into a competitive market. Not being able to effectively influence the economic decisions, the millions of 'owners' could not be regarded as economic agents. Eventually, they delegate their right of decision to a superior level, maintaining the power of certain organisations (e.g. unions, privatisation funds), which tend to be more or less obedient to the governmental and political influences, altering the efficiency of the economic process. This pattern does not allow for the development of an economic behaviour within the Romanian population.

In order to overcome the operational crisis of property, and confer consistency to these ambiguous property rights, at least two conditions must be fulfilled:

- the legal clarification of the property relations. This implies the speeding up of the process of emission of property titles in agriculture, and the transformation of property certificates in industry into shares valued in the stock exchange. Since their property rights are deprived of operationality, the masses can not oppose efficiently to the regulating actions of the State (directly or indirectly induced through rent-seeking intermediaries).
- aggregation of property into the hands of private agents with efficient economic behaviour. An important role the State has to play is to encourage the development of the entrepreneurial class, creating in the same time disincentives for monopolistic accumulation of power. Nevertheless, little competition law has been created in Romania so far, which allowed for a mere redistribution of monopolistic power from the State towards a few individuals or organisations (mainly politically favoured groups) to occur.

3. The decisional crisis of property

As mentioned previously, the ambiguous and extensive assignment of property rights lead to the delegation of the right of decision from the individual level to a superior level, which usually proved to be obedient to the political ruling party. Although this delegation of decision power (and/or responsibility) might be completely justified sometimes (and characterises the market economies as well), the evolution of the transition in Romania showed that, in many cases, this delegation occurred as a result of a *specific intent* of the legislative body.

The decisional crisis of property has a conspicuous political basis. The democratic elections from 1990 and 1992 promoted a ruling party which was not as strongly committed to the reform of the Romanian economy, as initially promised to the electorate. More likely, its advocated intent was to create a 'social market economy', which implied maintaining a large share of the State's influence

in the economic field, and a large share of political influence in legislation. There were many clear conflicts of interest between the political class and those affected by its decisions, the electorate.

Lacking democratic experience, as well as the knowledge of competitive economic behaviour, the masses were easy to manipulate by the ruling party in order to achieve its strategic goal: the preservation of its power. Therefore, all the legislative apparatus was purposely designed as to allow for accumulation of decisional power in the hands of the majority party. For this goal, a lot of decisional power was retained at the macroeconomic level. Very little has been done in the first years of transition in order to transfer decision from the macroeconomic towards the microeconomic level and ultimately, to the market.

Gradually though, the population became aware of this mechanism. Large changes in mentalities took place in the past years of transition. As a result, many individuals require now a reform of the decisional apparatus. The results of the last elections (1996) gave power to the centre right coalition. The new political leaders are expected to create legislation that would effectively separate the structure of the state from the structure of the ruling party, and would decentralise the decisional power. Though the State by definition has a notable political character, its structure should not be allowed anymore to identify blindly with a singular political view over the society, as happened during the communist era.

4. The institutional crisis of property

The institutional crisis is a feature that undermines the whole transitional process. It affects both the formal and informal institutions. In fact, the institutional crisis practically encompasses all the crises previously discussed.

However, since the institutions have been pointed out as playing a vital role in economic processes, and lack of appropriate institutions has been identified as a problem with paramount implications for the transitional countries (Olson, Clague, 1992), it might be relevant to discuss the crisis of the institutions separately from the other identified crisis.

The evolution of economies within the past decades have made more and more economists argue that the conventional wisdom about the spontaneous emergence of markets (the famous principle of 'laissez faire') can not explain anymore the workings of the economies or the development of competitive markets. A significant role has to be credited to the State and its specific institutions.

In this respect, the events in Central and Eastern Europe are, as Olson (1992) says "*a challenge to familiar ideas. [...] A thriving market economy is not, contrary to what some say, simply the result of 'letting capitalism happen' - not something that emerges spontaneously out of thin air. It requires a special set of institutional arrangements that most countries in the world do not have. The most prosperous countries in the world happen to have these institutional arrangements, but they take them for granted. These arrangements are usually overlooked in ideological debate and in scholarly research and their importance is not generally*

appreciated in either the mature market economies or in the societies in transition". Some authors went even farther in their analysis, claiming that the institutional change in Central and Eastern Europe deserves more attention than the privatisation in itself (Clague, 1994).

Potential improvement of the institutional sector of the economy is, on the other hand, subject to a greatly disliked 'externality', namely, the parallel development of bureaucracy. As such, a lot of issues related to property need the development of *formal* institutions, and, implicitly, an increase in bureaucracy (e.g. the process of privatisation required from the Romanian state to design and support the State Property and the Private Property Funds; the emission of property titles and their distribution to the Romanian citizens was a long and costly process, which incurred supervision and control from a professional apparatus; the transfer of property titles required a specialised, costly body of law, etc.)

Apart from the enforced formal institutions, there are also a number of *informal* institutions that the State is expected to create and protect in favour of private property and competitive markets, institutions that would not incur bureaucratic costs, since these informal institutions could be built on the existing infrastructure. Thus, legal norms should regulate the institution of contract, the rent, the competition, the stock exchange, the commodity exchange, the law on bankruptcy. All these informal institutions create an structure that is interdependent with the concept of private property. Success or failure of privatisation is contingent upon the credibility and enforceability of these institutions.

5. The moral crisis of property

The long period of dominance of the socialist ideology, even if frequently questioned by the common people, succeeded, nevertheless, in its attempt to create a new system of values. These values have been encompassed within the concept of "The Ethics of The New Man", as referred to by the communist propaganda.

While many of these so-called values existed only in the imagination of the communist leaders (such as the blind belief in communism as the ultimate goal of humanity, the 'revolutionary spirit' of the youth, etc.), some of them gradually transferred, unfortunately, from the utopian agenda of the enthusiastic political activists towards the mentality of individuals.

One of the perverse consequences of the communist indoctrination was the destruction of the respect for the private property and the general disbelief in this institution, as well as a hostile attitude towards individuals who privately owned something[4]. After tens of years of being exposed to the Marxist principle according to which property was a mean of exploitation, people started to believe into this

[4] The only forms of private property that were regarded with benevolence were the private goods equally accessible to everyone: the Romanian-made car, the Romanian-made TV set, etc.

principle. Unexpectedly, sociologists of the 90's had to deal with the fact that people belonging to certain age groups, though actively participating in the events of December 1989 (events that were meant to change the Romanian political set-up), were completely reluctant to accept the concept of private property. The first private domestic entrepreneurs, as well as the first foreign investors faced a rather diffident (not to say hostile) attitude from the common people.

The lack of respect for property had a second disastrous effect: the depletion of the 'social property'. Since no one was allowed to participate in the sharing of profits of a plant (the partition of profits was decided at a higher level than the individual), most of the people discovered new 'economic' ways to induce a 'just' distribution, by their own means. Mainly, this 'equity' was realised through stealing or simply wasting the resources. While now these facts might seem notoriously immoral, before 1989 they were generally regarded as the only possibility people had to appropriate some of the results of their work, and, to a certain extent, they were morally justifiable (since, anyway, no clear property rights were assigned to the stolen goods - they belonged in the same amount to the one that stole them as to all the other employees).

However one might regard the ethical justification for the depletion of common property before 1989, within the new social framework - since the capitalist system of values has been proclaimed as the one Romanian society chose to adopt -, there are no more ideological or moral excuses left for the same facts happening in the same plants nowadays (with the observation that the vast majority of plants are now, at least theoretically, privatised).

The only explanation remaining for the continuing exhaustion of resources within the factories (or any public ownership) consists in the fact that the society has serious flaws in its moral code with respect to property. Thus, the Romanian society must re-design a moral code supporting the interaction of the economic actors.

One economy can not be exclusively based on idealistic principles, such as perfect equality, 'love thy neighbour', etc. More likely, the ethic code of the economy has to rely on efficiency principles (Kaldor-Hicks and/or than Pareto optimality). The market must identify those functional mechanisms that would entail both ethics and efficiency as intrinsic components. Further on, it is the role of the legislative body to find ways of converting these efficient mechanisms into enforceable and credible laws, that would induce a higher level of morality at the level of the market participants.

It is obvious that the categories of crises mentioned so far are highly interrelated. As already mentioned, the institutional crisis appears to comprise the constitutional, decisional and operational type. Moreover, a causality chain can also be established. Facing the risk of over-generalising, it can be said that the constitutional crisis produces the operational crisis, which, in turn, induces the decisional and moral crisis of property. Thus, it can be inferred that, until the Constitution will establish clear and enforceable property rights, the Courts and the administration will not be able to develop and institute effective procedures to develop and safeguard private property and property rights. In turn, this weakness in defining the property rights results into a blurred perspective on the allocation of

rights of decision between the nominal owner of the property (usually the individuals) and the persons, or the institutions actually managing it (the State, Property Funds, Boards of Administration, etc.), inducing discouragement, confusion and distortion of moral values at the level of individual proprietors.

It can be concluded, that, in order to solve, at least partly, the crises of property in Romania, one option would be to break this "vicious circle" : constitutional-operational-decisional-moral, by working with competence and responsibility on redefining and refining the rights and the duties of the institutions (formal and informal) related to property and property rights.

However, this evolutionary process is discontinuous in Romania, as the legislative and administrative bodies tend to respond in excess to shifts in political currents.

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STUDIA UNIVERSITATIS BABEŞ-BOLYAI, STUDIA EUROPAEA, XLIII, 1-2, 1998

C 'EST QUOI LA BOURSE?

FLORIN DUMA

RÉSUMÉ La Bourse est la plus importante institution dans le marche du capital, concentrant dans le meme espace la demande et l'offre des valeurs mobilieres negociees d'une facon ouverte, libre et permanent a partir des regles connuees. Ici se efectuent des transactions avec des titres de valeurs emis sur le marche primaire du capital. La Bourse est un barometre tres sensible et exact de la situation dans le domain economique; le prix auquel s'etablie, apres une negociation, la valeur d'un titre reflait l'etat financiere et economique du societe qui l'a emis.Le plus important rol d'une bourse et celui de financement de l'economie permetant aux entreprises de trouver ici les moyens financiers qu'ils necessitent pour se developper.

Chaque jour, au matin, au midi ou le soir a l'aide du mass-media on nous presente une serie des listes et des tabeles contenant une serie des chifres et des dates misteriouses. Il nous represente dans des journaux et a la television une gamme variee des graphiques qui indiquent les evolutions de chaque jour, croisantes ou non, des differents indices, comme par exemple Dow- Jones, DAX, Nikkei, CAC 40, Hang-Seng, BET etc. La majorite d'entre nous ignorons cette sorte de choses ou nous les regardons avec mefiance a cause d'une mal connaissance.Mais, nous savons tous, que derriere ces representations il y a la BOURSE. On essayera au dessous eluder qu' est ce que c'est la bourse, et quelle est sa place et son importance dans une economie.

Les economies nationales se caracterisent par l'existence et le fonctionement des marchees financiers plus ou moins developpes. Conforme a la clasification anglo- saxone (bien acceptee par les specialistes) le marche financier est structure en marche monnetaire ("money market") et le marche du capital. Les marches monetaires sont specialises dans le domaine des transactions avec des titres a court terme (moindre qu' une annee) emis en general par des institutions bancaires qui includent: des certificats de depot, des depots bancaires, des cheques etc. Le prix du droit d'utilization les fonds offerts sur le marche monetaire est represente en principal par l'interet. Les marches du capital - et ceux-ci nous interessent ici- sont specialises dans le domaine des transactions avec des actives financieres a long et moyen terme qui sont emis par des institutions financieres (societes comerciales, d'assurance, d'investissment). Ces titres financiers sont representes en principal par des obligations et des actions.

Le marche du capital est structure en deux segments differents et interdependants: le marche primaire et secondaire. Le marche primaire assure l'emission et la premiere vente des valeurs mobilieres attirent les capitals financiers disponibles. Le marche primaire s'organise par l'intermede des banques ou des societes des valeurs mobilieres qui sont specialisees pour ce genre d'operations et ainsi se realisent de placements dans les meilleures conditions.

Le marche secondaire est celui sur lequel les investiteurs et les entreprenants achetent et vendent des valeurs mobiliers emis et mis en circulation sur le marche primaire. Ici intervient les bourses des valeurs par l'intermede des quelles et a cote du segment extraboursier (OTC - Over The Counter Market) se realisent les transactions avec des valeurs mobiliers (des actions ou des obligations en principal). Ces deux institutions (la Bourse de valeurs et OTC) sont plus efficientes plus ils concentrent la plus parte des intentions d'acquisition et vente des valeurs mobilieres et reussient a equilibrer la demande et l'offre.

La Bourse est la plus importante institution dans le marche du capital, specifique a l'economie du marche, concentrant dans le meme espace la demande et l'offre des valeurs mobilieres negociees d'une facon ouverte, libre et permanent a partir des regles connuees. Ici se efectuent des transactions avec des titres de valeurs emis sur le marche primaire du capital.

La bourse est un barometre tres sensible et exact de la situation dans le domain economique; le prix auquel s'etablie, apres une negociation, la valeur d'un titre reflait l'etat financiere et economique du societe qui l'a emis.

Le plus important rol d'une bourse et celui de financement de l'economie permetant aux entreprises de trouver ici les moyens financiers qu'ils necessitent pour se developper . Les acteurs qui se rencontrent sur ce marche sont tres varies et chaque d'entre eux suit la realisation des interets bien determines. Ainsi on trouve dans la bourse des banques, des institutions financieres des intreprises et companies, mais aussi des personnes privees, tous efectuant des transactions soit au but de la mobilisation des capitaux financiers, soit comme investiteurs desireux des placementes profitables.

La demande qu'il se pose le plus souvent un entrepreneur est: comment obtenir des argents? Tout au long du temp et jusqu' aujord' hui, la reponse est offerte dans la meme maniere: utiliser sa propre fortune, soliciter de subventions de l'Etat ou des autres institutions, prendre un credit bancaire ou utiliser la Bourse. La premiere posibilite fonctionne seulement dans un cercle limite des privilegies du destin; la deuxieme est moins realiste et determine par des situations exceptionnelles. En ce qui concerne le credit bancaire, il n'est pas tres facile a obtenir parce que, premierement, il est cher (les interets sont tres elevees) et, deuxiemment, les banques posent une tres grande serie des conditions dures et on peut perdre le control de l'affaire a la faveur de la banque.

Une possibilite pour l'enterprise d'obtenir des argents en evitant les problemes des variantes presentees au dela est la vente publique des actions a l'aide de la Bourse. La Bourse assure un circuit plus court et efficient entre les economies de ceux qui veulent investir sur moyen et longue terme (soit qu'ils sont des firmes , des banques, des companies d'assurance, des fond ou des simples personnes privees) et les besoins de financement des societes commerciales.

Ainsi la Bourse est devenue un concurent puissant pour le sistem bancaire, representant une alternative serieuse au credit bancaire souvant plus cher et difficile a obtenir.

En plus, la cotation d’une enterprise a la Bourse a le merit de la transparence; elle offre en permanence aux gents interesses une evaluation corecte et operative de la situation economique de l’enterprise et des perspectives de developpement. Celui ci permet aux investiteurs d’avoir une image claire sur la rentabilite de l’entreprise et qu’ils soient informes au moment d’une transaction.

La Bourse est alors, le lieu ou se rencontrent d’une cote l’offre du capital (les investiteurs) et de l’autre cote la demande de capital (les entreprises) cherchant des argents pour developper leurs affaires, les emitents viennent a la Bourse ou ils proposent aux ceux qui ont des economies d’investir, d’habitude dans leurs actions ou obligations. Le resultat depend de l’atractivite des produits boursieres qu’ils offrent (de taux d’interet des obligations, le prix des actions, le niveau des dividendes promis), mais aussi de l’image, des resultats et des perspectives de l’enterprise emitente.

Outre la transparence et le fait qu’elle offre egalite du traitement pour toutes les societes listees et surete des transactions, le marche boursiere est aussi un instrument qui assure de liquidites pour l’economie. La Bourse est ouverte d’habitude tous les jours ouvrables ainsi que ceux qui ont des valeurs mobiliers puissent realiser simplement par un ordre de vente la transformation de ceux-ci en argents (mais la vitesse de la transformations depend du niveau de liquidite de cette valeur mobiliere).

Mais pourquoi tant peut d’entreprises s’enscrivent a la Bourse? Tout d’abord parce que c’est pas quelque chose d’obligatoire et chaqune a le droit de choisir. Et puis ce n’est pas si facile d’etre admis la bas. Et enfin, l’avantage de "jouer" en Bourse est accompagne du risque "d’etre joue toi meme" par les agents de change et speculateurs; c’est pourquoi il s’impose des seriuses preparatives en vue de l’entrée a la Bourse. En general les conditions poses a une enterprise pour l’admission en Bourse regardent: une minimum rentabilite financiere (15%); la capacite de distribuer des dividende au moins trois exercices financieres precedents; un taux de croissance economique superieure a la moyenne sur le secteur industriel duquel elle fait part, un niveau minimum (10-20%) de distribution des actions en public; autres normes pour respecter les regles boursieres de transparence et garantir des titres.

Aussi, les bourses solicitent que l’enterprise donne periodiquement des informations sur leurs situation financiere. Ces conditions different d’un Bourse a l’autre, mais on peut observer qu’elles sont asses dures et, en general, seulement les entreprises performantes peuvent les satisfaire. Pour attirer a la transaction plus de societes comerciales et sur tout d’entre ceux qui ne satisfaits pas les conditions pour etre admis a la Bourse, partout dans le monde a ete cree ce que on appelle "le marche extraboursiere" ou OTC (Over the Counter Market). Toutes les firmes qui desirent peuvent etre listees ici. Ce marche est une structure tehnique informatisee basee sur un system electronique de transaction. Le plus important marche de se genre est NASDAQ (National Asociation of Securities Dealers Automatic Quotation) cree en 1971 aux Etats Units. Apres le model

americain a ete cree et fonctionne avec des bons resultats un marche extraboursiere aussi en Roumanie nomme RASDAQ.

Par l'entrée a la Bourse les actions deviennent librement negociables et auront un prix de marches journellement. La cotation en Bourse serve aussi comme moyene de publicite tres efficient pour l'emitent etant une reconnaissance de la valeur de l'enterprise et ainsi celle ci se trouve dans un niveau de risque inferieur. Par differentes techniques boursiere comme par exemple: l'offre publique de vente/achat deviennet possibles des actions de restroucturation majeurs (fusions et cessions).

Le prix de l'action a la Bourse constitue une information tres utile pour la direction de l'enterprise, pour le personel mais aussi pour les investiteurs en ce qui concerne la valeur de la firme.

Le prix des actions d'une firme au course de la bourse multiplie par le nombre des actions emis par celle ci donne un indicateur tres important: la capitalisation boursiere de l'enterprise, qui exprime sa valeur totale de bourse.

Pour evaluer la dimension de marche boursier il faut calculer cette capitalisation boursiere: on additionne toutes les valeurs de bourse des societes cotees en cette bourse. On obtiens ainsi la valeur du marche. Ainsi, la premiere bourse du monde est New York Stock Exchange celle qui a la fin du 1994 valorait 4,232 mld. USD, suivi par celle du Tokio: 3,592 mld. USD, et plus loin les bourses europeennes Londre avec 1,143 mld. USD, Frankfurt 499 USD et Paris 452USD.

Pres de la capitalisation boursier tres importantes sont les indices boursiers calcules pour chaque bourse separement. Pour connaitre la tendance sur un marche boursiere, chaque d'entre eux a defini un, ou plusieurs indices, calcules conforme aux echantillons des actions plus importants pour lesquels on calcule une moyenne. Ces indices mesurent l'evolution des differents marches, ca veut dire ses variations en bas ou en haut. Le plus important indices est celui de New York Stock Exchange: Dow-Jones qui suit 30 valeurs cotes sur Wall Street. Autres indices importantes: Nikkei (a la Bourse du Tokio - qui suit 225 valeurs), FT 30 (30 valeurs) ou FT 100 (100 valeurs) a la Bourse du Londre (surnomme Footsie). A Frankfurt on trouve DAX, et a Paris CAC 40 (Cotation Assistee en Continue) - compose du 40 des plus representatives actions du marche francais. La Bourse de Bucharest a aussi son propre indice BET qui est compose du 10 des plus importantes valeurs listees).

L'etude de l'evolution de ces indices donne aux personne interessee une serie d'informations precieuses sur la situation de cette bourse et meme de l'economie entiere reprentee sur ce marche du capital (en ce sens il faut etablir des graphiques qui decrivent l'evolution des indices).

Pour que les investiteurs et emitents puisse avoir acces sur le marche du capital ils doivent appeler au services des intermediares. En general, ces intermediares sont les Societes de Bourse (Brokerage Houses) celle ci recevant des ordres d'achat / de vente qui sont executes a la Bourse. Dans une telle societe on trouve trois sorte des protagonistes: ce qui font effectivement les transactions en executant les ordres de vente / d'achat de clients - les "traders"; puis les analystes et enfin le personel technique (ce qu'on appelle les fonctionnaires du "back-office"). Les "traders" efectuent en permanence des transactions au nom des

clients suivant tout le temp le "Ask" et le "Bid" sur le moniteur des ordinateurs pour efectuer les plus profitables transactions contant sur leur intuition et sur les conseils recus des analystes financieres.

Le "job" des analystes est d’etudier les entreprises cotees et de chercher sur toutes les chaines des informations et d’esssayer d’elaborer des modeles probables d’evolution pour certaines valeurs mobilieres. Courtement, tenant compte des certaines informations et dates precises les analystes essaient de prevoir les futures evolutiones des valeurs mobilieres. Le segment du back-office a aussi un tres important role - meme s’il travaille sans etre vu - sont les specialists en informatique, mais pas seulement, qui interviennent pour soutenir logistiquement les transactions et verifient la corectitude des enregistrement. Aux Etats Units d’Amerique il y a les suivantes cathegories d’intermediares: "dealers", "brokers", banque d’investissement et consiliers d’investissment. Les "brokers" peuvent faire des transactions avec des valeurs mobiliers seulement pour leurs propres clients. Les "dealers"peuvent faire des vente / achat des titres mais aussi en propre nom. Les banques d’investissement (Investments Banks) peuvent efectuer les memes operations que les "dealers" mais en plus ils peuvent faire aussi la troisieme: "underwriting" ca veut dire le placement des titres. Les consiliers d’investissments sont ceux qui peuvent offrir consultation en ce qui concerne la rentabilite et les probables evolutions pour differntes societes et valeurs mobilieres.

Enfin, pour que la Bourse fonctionne correctement et les regles du jeux soit respectes, partout dans le monde ont ete institues des organismes de surveillence totalement independants. Un exemple est SEC (Security Exchange Commision) qui surveille strictement les principales bourse americaines parmi lesquelles se trouvent: New York Stock Excange, American Stock Exchange et Chicago Board Option Exchange.

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STUDIA UNIVERSITATIS BABEŞ-BOLYAI, STUDIA EUROPAEA, XLIII, 1-2, 1998

THE EU-ASIAN RELATIONSHIP

DANA POP

INTRODUCTION

Article 130X (Title XVII) of the Treaty on European Union (TEU), provides for the co-ordination of development co-operation policies and for consultation between Member States and the EU on aid programmes. The objectives of development co-operation policy are to 'encourage the consolidation of democracy within the developing countries, within the framework of a return to political stability.

The aims of Article 130U (1) of the TEU are to ensure that:

- developing countries, especially the least developed, have lasting economic and social development;
- the developing countries gradually and harmoniously fit into the international economy;
- poverty in the developing countries is combated.

With respect to policy in different regions:

'ASIA: emphasis will be on boosting the EU's presence inn the region- through trade and investment- and on increasing awareness of environmental issues. The least developed countries will continue to receive conventional development aid.' (F.Nixson in Artis&Lee, p.411)

The Third World became less important for Europe, in terms of trade, finance and military strategy, since mid-1960s. The main reason was the creation of the Common Market which encouraged member states to trade with each other. The extent to which third parties were affected depended on their level of development. *Non-EC developed countries* (DCs) were more severely affected by the decline than were the *less developed countries* (LDCs) in the period 1960-75. Afterwards, LDCs were constantly the most affected. 'The LDC share of total EC imports has fallen continuously in the post-Oil Shock period (from 23 per cent in 1975 to only 13 per cent by 1988), while the DC share has stabilised(...) In the case of EC exports, the DC share has tended to hold up better than that of the LDCs throughout the period, although, once again, the differentially poor LDC performance was more marked during the second sub-period.' (C.Stevens, in Ugur, p.349)

The reasons of the decline and its extent were different for various LDCs. In respect of the relationship between EC and *East* and *South-East Asia*, the decline was determined mainly by the European lack of competitiveness in comparison with the USA and Japan. While countries from South Asia maintained close links with some EC Member States, the region as a whole remained at the periphery for the EC. The exception for the Asian region is represented by the East Asian Newly Industrialised Countries (NICs) Korea, Taiwan and Hong Kong. Their share of extra-EC imports rose from *1%* in 1970 to *6%* in 1988; the share of EC exports rose from *1%* to *4%* during the same period. (Source: Eurostat 1993)

Over the period 1970-1988 there were changes in the importance of EC's sources of growth and development with a shift towards non-traded services and intra-developed country trade. The Common Agricultural Policy (CAP) induced other distortions in the field of traditional colonial imports of raw materials from the LDCs and exports of manufactured goods to these regions. Further, a trade with some parts of the South developed, based on a two-way flow of manufactured products and services. 'The leaders of the new pattern of trade have been, on the European side, the states with relatively weak colonial ties (notably Germany) and, in the South, the countries of East and South-East Asia. By contrast, formal development policy has been fashioned largely by the major ex-colonial states (France and UK), and has focused on their erstwhile colonies.' (Stevens in Ugur p.350)

TRADITIONAL COMMERCIAL RELATIONS BETWEEN THE EU AND THE ASIAN COUNTRIES

In respect of trade arrangements and preferences, East and South -East Asian countries have been nothing but neglected by the EC and some of them vaguely favoured by Member States. They are included in the Generalised System of Preferences of the EU.

Generalised preferences were first introduced in 1971, following negotiations between Western industrialised countries and the UNCTAD and then extended in 1980.

The main features of the *EU's GSP* (Generalised System of Preferences) are:

- 'Imports of industrial goods into Europe's single market are exempted from duties provided that the quotas (which vary from one European country to another) are adhered to and a strict 'origin rule' is being applied (the exporting country must normally have added at least 35 per cent of the value of the exported good).
- Exports in excess of agreed ceilings are subject to the full CET.
- The preferential scheme covers only a limited range of agricultural goods.' (Heidensohn, p.145)

The preferences for the GSP beneficiaries are not as generous as those offered by the EU for ACP and Mediterranean countries. For instance, the rules of origin are more restrictive. Only for a few agricultural products the import levies are reduced or cancelled. For 'sensitive products' as textiles and clothing there are limitations. The effect of the European GSP has been a *trade diversion*. The main reasons for this are the exclusion of some goods from the scheme and the strict quantitative restrictions. For textiles, the restrictions are due to the 'managed' trade through the MFA (Multi-fibre Agreement) which increased rather than reduced the restrictions on imports into the EU from GSP-eligible countries.

What proportions of EU-Third World trade is covered by the GSP scheme and which developing countries benefit from the system? 'In 1990, seven tenths of dutiable exports from developing countries to Europe were covered by the GSP. With more than 50 per cent of these imports being treated as 'sensitive' (no or limited/conditional coverage by the GSP scheme), only three tenths of the dutiable imports actually received beneficiary GSP treatment.' (CEC 1993: 70) In 1990 eight Asian, South-East Asian and Latin American countries accounted for a very big share of GSP benefits. These countries are as follows: China, India, Brazil, Thailand, Indonesia, Singapore, Malaysia and Hong Kong. 'While their share of dutiable trade amounted to 55 per cent, 60 per cent of total GSP benefits accrued to them. The eight top GSP beneficiaries appear to have been particularly effective in utilising GSP preferences for non-sensitive products.' (CEC 1993: 72) We have to mention that there is no certain causal link between the GSP and trade performances.

Despite EC's preferential trade arrangements with the LDCs, the LDCs are not always subject of positive discrimination by the EC. Apparently, the LDCs face lower tariff barriers in the EC market than the Developed Countries. 'In 1983, for example, the average MFN rate applied to total EC imports from DCs was 7.2 per cent; this was much higher than the average GSP rate applied to imports from LDCs. But the average tariff rate *actually imposed* by the EC was lower on imports from DCs than from LDCs (at 4.7 per cent as against 5.3 per cent) (Sampson 1989)' (Stevens in Ugur, p.353) There are two reasons for this:

- first, DCs do not trade on MFN terms due to preferential arrangements with the EC;
- second, DC exports include a smaller proportion of 'sensitive' goods than do LDC exports.

The Non-Tariff Barriers (NTBs) may also lead to discrimination against the LDCs or against some of them. For example, exports from the poorest countries such as India face more NTBs than do EC imports from the NICs. (Sapir and Stevens, 1987)

A NIC means a country in transition from a developing to a developed economy. The main criteria usually used in order to identify a NIC are:

- absolute and relative growth of the manufacturing sector;
- rising importance of manufactures in the composition of exports;
- international competitiveness in manufacturing as measured by an increasing share in world exports of manufactured goods;

- a growth rate of per capita GDP (in real terms) in excess of that achieved by developed countries (CEC 1988; OECD 1979).

In a statistical analysis of EU-NICs trade in the 1970s and 1980s some 16 countries were listed:

- the core or Asian NICs-Hong Kong, South Korea, Taiwan and Singapore (the four 'tigers' or 'dragons');
- the 'baby tiger' economies: Malaysia, Philippines and Thailand;
- the Mediterranean economies of the former Yugoslavia, Israel and Turkey;
- Argentina, Brazil and Mexico;
- and three potentially large traders in Asia - China, India and Indonesia (Eurostat 1991: 5).

In the respect of the trade between Europe and the NICs we will focus on the four Asian 'dragons'. Between 1958 and 1992 the four Asian NICs tripled their share of imports from the EU from *2%* to *6%* (Eurostat 1993). Over the same period EU imports from the 'four dragons' increased from *1%* to *6%* (Eurostat 1993). These results were possible due to changes in the composition of their exports. Such changes were:

- upgraded production facilities
- a shift away from labour intensive towards technology-based industries.

Thus, the plastics and electronic industries replaced the textiles and clothing industries. The EU has been a major supply source and export market for the four Asian NICs. In the 1970s and 1980s between one eighth and one fifth of their total exports reached EU markets (Eurostat 1991: 116-7). Between one tenth and one sixth of their imports have come from the EU (ibid.: 114-5).

'The industrial dynamism and export success of the coreNICs appear to be due to four factors: appropriate development strategy based on export promotion; establishment of foreign subsidiaries of MNEs (multinational enterprises); exploitation of competitive advantages; and adjustment to changing economic conditions.' (Heidensohn, p.148)

If in EU trade with the Asian NICs EU had a permanent trade deficit, this is not the case for the LDCs. In order to gain a stronger position in the Asian region the EU made efforts to change its perspective on this relationship.

EU'S NEW POSITION TOWARD ASIA

In the last years the EU admitted that its position towards the Asian countries had to be changed due to the economic and political importance of the Asian realities. In order to realise a much closer co-operation with Asia, the European Council adopted at the Essen Summit of 1994 the '*New Asian Strategy*'.Firstly, the European Council approved, in November 1994, the communication 'Towards a new Asian strategy'. This was a first attempt to consider Asia as a whole, to underline EU's main interests in the region and to find the means for meeting these interests.

The communication set out four main objectives, as follows:

'(I) to strengthen the Union's economic presence in the region;
(ii) to contribute to stability in Asia by promoting international co-operation and understanding;
(iii) to promote the economic development of the less-prosperous countries and regions in Asia;
(iv) to contribute to the development and consolidation of democracy and the rule of law, and respect of fundamental freedoms in Asia.'(European Economy, p.58)

This new approached is based on the concept of a 'partnership of equals'.

In 1994, the Government of Singapore proposed an Asia-Europe meeting-*ASEM*. The meeting was meant as a forum of discussions between Asia and Europe in order to find common interests especially related to their relationship with the United States. The first ASEM took place in Bangkok on 1 and 2 March 1996. The participants were the Heads of State or Government, or their representatives, of the 15 EU Member States, the President of the European Commission, the ASEAN countries, Japan, China and South Korea. The 7 ASEAN states are: Brunei, Vietnam, Singapore, Thailand, Indonesia, Malaysia and Philippines. Other countries may become involved in the process since there is no limitation regarding the number of participants.

THE TRADE BETWEEN EUROPE AND ASIA NOWADAYS

1. Europe & Japan

The relationship between the EU and Japan is one involving two mature and developed economies. In 1995 98% of EU imports from Japan were manufactured products. From these, 49.4% represented machinery and 24.5% transport equipment. In the same year, in EU exports to Japan the share of manufactured goods was 83.9%. The transport equipment represented 20.1% and other, including clothing&textiles - 29.1%. This composition of the bilateral trade was relatively unchanged during the last years.

2. EU and the developing ASEM (D-ASEM)

In respect to these trade links, one can observe two main trends:

1. *the rate of growth of the trade with the EU*

If in 1988 the trade with the D-ASEM countries represented *5.1%* of EU's total trade, in 1995 D-ASEM share was of *10.7%*. China is an exception, with a much slower growth in 1995. This can be explained by China's slower economic growth and 'because an increasing part of Chinese trade is registered as Hong Kong trade, which would mask the true origin and direction of the trade flows.' (European Economy, p.65) Nevertheless, the figures for Hong Kong are also altered.

2. *the composition of trade and the evolution of the sectorial elements*

D-ASEM states had a rapid economic growth which was possible due to high levels of domestic and foreign investment followed by an increased industrialisation. Such a change usually means also changes in the trading behaviour of the countries.This can be illustrated by the evolution of trade by sectors in the D-ASEM countries, as follows:

a) the reduction of traditional exports:

- if in 1988 *23%*of EU imports from D-ASEM countries were agricultural products, in 1995 only*10%* were of this kind;
- EU textile imports from the region dropped from *20%* of EU total imports in 1988 to *13%* in 1995.

Thus, there is a reduction in the shares of EU imports of the usual products of these developing countries.

b) a two-way trade of industrial goods:

- the main increasing of EU exports towards the region was in machinery and transport equipment;
- in the same time, EU imports of machinery and transport goods from D-ASEM countries increased. EU became a net importer of such goods, with increasing positive flows.

c) other manufactured products maintained a relatively constant share of exports and imports during the period 1988-1995.

3. Asian intra-regional trade

The economic growth of the region was followed by a demand increasing more rapidly than in the rest of the world. As a consequence, there was also a growth of the intraregional trade. 'Asian countries also began to move from an economic strategy of import substitution to one of export-led growth which necessitated a large degree of trade liberalization (...).' (European Economy, p.67)

One should not ignore the large amount of intraregional investment which led to a large degree of intra-firm trade and the concentration of Japan aid programmes in the region.

The results were:

- intra-ASEM imports increased from *31%* of total imports in 1988 to *39%* in 1995;
- intra-ASEM exports increased from *24%* of total exports in 1988 to *34%* in 1995.

(Source: Comtrade, Rev.2& Rev.3)

EU INVESTMENT IN ASIA

Between trade and investment is a two-way relationship. Specialists agreed on four main elements of the relationship. These are:

1. *Substitution*. This refers to a situation where goods can be delivered to a market through trade or through Foreign Direct Investment (FDI).The latter would affect trade flows by substituting exports from the source country.

2. *Complementarity.* Complementary FDI is intended to increase the attractiveness of exports from the source country by backing these up with maintenance or other support. Thus, it would, in the first place, stimulate trade.

3. *Market expansion*. If production from FDI is oriented not solely to the market of the host country but towards other markets as well, markets which were not served previously through exports from the source country, this constitutes a net increase of the total trade flows.

4. *Trade generation.* A FDI in a host country usually is likely to attract imports from the source country. At the beginning, these imports consist of capital goods, equipment, engineering and technical services,etc. Later, the imports can be inputs for the production in the form of intermediate products or services. In the long run, the host country can experience an economic growth and FDI can stimulate the demand for imports from the host country in the source country.

The European Commission/Unctad study *'Investing in Asia's dynamism'* analysed FDI trends in developing Asia. Beside D-ASEM countries, developing Asia includes: Afghanistan, Bangladesh, Cambodia, Hong Kong, India, Democratic People's Republic of Korea, Laos, Macao, Maldives, Mongolia, Myanmar, Nepal, Pakistan, Sri Lanka and Taiwan. Developing Asia overtook Latin America and the Caribbean in terms of FDI in the 1980s and, nowadays, accounts for around half of total FDI stock in developing countries. The great majority of FDI to developing Asia had as recipients the D-ASEM states. The other important recipients were Hong Kong and Taiwan.

Investment flow figures demonstrate that developing Asia doubled its share in world FDI flows between the first half of the 1980s and the early 1990s, from *8%* to *18%;* there was an increase in its share of developing countries FDI stock from 30*%* to *52%* during 1980-94.(table 69, European Economy, p.71)

The triad- Japan, the United States and the European Union- were the main investors in the region for a period, still accounting for 48%, the largest share, of FDI stock in developing Asia. Meantime, the decline of the importance of the triad gave way to FDI made by intraregional developing country transnational corporations (TNCs), which means increased regional economic links in East and South-East Asia.

Among triad investments in developing Asia, EU has the smallest FDI stock. If in the 1980s it accounted for 16 to 17% of the FDI inward stock of nine East and South-East Asian developing economies, in 1993 held only 13%. Both Japan and the United States had a higher share but registered also a decline in the 1990s compared with the 1980s.

EU's investments in the total FDI stock of ASEAN economies declined during 1985-1993 due to several main reasons:

1. the European companies concentrate on opportunities closer to their origin country, that is on EU countries as a result of the Single European Market (SEM) and on the emerging market economies from Central and Eastern European Countries (CEECs);
2. 'a lack of knowledge concerning the opportunities for investment which exist in Asia on the part of European firms, or where this knowledge has existed, an inability to respond adequately to the opportunities ' (Eur.Econ., p.72).

One should not omit the fact that the situation is not the same for all Asian developing countries. EU FDI has approximately maintained or increased its share in inward FDI stock and flows in the four Asian newly industrialised countries (NICs) or the four 'Dragons'. The increase was concentrated mainly in the republic of Korea, even if countries as Singapore and Hong Kong have closer historical links with some EU Member States.

In this context, is not surprising that the EU decided to increase its presence in Asia trough trade and/or investments.

CONCLUSION: WHY THE 'NEW ASIA STRATEGY' AND WHAT POTENTIAL BENEFITS IN THE FUTURE ?

The 'New Asia strategy' underlined EU's main interests in Asia, namely:

- to benefit from the economic opportunities and to respond to the challenges in a region with the fastest growing countries in the world;
- to support the integration into the market-based world trading system of countries moving from State controlled to market-oriented economies, such as China, India, Vietnam;
- to give assistance in order to solve the problem of poverty in these developing countries.

As we mentioned earlier, the Asia-Europe meeting, ASEM, was intended to become a forum for discussions between the European Union and Asian states. Regarding trade, the 25 States agreed to make efforts in order to co-ordinate their commercial policy, mainly within existing international organisations, especially within the WTO (World Trade Organisation). At the ASEM meeting was established that there would be an ASEM follow-up procedure for assessing how the aims could be achieved.

The ASEM follow-up covers economic and political elements, the former seeming to show concrete results. Different actions are aimed to promote trade and investment, to facilitate them between the regions involved.

After the 1996 ASEM some processes have been set in motion. The parts involved in these processes are:

- governments;
- the senior officials meeting on trade and investment (SOMTI) ;
- business representatives;
- the Asia-Europe business forum;
- the government-business working group on investment.

The first *SOMTI* meeting was held in July 1996. The discussions focused, firstly, on WTO issues in order to provide a forum for diverse ideas and views on different topics and to assist in the preparation of the Singapore meeting. Secondly, non-WTO issues were discussed, mainly regarding trade and investment facilitation measures. The participants agreed on the preparation of a trade facilitation action plan (TFAP). This plan was meant to help reduce the non-tariff barriers and to promote trade opportunities between Europe and Asia.

The joint *government-business working group on investment promotion* decided, in parallel, to prepare an investment promotion plan under the guidance of SOMTI and the business forum. The plan should refer to regulatory issues and to real investment promotion.

In October 1996, the *ASEM business forum* met for the first time in Paris. It discussed mainly the same problems of trade liberalisation and investment promotion but from a business perspective. The forum underlined the need to stimulate business co-operation through various forms of alliance, especially through joint ventures. For such actions to be successful, more training and staff exchanges, as well as a greater flow of information between the regions are a must. There was also a suggestion regarding the possible creation of a Europe-Asia infrastructure fund.

Under the ASEM umbrella other actions are being undertaken, which will have direct and indirect effect upon trade and investment. The Heads of State or Government agreed on co-operation in other areas with potential impact on economic flows:

1. an environmental technology centre in Thailand;
2. an Asia-Europe university exchange program;
3. the proposal on the establishment of an expert group on the promotion of technology exchanges;
4. co-operation for the development of the Mekong delta;

Some other activities worth to be mentioned, in the field of economic co-operation are:

- different business conferences and meetings of the Economic Ministers, Finance Ministers,etc.;
- a study on economic synergy between Europe and Asia;
- a study on integrated railway networks, both trans-Europe and trans-Asia.

The processes and actions undertaken after the first ASEM had political impact and created a favorable climate for a permanent dialogue, for a better understanding of the situation in both regions. Initiatives such as those mentioned earlier in this paper could assist in the creation of much stronger links between Asia and Europe. Ultimately, trade, investment and economic flows in general could benefit from such cooperation.

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STUDIA UNIVERSITATIS BABEŞ-BOLYAI, STUDIA EUROPAEA, XLIII, 1-2, 1998

CEFTA, A WAITING ROOM OF THE EUROPEAN UNION OR A VALID STRUCTURE WITHIN THE CONTEXT OF A UNITED EUROPE?

DORIN CONSTANTIN DOMUŢA

ABSTRACT. *CEFTA, as a structure, is a compulsory step meant to accelerate the integration of its members in the European Union, which will be no longer fit within the context of a United Europe. Yet, its denomination might be used in the structure of EU in order to delineate the new states members from the central and eastern Europe. We might expect that, once the integrated enthusiasm and the economic requirements are fulfilled, the countries of the central and eastern Europe should capitalize the history and the common tradition, and belonging to CEFTA should acquire new meaning.*

The disintegration of the Socialist block in the year 1989 represented a difficult moment for the countries of the central and eastern part of Europe and one of the most important consequences was the dissolving of the Council for Mutual Economic Assistance (CMEA) and of the Warsaw Pact. After a short moment of political and economic elation, the countries from the area realized that the transition to a democratic society and to market economy would be extremely difficult and it would not take place without the politic and economic support of the European Union. The high standard of living of Western Europe and the security warranties that the area was offering made joining the EU become the main objective of all the countries from the Eastern Europe.

Within this context, some central European countries - Czechoslovakia, Poland and Hungary - met in May 1990 at Bratislava in order to try to create a new framework of regional economic cooperation, which should substitute the CMEA. The result of this meeting was the signing at Visegrad (February 1991) of a document, the "Declaration of cooperation between the Republic of Hungary, the Czech and Slovak Federal Republics, and the Republic of Poland, on the Road to European Integration". The main aim of this declaration was the achieving of a kind of regional cooperation with a view to accelerate the integration process of the central and eastern European Countries in the security, legal, economic and political structures of the European Union.

The common objective of the integration in the UE and the attempt to model a common approach of the relationship with the western Europe were very important elements, which stood behind the project from Visegrad. At the same time, the pressure exercised by the western European countries was decisive, as

they wished that the three countries, together with the other countries from the area, should build a system of mutual connections, as a start for the political and economical approach of the future integration within the European structures.

The wish to join the EU of the countries from the central and eastern Europe lead to a powerful competition among them, in order to obtain financial support and security warranties coming from the western part of Europe, which lead to an unexpected destructive effect upon the relation ships they had developed among themselves. A strong stimulus for the maintenance and increase of the cooperation was that, however, the chances of accepting an application for joining the EU of any country from the area are bigger when the respective country is already involved into the cooperation in the area, the regional integration being an essential tool in the postwar effort of rebuilding Europe.

As one of the preconditions of integration in the European Union is the regional cooperation, and as this political argument found a counterpart in the economical necessities of the countries from the central Europe, the importance of coming to an agreement of free trade among the central European countries became obvious. The ministers in charge with the foreign trade from Hungary, Poland and Czechoslovakia signed the Central European Free Trade Agreement on December 21st 1992 at Krakow. On March 1st 1993, CEFTA began to work on the basis of a temporary agreement, so that, as a result of the ratification performed by the states which signed it, it came in force on July 1st 1994, a time when the agreement contained four countries, after Czechoslovakia was divided. The liberalization of the trade among the CEFTA countries was similar with the one performed by the bilateral agreements concluded by these countries with the European Union and with the European Free Trade Agreement (EFTA). CEFTA has worked for two more years, without any meaningful changes. In 1996, Slovenia was admitted to enter CEFTA, a fact which introduced an element of heterogeneity within the group, as Slovenia had the gross domestic product about twice larger than the other states members, and a different structure of the commerce. The following increase of the number of CEFTA members was in 1997 when Romania also joined the agreement. In 1998, Bulgaria became the 7th CEFTA member, and probably the last one.

CEFTA is a multilateral trade agreement, not a trade area, not either a custom union or an entity with a common trade policy, not taking into account to achieve an alternative to the EU, by this type of agreement. The final target was to obtain the EU membership as soon as possible. Within this context, the Central European Free Trade Agreement - whose achievement the EU leaders encouraged - might be looked at as a "warm up" before joining. In fact, the conditions meant to turn CEFTA into a real institution having an integrating purpose are missing, as its members are facing the same economic problems, in spite of their different levels of economical development. The structure of their exports is similar and they all need foreign capital in order to achieve a real meaningful progress, this is why they cannot offer one another mutual support to generate the financial resources.

The countries from the central and eastern Europe look at CEFTA as an objective already achieved, as they as a matter of fact wish to integrate in the EU. As the European Union is the most advanced integrating group all over the world, CEFTA is regarded as a temporary structure, meant for a more rapid joining within the EU. CEFTA is also a spatial structure more reduced than the ideal area of integration as there is a limit to join the CEFTA which will not possible be surpassed. The integration within CEFTA will not surpass the present liberalization of trade and a certain political coordination, so that it should no affect the integration of its members in the EU. The changes of the eastern economies require enormous investments and an important technological transfer, and this might be much easier to perform, if these countries were EU members.

Another point of view is the one expressed by Kierzkowski (Kierzkowski, H.,1996), who considers that the assistance given by the European Union to the CEFTA members is near the upper limits and the countries which are on a transition step, should not expect a better access on the EU market after having joined. On the other hand, as a result of having joined, these countries should adopt a communitary economical policy, which would be a major disadvantage taking into account the economical discrepancies among the CEFTA countries and western Europe. The full integration within the EU will be possible only when the economies of the central and eastern countries will reach the western standard, and this transformation is attainable within the framework offered by CEFTA and with a peculiar economical policy.

This point of view seems to be shared by the European Union. The joining conditions imposed on the CEFTA countries are much more difficult than those which Spain, Portugal and Greece had to fulfil. This means that the EU doesn't wish to accept too soon new members and would rather support CEFTA as a partial substitute for the integration. On the other hand, we must not neglect that the EU already benefits by the liberalization of the trade of the countries from eastern Europe more than they themselves, and the building of CEFTA increased these benefits.

CEFTA is therefore a regional multilateral trading agreement and not an international trading institution, which does not follow economical or political integration of the states members. Thus, CEFTA has not an international legal status, its own staff, neither does it have a headquarter, its members not accepting the idea of becoming an institution, as it has been conceived as a transition structure towards the integration in the EU.

In the future the dissolving of CEFTA is foreseen, as well as its members joining the EU, although there are voices which state that the importance of the Central European Free Trade Agreement does not consist in integrating the states members to the EU, but in performing a better cooperation among these countries, which are so close in terms of the economical and political relationship already known as traditional ones.

The Central European Free Trade Agreement reunited in it countries having a close standard of economical development, having a common cultural and historical patrimony. The joining of the CEFTA states to the EU will bring about a change in the geometry of this institutional structure, by the distinctive feature

opened by the peculiarities of the culture and mentalities of the 100 million inhabitants of the central and eastern area. CEFTA, as a structure will cease to exist, as it lacks a personal political structure and its economical provisions are covered by those of the European Union.

CEFTA, as a structure, is a compulsory step meant to accelerate the integration of its members in the European Union, which will be no longer fit within the context of a United Europe. Yet, it might be used in the structure of EU, namely its denomination to be used in order to delineate the new states members of the central and eastern Europe. We might expect that, once the integrated enthusiasm and the economic requirements are fulfilled, the countries of the central and eastern Europe should capitalize the history and the common tradition, and belonging to CEFTA should acquire new meaning.

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STUDIA UNIVERSITATIS BABEŞ-BOLYAI, STUDIA EUROPAEA, XLIII, 1-2, 1998

ANALYSING DETERMINANTS OF WAGES AND MEASURING WAGE DISCRIMINATION BASED ON GENDER IN THE HUNGARIAN LABOUR MARKET

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ABSTRACT. Differences in earnings among working people have long represented the focus of economic theory and applied research. Many authors accounted for substantial differences in earnings, induced by various levels of education, experience, as well as by other factors, such as gender, race, occupation, geographic region.

This paper aims to provide an analysis of this kind, pertaining to the transitional Hungarian labour market. In the first stage, using the available data and following the line of reasoning introduced by the Human Capital theorists, we assess which are the main determinants of wages. Secondly, using the traditional Oaxaca-Blinder decomposition, we measure the level of wage discrimination based on gender, since gender has been traditionally considered as a source of chronic wage gap between working individuals.

1. Review of Relevant Literature

The determinants of wages and the resulting causes of wage differentials are complex and controversial. Apart from differences in productive abilities, related to schooling and on-the-job training, many authors account for non-standard factors like culture, tradition and even overt discrimination (Oaxaca, 1973).

1.1. Determinants of Wages

Out of the many attempts to explain the determinants of wages, the most credible and persuasive conjectures and models are those due to the exponents of Human Capital theory (Jacob Mincer, Theodore Schultz and Gary Becker).

Briefly, the Human Capital theory states that wages (incomes, earnings) are regarded by the workers as a compensating return to their investment in improving their own human capital. Such investment can be related to their education (schooling), experience (which can be general or specific on-the-job training), job search and migration. In other words, employers and employees are involved into a rational cost-benefit analysis, where the investment in human capital is assumed to be compensated over the life cycle by wages.

Theorists of labour markets have noticed that, typically, the data on the distribution of earnings and wages is skewed, with median earnings usually being less than the mean. As a consequence, researchers prefer nowadays to use a log-normal distribution for earnings, since it is considered to fit "*quite well, perhaps better than any other rather simple distribution*"[1].

Typically, econometric equations on determinants of wages have the following form (also called "*the statistical earnings function*"):

$$\ln y_i = f(s_i, X_i, z_i) + u_i, \quad i = 1,...,n \qquad (1)$$

where: y_i - earnings/wages of individual i
s_i - schooling/education of individual i
X_i - stock of experience of individual i
z_i - other factors (gender, race, occupation, region, etc)
u_i - normally distributed random disturbance.

Based on this general form, Jacob Mincer suggested the use of the following equation:

$$\ln y_i = \ln y_o + \beta_1 s_i + \beta_2 X_i + u_i \qquad (2)$$

where $\ln y_o$ represents earnings without education and experience

Human capital theorists claim that earnings should generally not be constant after leaving school, but rather follow a concave parabolic shape, peaking somewhere in mid-life, after this point displaying diminishing returns. Accordingly, Mincer suggested an improved form, quadratic in experience:

$$\ln y_i = \ln y_o + \beta_1 s_i + \beta_2 X_i + \beta_3 X_i^2 + u_i \qquad (3)$$

with $\beta_2 > 0$ and $\beta_3 < 0$

Moreover, Mincer also proposed the use of a term that would account for the interactions between schooling and experience:

$$\ln y_i = \ln y_o + \beta_1 s_i + \beta_2 X_i + \beta_3 X_i^2 + \beta_4 s_i X_i + u_i \qquad (4)$$

The equations presented so far only controlled for variables related to investments in human capital. However, as noted in the general form (1), wage determination also accounts for differences in other factors, such as gender, race, occupation, region. The earnings function can be modified to incorporate the effects of these factors, by using dummy variables:

[1] E., Berndt, 1991.

$$\ln y_i = \ln y_o + \alpha_1 C_{1i} + \beta_1 s_i + \beta_2 X_i + \beta_3 X_i^2 + \beta_4 s_i X_i + u_i \qquad (5)$$

C_1 refers to a category of workers that constantly earns more (less) than the rest of the sample population. Thus α_1 measures the constant difference in log earnings for being a member of that category (i.e. women, blue collars, etc), and it is positive (negative) when the group is favoured (disadvantaged) with respect to the others.

As previously (equation 4), the use of dummies also allows for creating interaction terms (e.g. using a term referring to those women which are blue collars). However, these interaction terms should be used with parsimony, since their interpretation is doubtful and subject to errors.

In spite of their widespread usage, inclusion of dummy variables into the earnings model suffers from an important shortcoming. Namely, it implicitly assumes that rates of return on schooling, experience, etc are similar for the different categories. In other words, it is inferred that slopes β_1, β_2, β_3 and β_4 are the same for all the subgroups of the population, and that they differ only through the constant term.

However, one might expect the parameters of the statistical earnings function to differ significantly between various subgroups, one typical example being the men/women wage differentials (where the slope coefficients for schooling, and especially for experience, are expected to differ sharply)[2]. In this case, the mere specification of dummy variables in relation with the intercept term does not fully accommodate the differences, and the analysis of wage differentials needs a particular methodology, which is presented in more detail in the following section.

1.2. Estimating the Wage Effects of Discrimination

It is widely known (and proved by empirical research) that there is substantial inequality in earnings by gender groups. Once again, the versatile theory of human capital offers an explanation for these findings. It states that both employers and female employees expect the latter to leave the work force for prolonged periods of time to rear children and to carry out household activities. In these circumstances, the incentives of employers and women to invest in training and schooling are smaller, since the remaining work period over which the benefits from these investments can be recouped is likely to be much smaller. As such, it should not be surprising that women tend to have lower wages, since they have lower productive capacities. Accordingly, the main issue of the theories of (gender) discrimination is to ascertain to what extent the earning differentials are due to variations in individual *endowments* (productive capacities, such as schooling or experience), as opposed to *pure discriminatory policies*.

[2] Similar wage differentials could come by due to racial discrimination or union membership. We limit our study to gender discrimination, since the Hungarian labour market is not notoriously affected by racial segregation, and, on the other hand, data on union membership is not available.

Labour market discrimination is present when a minority group (in our case, women) with abilities, education, training and experience equal to those of majority workers (men) are provided inferior treatment in hiring, occupational access, promotion or wage rates.[3] Thus, gender discrimination can take various forms: "*pre-labour market discrimination*" (when women have less access to productivity augmenting opportunities), "*occupational barriers*" (given equal qualifications, women occupy less favourable jobs than men) and "*wage discrimination*" (given equal productive abilities, women receive lower pay than men).

Unfortunately, the study of the first two categories of discrimination, apart from requiring detailed data, is also very controversial. Economists did not agree so far on what variables should be exogenously taken when assessing the pre-market discrimination, or on what is the direction of causality in women's career choices (for example, some authors claim that, knowing a priori that they will later on be discriminated, women rationally decide not to invest in education).

Therefore, we will restrict our study to the traditional wage discrimination theories (unequal pay for equal work). This is described as the situation when, even after adjusting for differences in productive abilities, there is still a wage gap remaining. The classical model for measuring the extent of discrimination has been developed simultaneously by Ronald Oaxaca and Alan Blinder in 1973. The initial assumption of the model is that, in the absence of discrimination, the returns to equal productive abilities, encompassed by earnings, should be identical for each group of workers. Discrimination is revealed by differences in the estimated coefficients of the earnings function. Differences are not confined only to the intercept terms, but also include variations in estimated coefficients (distinct slopes).

The methodology is as follows:

a/ Data is collected for the two groups, men (m) and women (f).

b/ Two separate earnings functions are estimated for the m, f groups:

$$\ln y_m = X\beta_m + u_m \quad \text{and} \quad \ln y_f = X\beta_f + u_f$$

where y and u are respectively vectors of wages and random disturbance terms, and X is a matrix of observations on explanatory variables (constant term, schooling, experience, occupations, etc), with observations on the *same explanatory variables* in each of the two groups. We denote the least squares estimates of β_m and β_f as b_m and b_f respectively .

By the properties of least squares estimators, we have:

$$\overline{\ln y_m} = \overline{X}_m b_m \quad \text{and} \quad \overline{\ln y_f} = \overline{X}_f b_f$$

$$\overline{\ln y_m} - \overline{\ln y_f} = \overline{X}_m b_m - \overline{X}_f b_f \qquad (6)$$

[3] Berndt, E. 1991

Since $\Delta b = b_m - b_f$ and, implicitly, $b_f = b_m - \Delta b$,

it follows that

$$\overline{\ln y_m} - \overline{\ln y_f} = b_m\left(\overline{X_m} - \overline{X_f}\right) + \overline{X_f}\Delta b \qquad (7)$$

Equation (7) states *that the mean difference in log earnings between men and women workers* (also known as "*raw discrimination*") *can be decomposed into the effects of differences in their average endowments* (first term of the right hand side) *and the effects of pure discrimination* (second term on the right hand side*), which encompasses the difference in returns to similar endowments for the two groups analysed*. In this equation, average endowment differences are weighted by the men's estimated coefficients, while differences in the estimated coefficients are weighted by average characteristics of the disadvantaged workers.

The decomposition in equation (7) is not unique. In the same way we can obtain:

$$\overline{\ln y_m} - \overline{\ln y_f} = b_f\left(\overline{X_m} - \overline{X_f}\right) + \overline{X_m}\Delta b \qquad (8)$$

Here average endowment differences are weighted by disadvantaged workers' (women) estimated coefficients, and coefficient differences are weighted by mean characteristics of the advantaged workers (men).

The choice of the weighting method (overpayment of men or underpayment of women) is subjected to what Oaxaca (1973) called "the familiar index problem". He suggested the use of both in order to determine the range of possible values[4].

Although very popular, the Oaxaca-Blinder decomposition suffers from two major caveats: 1) in order to provide an accurate measure of discrimination, the wage equation must include all the relevant variables that could control for differences in productive abilities and 2) the procedure becomes inappropriate if there are any reasons to suspect systematic differences among groups.

2. Data Description

The data set refers to the Hungarian labour market in 1995. The sample, consisting of 2000 cross-sectional observations, is part of a larger set, which provides information on income (denoted INC), net income (NETINC), gender (GENDER), education (ED), occupation (OCCUP), age (AGE) and experience (EXPER) (See Appendix for descriptive statistics).

One observation has to be made at this point. Analysis of data shows that mean experience is calculated with the following formula:

[4] Later, Oaxaca and Ransom suggested a more complicated weighting procedure, claimed to offer a more accurate decomposition of wages. The authors submit an algebraic proof for their statement.

$\overline{EXPER} = AGE - \overline{ED} - 6$, the error being very small[5].

As such, the simultaneous use of the three mentioned variables would induce multicollinearity and therefore has to be avoided[6]. Out of the three, age seems to have the least relevance for the Human Capital theory. Consequently, usage of the other two (experience and education) will be preferred.

3. The General Model

The model used for the wage equation is a fairly standard Human Capital model, to which relevant dummy variables have been added. According to the available data, the dummies are:

- Gender (denoted FE), with values 0 for men and 1 for women;
- Occupational - the initial OCCUP variable is split into 3 categories: BLUE for blue collar workers, WHITE for white collars and MANAG for managers. Conforming to the theoretical grounds, only two of them are used in the regression (BLUE and MANAG), the third one being included in the constant term.

Before proceeding in estimating the model, it is important to mention that the dependent variable used is the income (more precisely, log income), denoted INC. The available data does not provide information on the number of hours, or the hourly wage, or on the extent of fringe benefits, bonus payments, etc. Consequently, income is preferred to net income, which could induce a set of disturbances, due to non-linear taxation schemes, pension plans, unemployment payments a.s.o. If we had used the net income, not all the relevant factors could have been captured in the wage model and, consequently, the results would not necessarily have conformed to the predictions of the Human Capital theory.

Therefore, the model used for the wage equation is the following:

$$\ln INC_i = \ln INC_0 + \beta_1 ED_i + \beta_2 EXPER_i + \beta_3 EXPER_i^2 + \beta_4 FE_i + \\ + \beta_5 BLUE_i + \beta_6 MANAG_i + u_i \qquad (9)$$

On this model we will further apply the Oaxaca-Blinder decomposition.

[5] Precisely, $21.83 \approx 39.28 - 11.62 - 6$, with an error of 0.17

[6] Many authors state that this way of computing experience overstates the results for women, as it does not account for the intervals when they are out of the labour force.

4. Empirical Results

A brief look at the descriptive statistics of the variables gives the following information:

Standard means	All sample	Women	Men	Blue	White	Managerial
Income	39343.3	33521.78	45049.70	30335.89	45607.32	102581.08
Education	11.62	11.66	11.58	9.97	13.27	15.07
Experience	21.83	21.55	22.10	22.51	20.84	25.21
Nr. of observ.	2000	990	1010	1033	910	57

There is a noticeable wage gap between men/women. On average, men earn monthly 11537.92 HUF more than women. Data also shows that women are slightly more educated than men (if only this information would be taken into consideration, the human capital theory would imply that women should earn more), but in the same time they are less experienced. It remains to be examined how much of this wage gap will reflect pure discrimination, after controlling for the productive capacities. Unsurprisingly, managers earn more than the other two categories, and conforming to the predictions of the human capital theory, their higher wages reflect their longer educational attainment.

4.1. Estimation of the Model

The model was estimated by OLS method[7], using LIMDEP 7.1. as statistical software package. LIMDEP automatically adjusts for heteroskedasticity (according to White's consistent covariance matrix estimation method). The results are as follows:

$$\ln INC = 9.7284 + 0.0545\ ED + 0.0239\ EXPER - 0.0003\ EXPER^2 -$$

$$(0.0000) \quad (0.0000) \quad (0.0000) \quad (0.0004)$$

$$- 0.3078\ FE - 0.2875\ BLUE + 0.41725\ MANAG$$

$$(0.0000) \quad (0.0000) \quad (0.0000)$$

$R^2 = 0.362$, Adjusted $R^2 = 0.360$, DW=1.937

[7] Many other nested models have been tested, but this one displayed the best results, in terms of R-squares and significance of coefficients, as well as F-test.

The model does not display serial correlation (which is not surprising, given the cross-sectional nature of data). All coefficients are significant at 1% significance level and the F-value is very high (F(6,1993)=188.68), showing that the functional form is appropriate. The Breusch-Pagan test (chi-squared distribution) shows heteroskedasticity, which is quite natural, since the sample is obviously very varied (the occupational dummies are very broadly defined).

The values of the coefficients support the claims of the Human Capital theory. Wages are an increasing function of education and experience. Also, the coefficient for the experience-squared is negative, displaying diminishing returns to experience, as predicted by the theory.

The signs of the coefficients for dummies implies that, with respect to the reference group (white collars), the blue collars earn less and the managers earn more, which is, once again, a rather predictable outcome with respect to the conjectures of the human capital theory.

The coefficient of the gender dummy shows that, on average, the difference between men and women log-earnings is equal to 0.3078. Otherwise stated,

$$\overline{INC}_f / \overline{INC}_m = e^{-0.3078} = 0.73$$

It means that, on average, women are paid 73% of the wages of men. This difference, however, must be decomposed into effects of *objective* differences in productive abilities and *subjective* discrimination (so far we have assumed that the returns on productive abilities were equal for men and women).

4.2. Wage Discrimination

In order to analyse the gender discrimination, the model described by equation (9) was estimated separately for the two gender groups (by dropping the gender dummy). The OLS estimation results of the two regressions are as follows[8]:

[8] RESET Test (a general misspecification test - F distribution- indicating possible incorrect functional form, omitted variables or heteroskedasticity) and PE test (a model selection test for the appropriate transformation of the dependent variable) have been applied to the two models. According to the t-statistics, it resulted that the log linear function of earnings is preferable to the simple linear one. The same result was obtained for the model from the pooled sample. RESET shows misspecification, which is quite predictable, if only we think about the heteroskedasticity involved by such heterogeneous data.

	Const	Exper	EXSQ	Ed	Blue	Manag	Adjusted Rsq
Females	9.5165 (0.0000)	0.0128 (0.0072)	-0.00005 (0.6480)	0.0546 (0.0000)	-0.3013 (0.0000)	0.3634 (0.0000)	0.3431
Males	9.6382 (0.0000)	0.0345 (0.0000)	-0.0005 (0.0000)	0.0539 (0.0000)	-0.2847 (0.0000)	0.4460 (0.0001)	0.3208

The table shows that the squared experience is insignificant for the women's subgroup (unless we choose a very high level of significance). This means that women's wage equation is not quadratic in experience. In other words, women do not reach a point in their working life after which the returns to experience tend to decrease, but rather tend to have returns continuously and linearly increasing with experience. In pursuing the Oaxaca-Blinder approach, we have to decide what alternative to follow, given the fact that the same regression must be used for both groups. We face a trade-off between using in the regression for women a redundant variable (EXSQ), or to drop from the men's regression a variable which is significant and consequently encounter the omitted variable problem.

A separate regression has been estimated for the women's group, but excluding the EXSQ variable. The adjusted R-square improved insignificantly (from 0.3431 to 0.3428), and the coefficients of the significant variables modified only slightly. In contrast, dropping the significant variable from the men's equation induced a more dramatic decrease in the adjusted R-squared (from 0.3208 to 0.3090), while some coefficients changed significantly.

Under these circumstances, we decided to artificially maintain the variable EXSQ in the wage equation for women, on the grounds of minimising the harmful effects on the statistic results. With this model, we can further on estimate the effects of discrimination.

The results on the decomposition of wages in discriminatory and endowment effects are synthesised in the following table:

Method of weighting	Raw discrimination	Difference in endowments	Discrimination
Underpayment of females (1)	0.7912	1.0781	0.7338
Overpayment of males (2)	0.7912	1.0775	0.7343

where the decomposition (1) is as follows:

$$\overline{\ln y_f} - \overline{\ln y_m} = b_f\left(\overline{X_f} - \overline{X_m}\right) + \overline{X_m}\left(b_f - b_m\right) \text{ (underpayment of women)}$$

Algebraically, it can be shown that:

$$\overline{y_f} / \overline{y_m} = \exp\left[b_f\left(\overline{X_f} - \overline{X_m}\right)\right] * \exp\left[\overline{X_m}\left(b_f - b_m\right)\right]$$

A similar procedure (2) can be applied for estimating the overpayment of men:

$$\overline{\ln y_f} - \overline{\ln y_m} = b_m\left(\overline{X_f} - \overline{X_m}\right) + \overline{X_f}\left(b_f - b_m\right)$$

The table proves that the choice of the method of indexing is not very significant in this case, since the results are relatively similar. Whatever the method, the Oaxaca-Blinder decomposition shows that, even after controlling for the objective differences in the productive capacities, there still remains a wage gap between genders in the sample we took under consideration.

Taking logarithms[9] we get:

- 0.235 = 0.075 - 0.310 (the difference in the averaged logarithms of wages of women/men = the difference in the endowments of women/men + the amount by which women are discriminated in the labour market)

As such, surprisingly, we obtain that, though they have slightly superior productive abilities, Hungarian women are discriminated in the labour market (i.e. the returns to their endowments are lower than for men), up to the extent to which the observed women/men average earnings ratio equals 0.79. It is noticeable that, in the absence of their superior productive abilities, the level of discrimination against them would be even higher (73% of men salaries).

However, these results should be treated with caution, due to at least the following: experience of women is overstated in the data set, the regression for women includes a redundant variable, as well as the usual omitted variable problem.

In order to strengthen our conclusion, a Chow test has been administrated. The null hypothesis was that all intercept and slope coefficients were simultaneously equal in the men/women equations. The very high value obtained (40.29) rejects the null hypothesis, once again proving that the simple use of a dummy for gender is not enough to capture the whole complexity of the wage differentials.

An extension of the research with the available data was to study the level of discrimination within the occupational categories. Though the procedure was the same as the one used previously, the results should be treated with suspicion, due to the high heteroskedasticity existent within the very heterogeneous occupational

[9] It is obvious that the information from the table can be written as a product:

0.73 = 1.07* 0.79

groups, and due to the limited number of observations (particularly for managers). Moreover, the regression equations for the occupational groups have very low fit and include very little exogenous variables (e.g. for white collars and managers we only use as regressors the constant and education). We present the results in the following table:

Occupation	Raw discr.	Overpayment (1)		Underpayment (2)	
		discrim	endow	discrim	endow
Blue	0.70	0.73	0.96	0.73	0.96
White	0.70	0.73	0.96	0.74	0.95
Manager	0.60	0.77	0.77	0.68	0.87

An interesting fact is that, within any of the occupational groups, women do not display anymore a higher endowment than their male colleagues. Therefore, pure discrimination within the occupational groups is smaller than the one reflected in the wage ratio existent in the entire market. Women's smaller salaries are not only due to discriminatory policies, but also to less productivity. Moreover, in our sample, the same discriminatory pattern seems to apply for white and for blue collar workers. As for women managers, it appears that they have the lowest salaries in rapport to their male colleagues, but this fact is equally due to discrimination and to their low capabilities, when compared to men's.

5. Conclusions

Using a standard Human Capital theory model with conventional dummies and the Oaxaca-Blinder decomposition of wage differentials, we tried to analyse the wage discrimination based on gender in the Hungarian labour market. The results obtained for the wage equation were very much conforming to the predictions of the theory (wages can be computed as returns to one's investments in improving his productive abilities), except for the women's subsample, where the concavity of the earnings function with respect to the experience variable did not hold. The level of raw gender discrimination on wages captured by the pooled sample was 0.79 (women receive approximately 80% of men's salaries). However, this result must be detailed, since existence of differences in salaries reflects not only *subjective* gender discrimination, but also *objective* differences in the productive abilities of men and women. Surprisingly, in the case of Hungarian labour market, women overall tend to have higher productive endowments than men (if we ignore the doubts induced by the measurement of experience). This fact accounts for an even higher level of discrimination in the returns to the productive abilities than the one observed in the market through the ratio of average incomes for the two gender groups. In contrast, when confined to the three occupational

groups, analysis of gender discrimination results in opposite conclusions. Within these groups, women have less productive capacities and, though discrimination exists, it is less than the one observed through the market ratio of wages.

All the results of this survey have to be treated with caution, due to the usual measurement and theoretical econometric problems (miss-specification of the model, sampling error, heteroskedasticity, imperfect functioning of the market, etc). As for the doubts induced by the microeconomic and macroeconomic theory, it is very unlikely to believe that wages have a rapid adjustment to marginal productivity in the inflationary conditions of the transitional period. Therefore, it is questionable to what extent the predictions of the human capital theory apply in an imperfectly functioning and continuously adjusting labour market.

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APPENDIX

Description of Data

	Mean	Std Dev	Minimum	Maximum	Description
INC	39343.39	32723.84	10500	804500	Monthly gross income, HUF
NETINC	22120.81	14350.84	7824	350327	Monthly net income, HUF
GENDER	1.49	0.50	1	2	Male: 1 (1010) Female: 2 (990)
ED	11.62	2.82	7	17	Number of years
OCCUP	1.51	0.55	1	3	1 blue collar (1033) 2 white collar, non-managerial (910) 3 managerial (57)
AGE	39.28	10.17	17	66	Years
EXPER	21.83	10.42	0	49	Work experience, in years

STUDIA UNIVERSITATIS BABEŞ-BOLYAI, STUDIA EUROPAEA, XLIII, 1-2, 1998

III. INFORMATION SOCIETY

MULTIMEDIA EXTENSIONS FOR RELATIONAL DATABASES

HOREA TODORAN

ABSTRACT. Multimedia databases are systems capable of storing, manipulating and efficiently retrieving large amounts of both multimedia and alphanumeric data. A multimedia database should integrate at least three fundamental technologies: a conventional database management system (with all the capacities it offers), a hierarchical storage system (to store multimedia data on-, near- and off-line) and an information retrieval system (to support also content-based information retrieval).

On the market there are a very few systems which are exclusively developed as multimedia databases. In most cases, applications that are typical for multimedia databases have been developed within already built systems, especially within relational and object-oriented databases. They are focusing on certain aspects (document-imaging, image or video administration), rather than being general-purpose applications.

Relational and object-oriented systems have been extended with new capacities, extremely important in terms of an efficient manipulation of multimedia data: variable-length data types, hierarchical storage management, content retrieval capabilities and so on. This article aims to present and compare multimedia extensions for relational databases. An overview of the relational model makes the further understanding of various aspects easier.

Overview of the Relational Model

The relational model has been developed by E.F. Codd at the beginning of the 70's and is still highly appreciated due to its elegant and concise mathematical foundation. The relational model can be characterized through three powerful features [Oszu 1991]:

1. very simple data structures- relations represented through bidimensional tables between which relationships can be defined;
2. high level of data consistency, due to integrity rules included in the description of data structures and due to normalization;
3. the model allows the set-oriented manipulation of relations, which has led to the development of powerful languages based either on set theory (relational algebra), or on logic (relational calculus).

Definition 1 - Relation

A *relation R* defined over *n* sets $D_1, D_2, ..., D_n$ is a set of distinct elements (n-tuples) $<d_1, d_2, ..., d_n>$, where $d_1 \in D_1, d_2 \in D_2, ..., d_n \in D_n$. It can be formally represented through a bidimensional table, whose columns are called *attributes* or *fields* and whose rows are called *relation elements* or *records*.

Each attribute of the relation has its own *type*, defined through a set of possible values - *domain* - $D_1, D_2, ..., D_n$ and through specific *operations*.

Definition 2 - Degree and cardinality of a relation

The *degree* of a relation is the number of the attributes of that specific relation. The *cardinality* of the relation consists on the number of the records of the relation at one specific moment.

Definition 3 - Key of a relation

The *key* of a relation scheme is the minimum nonempty subset of its attributes such that the values of the attributes comprising the key uniquely identify each tuple of the relation [Oszu 1996].

The attributes that make up a key are called *prime attributes*. A set of attributes which includes a key is usually called a *superkey*.

According to definition 1 the elements of a relation are distinct, which leads to the conclusion that each relation has at least one key (in the worst case, the key is made up of all attributes). For some relations there may be more than one possibility for the key; each alternative is considered to be *candidate key*. In this case, one of the candidate keys is chosen as *primary key*; the others are *secondary keys*.

Definition-4 - Relational database

A *relational database* consists of a collection of relations which vary in time (they can be modified through insert, delete or update operations) [Țâmbulea 1992].

A relational database has three main components [Khoshafian 1996]:

1. the structure of the database - describes the structure of the tables within the database and the relationships between these tables;
2. integrity rules either on the values from the columns and the rows of a table, or on the relationships between tables. For example, primary key attributes cannot be null - *entity rule*, or a set of attributes from a relation cannot make up a key for an other relation - *referential integrity rule*.
3. the collection of files which contain the data itself.

Relational databases are defined through a *data description language* (DDL) which allows the definition of the data types needed for the attributes of the relations, the definition of relations (the name and the set of attributes for each table within the database) and the specification of integrity restrictions.
Relational databases are manipulated through a *data manipulation language* (DML) also called *query language*. There are two fundamental groups of query languages developed for relational databases: relational algebra based languages and relational calculus based languages. The most popular commercial query languages are SQL (Structured Query Language), Quel și QBE (Query by Example) with various versions.

Definition 5 - Normalization of relational databases

Normalization is a step-by-step reversible process of replacing a given collection of relations by successive collections in which relations have a progressively simpler and more regular structure [Tsichritzis 1977].

The aim of normalization is to obtain "better" relations by eliminating anomalies like data redundancy, difficult updates, inserts or deletes. Through the normalization process each relation is brought to a level of normalization, it means that the relation is of a specific *normal form* (it satisfies the conditions associated with that normal form). There are five normal forms defined: the first three have been introduced by Codd (1NF, 2NF, 3NF), and the last two have been defined by Fagin (4NF și 5NF). There is also a hierarchical relationship between these normal forms:

$$5NF \subset 4NF \subset 3NF \subset 2NF \subset 1NF,$$

it means that each 5NF relation is also a 4NF relation and so on.

Definition 6 - Relational database management system

A *relational database management system* (RDBMS) is a software component supporting the relational model and a relational language [Oszu 1996]. The interface between the RSGBD and the resources of the computer it is running on (memory, processor, disk drives) consists on the operating system installed on the computer. The interface between the RSGBD and other subsystems (ex. the terminal monitor) consists on the communication subsystem.

Extension of relational databases with variable-length data types

According to the relational model, data from the same column of a table have the same data type. The main data types supported by the relational databases (numeric, character, date/time, boolean) have a fixed length, which is specified in the description of the table structure. It means that the length of each record (equal with the sum of the lengths of the fields) is also fixed.

Unlike the alphanumeric data, multimedia data are very large, up to gigabytes. Extending a relational database to efficiently organize and manipulate multimedia data should, nevertheless, take this point into account and try to manage all the problems deriving from it.

A relational database with multimedia extensions should allow users to declare *long variable-length fields* within its tables, fields that will correspond to multimedia data. Using fixed-length fields for multimedia data is completely inefficient. In order to prove the importance of variable-length data types for databases comprising multimedia data, we describe two variable-length data types included in the SQL92 standard [Khoshafian 1996].

Within the SQL89 standard, once a character string field is defined as

CHARACTER (150)

all the strings from that field have the length of 150 characters. Even if, for a specific record, the corresponding character string contains only 25 characters, the other 125 positions are allocated and filled with blanks. This mechanism leads to the waste of approximately 125 bytes.

SQL92 has developed a new data type to declare variable-length strings. A field defined as

CHARACTER VARYING (150)

also contains strings of a maximum of 150 characters, but, for a 25 characters string only 25 bytes will be allocated.

A similar mechanism - BIT VARYING - has been developed for variable-length bit strings. It can be efficiently used to declare and manipulate *bit-map* images.

We have to mention that SQL92 does not specify a maximum limit for the length of a variable-length field. Specific implementations set this limit somewhere between 256 bytes (which are totally insufficient for multimedia data) and a couple of gigabytes.

Definition 7 - Binary Large Objects (BLOBs)
A *BLOB* is a very large string of bits or bytes.

BLOBs are used to store vary large data, as multimedia data are. When we refer to the manipulation of data stored in a BLOB it is more reasonable to suppose that we will read and update substrings than the whole BLOB at once. It is more reasonable to consider it, because we have to take into account the fact that very large data can outnumber the system memory or produce traffic jam on the communication network.

Although each software company has its own conventions concerning the manipulation of BLOBs, [Khoshafian 1996] describes five fundamental operations that should be available for Binary Large OBjects:

CreateBLOBHandle(<BLOB Handle>, <BLOB Content>) - creates a handle to the <BLOB Content> BLOB, which could be a directory path, a string or a pointer to a buffer.

ReadBLOB(<BLOB Handle>, <Byte Position>, <Number of Bytes>, <BLOB Content>) - returns <*Number of Bytes*> bytes starting with <*Byte Position*> position from <*BLOB Handle*> BLOB into the <*BLOB Content*> BLOB.

InsertIntoBLOB(<BLOB Handle>, <Byte Position>, <Number of Bytes>, <BLOB Content>) - inserts <*Number of Bytes*> bytes at <*Byte Position*> position into the <*BLOB Handle*> BLOB, from the <*BLOB Content*> BLOB.

DeleteBLOB(<BLOB Handle>, <Byte Position>, <Number of Bytes>) - deletes <*Number of Bytes*> bytes starting with <*Byte Position*> position from the <*BLOB Handle*> BLOB.

AppendBLOB(<BLOB Handle>, <Number of Bytes>, <BLOB Content>) - appends <*Number of Bytes*> bytes from the <*BLOB Content*> BLOB into the <*BLOB Handle*> BLOB.

Sybase SQL Server system also supports a variable-length data type, VARCHAR, whose maximum length is limited to 255 bytes. If the user wants to store strings larger than 255 bytes, Sybase SQL Server allows him/her to use another variable-length data type: TEXT.

TEXT data are stored in BLOBs, in fixed-length segments of 2 kilobytes, which means that, no matter if data from a TEXT column corresponding to a specific record needs 1 byte or 1500 bytes, the system will allocate a 2 kilobytes segment for it.

Using the two variable-length data types (VARCHAR and TEXT) with the above-mentioned features, application developers in Sybase SQL Server aiming at a very efficient data storage can combine, in a flexible manner, columns of these two data types to split the data (even if it implies additional code to re-join the data together). For instance, if data in a column regularly contains more than 255 bytes, but significantly less than 2 kilobytes (the length of a TEXT segment), then the user can combine a couple of VARCHAR columns [Comparison].

Another variable-length data type, IMAGE, can be used to declare fields in tables, in order to store images. TEXT and IMAGE data can be manipulated through functions in TransactSQL, which is a query language included in Sybase SQL Server system. The maximum limit for the length of a TEXT or IMAGE field is 2GB.

An interesting situation linked with the manipulation of character strings occurs in InterBase, relational database system produced by Borland. The manual guide states that the use of the VARCHAR data type leads to less storage capacity needed comparing to the use of the CHAR data type (which fills with blanks up to the declared length of the string).

On the other hand, Paul Reeves, InterBase independent consultant, states that a VARCHAR column actually requires more storage space than a CHAR column, because it uses 2 additional bytes that indicate the length of the string. He also affirms that, before being stored, CHAR strings are compressed, by eliminating the useless blanks [Reeves].

If this is the case, then another question raises: why do we need VARCHARs? The answer comes also from Reeves, who states that when a select is done on a VARCHAR column, InterBase returns the exact stored value. When a select is done on a CHAR column, InterBase returns both the stored value and the necessary padding with blanks up to the declared length of the string. So, the user is forced to eliminate himself the useless blanks.

As a conclusion, in InterBase, as far as storage goes, the VARCHAR data type requires 2 additional bytes than the CHAR data type, but, in terms of data manipulation performance, theVARCHAR data type brings important advantages.

Comparing it with the similar data type from Sybase SQL Server, VARCHAR from InterBase allows a much higher maximum length for strings of this type, which is 32 kilobytes. If data contains more than 32 kilobytes, InterBase allows the developer to use BLOBs. The main feature of BLOBs in InterBase is the ability of the application developer to set the length of the segment for each BLOB according to his/her needs.

The Access Basic programming language used to develop modules in Access relational system supports a fundamental data type, called ***string***, which allows developers to manipulate character strings. Access strings store 1character/1byte and can be both fixed-length and variable-length data types.
Fixed-length strings, declared as

string*length

can contain up to 2^{16}-1=65535 characters (64 kilobytes). Shorter strings are filled with blanks up to the limit declared through ***length***.

Variable-length strings are very simple to declare, through the reserved word ***string*** and contain up to 2^{31} (2 billion approximately) characters. The number of bytes used for the storage of a variable-length string is equal with the number of characters it contains [Access].

The Text, Memo și OLE Object data types used to define fields in the tables of the relational databases in Access are also based on the ***string*** data type. Text is used for character strings with the length between 1 și 255, Memo for strings of maximum 65535 characters, and OLE Object for multimedia linked and embedded objects (Word documents, Excel datasheets, graphics, sounds), which require maximum 1 Gigabytes [Țâmbulea 1996], [Access].

Hierarchical storage management for relational databases

As concerns the internal storage representation of the TEXT and IMAGE column values in Sybase SQL Server, they contain pointers to linked lists of pages that store multimedia data. Each page has a storing capacity of maximum 2 kilobytes (version 10 of the product).

In terms of storage for tables and multimedia data, the pages for IMAGE and TEXT are stored separately from the database tables. The system allows users to place images and long text data from a particular table in a separate segment. The segments can be parts of different storage devices. The system administrator has the ability to map new devices into the system, using the DISK INIT command. The possibility to store images and texts on different volumes or storage media than the database tables, increases the flexibility in using different device types to store multimedia data. It does not mean that Sybase SQL Server supports a hierarchical data storage. The system requires that the segments containing the data are available on the network, and does not inform the user that an object is *off-line*.

A different perspective in terms of data storage is offered by XDP, product of Plexus. XDP supports a hierarchical storage system able of direct administrating magnetic disks, optical disks and optical jukeboxes for *on-line*, *near-line* and *off-line* storage.

If the required data is stored *off-line*, on an optical disk placed on a shelf, the *media manager* application sends a message to the system operator telling which disk to introduce into the jukebox to make the needed data accessible. *Media manager* receives this piece of information from the *data manager*, the application that manages, through a catalogue, all the multimedia data stored *on-, near-* și *off-line.*

If the disk containing the required data is already in a jukebox, but the volume has not been yet mounted, *media manager* sends to the *jukebox manager* the request to mount that volume. Then, the disk input/output units (DIO) read the data from the disk and send it to the *data manager*, which sends it further back to the application programs that have requested it at first.

In addition to this hierarchical storage system, XDP also includes a database management system (DBMS) providing all database functionalities (persistence, queries, transactions and so on), including a SQL interface for queries. There are also two variable-length data types which have been implemented (BYTES și TEXT). Using these data types, users are able to define columns to store up to 2 gigabytes of data in the database tables [Khoshafian 1996].

Content-based retrieval in relational database systems

In terms of multimedia data, in addition to retrieval based on different attributes, an enormous importance is given to content-based retrieval of information. Notable advances have been made for text documents, where content-based retrieval means to search for words or expressions into the text. As concerns images, sound or video, the steps forward are very small and slow, mainly because of the complexity of these kinds of data and the difficulty to recognize patterns or shapes. The next paragraphs will deal with two content-based retrieval mechanisms used in Sybase SQL Server and Access respectively.

In Sybase SQL Server, the PATINDEX function included into the TransactSQL language, implements a simple mechanism of content-based retrieval. It has the following syntax:

PATINDEX("pattern", column)

The function returns the starting position of the first occurrence of "pattern" in column.

For instance, we can create a table to store the abstracts of some articles from "Studia Europaea" publication:

```
CREATE TABLE Studia (
        ArticolID       Integer
        Title           CHAR[30]
        Author          CHAR[30]
        Abstract        TEXT)
```

Let us consider that we have already inserted a few records into the table. For example:

> INSERT Studia VALUES (1, "Towards a European Nationalism", "Ovidiu Pecican", "Can we speak today about European nationalism, in addition to other classical types of nationalism? This is one of the main questions of our time, to which this essay tries to give a thorough response."

The call of PATINDEX ("nationalism", abstract) for the above-mentioned record will return the starting position of the first occurrence of the word "nationalism" into the abstract column (it is, byte number 35).

Microsoft Access also supports content-based retrieval in Text and Memo fields using the Like comparison operator.

Let us consider the following Access table (Table1):

TextID	Text
1	My name is John.
2	John is my first name.
3	I am John.
4	Your name is Daniel.
5	Your name is not John.
6	I am not Daniel.

We want to design a SQL query to return all records that contain in the field Text the word "name". The query will be:

```
SELECT Table1.TextID, Table1.Text
FROM Table1
WHERE (((Table1.Text) Like "* name *"));
```

The Like operator verifies if an expression (Table1.Text) matches a given pattern ("* name *"). The pattern can either ask for a total match ("My name is John."), or use "wildcard characters" to replace parts of the text which are not very important for the search:

* - matches any number of characters;
? - matches any single character;
- matches any single digit;
[] - matches any character within the brackets (set of characters);
! - matches any character but not those following the ! in the list;
- (a-c) all the characters between a and c.

Wildcards characters can match themselves only when enclosed in brackets. They can be combined to obtain more complex patterns. (Further information concerning the use of the Like operator in Access can be find in [Access], [Browne 1996] și [Țâmbulea 1996])

Conclusions

Relational databases do not represent the best solution for developing multimedia applications in a database environment. It is quite obvious that object-oriented databases offer better support for complex multimedia objects, better integration with the host programming language (such as C++), extensibility and ability to create new data types (classes), better concurrency control and transaction support.

Nevertheless, relational database systems are very popular and used at a very large-scale all around the world. This is the main reason for software companies to try to extend their relational environments with mechanisms that allow them to support and manipulate large amounts of multimedia data. Variable-length data types, hierarchical storage management (HSM) and content-based information retrieval systems are important advances in terms of extending relational databases with multimedia capabilities.

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STUDIA UNIVERSITATIS BABEŞ-BOLYAI, STUDIA EUROPAEA, XLIII, 1-2, 1998

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION FACILITIES IN INTERNET

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ABSTRACT. The paper describes the electronic information and communication techniques provided in Internet, which generated a genuine revolution in last decade's communications. The implementation of these techniques became possible as computer networks appeared and evolved, eventually generating the Internet global network. There are also revealed the differences between various types of computer networks and the possibility of integrating local area networks or individual computers within wide area networks. An accessible software enables users with various backgrounds to access Internet information as an alternative to a classical library, sometimes more efficient, or to communicate with people whose computers are connected to the Internet.

1. Introduction

Communication is of vital importance for the development of human society; it evolved constantly, pursuing technological progress. Last centuries were dominated by particular industrial technologies. The XVIIIth century, characterised by the Industrial Revolution, was technologically dominated by mechanical systems, whereas the XIXth century was the vapour machine era. Unlike these periods, whose main technology had physical, mechanical features, the XXth century promotes mainly information processing technologies by collecting, manipulating and distributing information. Conclusive examples in this respect are: global telephone networks, radio and television systems, satellite communications and the development of computer networks, promoted by hardware and software industries.

One can notice that computer industry is the field with the most dynamic evolution in our century, both from hardware and software points of view. This progress is spectacular since 50 years ago the computation power of a computer with considerable dimensions was not even close to the nowadays one, at an approximate dimension scale of $1/10^4$. Processor speed evolved as well, approximately with a factor of 10 for each decade. For example, a fast computer of the '70s (CDC600) executed an instruction in 100ns, whereas a fast computer of the '90s ran it in 1ns [5]. While first electronic computation systems were centralised, making use only of their own capacity, distributed computation systems and computer networks strongly enhanced the capabilities of computation

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systems. The rhythm of development and miniaturisation encountered in computer industry was hard to imagine even in the most optimistic scenarios a few decades ago. Thinking by analogy and taking into account the existing technological capabilities, one can predict that the future evolution of computers will be very promising.

2. Computer networks

2.1. The evolution of electronic computation systems

First computers had very large dimensions and required a whole room, with a compulsory acclimatisation installation; for this type of systems, the term of *computer centre* has been used. Afterwards, minicomputers appeared; they were interactive multi-user systems that could be simultaneously used by many persons, working at different terminals. Minicomputers were followed by microcomputers - interactive single-user systems, whose central unit was a microprocessor. The widely spread personal computers used today belong to this category.

In order to increase processing capabilities of electronic computation systems and to create, for many users, means of accessing databases created in certain centres, the natural idea of connecting computers appeared, generating computer networks. A *computer network* [5] contains autonomous computers (which can function independently), interconnected by various communication media - material ones (cables, optical fibres, communication satellites, etc.) or wave type connections, which ensure information exchange.

The network model containing a personal computer for each user and one or more shared servers is known as the client-server model: a client machine sends requests to a server machine and receives answers. Usually, there is a large number of clients and a small number of servers.

A computer network is sustained by indispensable network software, which solves complex communication problems. The most widely used network softwares are Novell Netware and Windows NT for local networks and UNIX type systems (Linux) especially for integrating local networks in wider area networks. Therefore, a network software enables to:

- share physical and logical (basic and application software, data bases) resources with the other users
- send messages to the network users
- protect users' data and files against unauthorised access by means of network security services.

Communication problems between network computers are solved at an elementary level by *communication protocols*, which equalise technological differences and perform the necessary connections [3]. A protocol consists of a set of rules that describe relations between activities with common goals: data transmission, error detection and correction, dividing messages into packages - smaller components that facilitate the transmission - and reassembling them at the

destination, package routing (special machines named routers choose the best path for a package, until the next router). Designing communication protocols requires a special professional training and pursues a high degree of standardisation. The communication protocol in Internet is named TCP/IP (see 3.2) while local networks use specific protocols (like IPX/SPX, NetBEUI).

In the whole world there exist a large number of computer networks of various types, used in research or education, commercial or governmental purposes. Some networks are designed and administrated rigorously, while others are not so well planned. Services provided by computer networks range from common sharing and communication to e-mail, file transfer, remote connection and execution. Technical designing details may also be very different, in respect with transmission media, naming and routing algorithms, protocols. A network may be used by one corporation or by very large communities, with common professional or informational interests.

2.2. Advantages and social impact of computer networks

Sharing resources within a network is very important when a group of people - researchers or firm employees - work on the same projects, exchanging information: in a computer network, equipments, programs and data will be available for each authorised user connected to the network, regardless his geographical location. Practically, a remote user may access data as if they were local. One can say that computer networks break geographical barriers, by enabling co-operation between people who do not necessarily work in the same city, by using electronic communication means and sharing applications or documents (for example, a change made by a user will immediately be visible for the other members of his research group). Therefore, we can conclude that a computer network also represents a *communication medium* between people who are connected to the network. One can predict that the importance of computer networks as communication media will increase in the future.

Using computer networks instead of large independent computing systems is *cheaper*: the latter are about 10 times faster than personal computers but their cost is approximately 1000 times bigger [5].

Computer networks ensure a good *fiability* by sharing access to various storage equipments (for example, files can be copied on hard-disks from different machines, so that, if one of them is not available, the other copies may be used). If a processor crashes, its tasks can be performed by the others and the final goal accomplished, even if this is done with reduced efficiency. This characteristic is crucial for strategic activities, such as military, banking, flight control, nuclear reactor safety, etc.

A computer network may *evolve* in successive steps, by adding new servers or clients, whenever this becomes necessary. By comparison, centralised computation systems' capabilities can only be improved by replacement with a better system, operation that involved high costs and causes nuisances to users.

We can conclude that the exploitation of computer networks is economically and technologically motivated; computer networks became popular along the 80's, when technological developments made them very profitable from the price / capabilities point of view.

During the '90s, computer networks began to provide home services to individual persons, connected through a modem and a phone line, to a (Internet) service provider.

After the constitution of the Internet network, both local networks belonging to firms or institutions, and private persons connected to Internet, may use various specific services [5]:

- ***information*** by accessing a remote data base. A very efficient and accessible mean of consulting information from different domains is World Wide Web system (see 4.4), created at CERN (Geneva). Information belongs to a very large range of fields: science, art, business, politics, sport, hobbies, etc.
  Moreover, people are or will be able to perform, interactively by using special designed software, operations that would otherwise require physical presence (payments, ticket reservation, shopping, etc.). An example of such a domain, more and more transformed by electronic progress, is banking: virtual banking becomes a reality since the banking system starts to provide its services in a new, electronic form, by using computer networks and special designed software. People are (will be) able to pay their taxes or administrate their banking accounts by electronic means. Thousands of firms are already offering their catalogues for on-line consultation and electronic shopping.
  Press is also available by electronic means. Moreover, the tendency is that it become more and more personalised: a person may request only the articles on the subjects he/she is interested in. The next step will be to create *electronic libraries*, a leap that can be compared to the medieval transition from manuscripts to printed books.
- ***communication*** between persons who are connected to the computer network. The *e-mail* is an electronic communication system based on written messages (possibly transmitted to a whole group of persons), which was added to the over one hundred years old, classical telephone system. Electronic messages may also contain audio and video sequences.
  Direct dialogs, using talk-chat mechanisms, ensure an on-line communication between users; in the future, they will also be able to see or hear each other. This technology enables real time meetings, named *videoconferences*, between persons with different geographical locations. Virtual meetings could be used for distance learning, medical advises, business or political meetings.
  Global interest groups have already been formed and it seems that the whole world prepares to take part in electronic communications, on various subjects. One can predict that, in the future, electronic communications will take over all kinds of transportation-type services, as e-mail already overpowered the classical postal service.

- ***interactive divertissement*** - usually, for private persons. Divertissement is nowadays a rapidly growing industry, which develops new technologies. The most successful application appears to be so far video on demand (see 4.5.1), which will enable the user to select and immediately watch at home any film or television program. The films of the future, provided with alternative scenarios, could become interactive so that the spectator would play an active role in unfolding the action. Television shows could also be interactive, with direct contributions from spectators.
  A divertissement domain that encountered a huge success and whose future seems to be very promising is game industry. There already exist real-time, simulation games for many persons; as computer graphics and distributed techniques evolve, virtual reality, created by high quality 3D animation, will soon be shared.

All these new technologies are possible due to the new communication technologies, based on computer networks.

The advantages of electronic information and communication techniques provided within computer networks are obvious. But a more thorough analysis reveals that these modern means of communication also give birth to new ethical and social problems.

The appearance of various interest groups within network information systems is already a reality. But sometimes the subjects dealt with interfere with the world of illegality, violence, lack of ethics. The matter of a rigorous control upon these aspects generates vivid debates about the limits of individual liberties, is not legally defined yet and, besides, would be difficult to implement. As in the case of a phone company, network operators can not control communications (texts, sounds or images) between its users because the right of "free speech" would be violated. At a smaller scale, similar problems appear within firms or education institutes: could messages with illegal content be intercepted? It seems that these debates will carry on for a long time.

One can notice that as soon as communication technologies evolve, general society problems emerge into this field in new, adapted forms.

2.3. Geographical classification of computer networks

According to the geographical area they cover, which induces particular transmission methods and node distributions (topologies), computer networks may be: local, metropolitan or wide area ones [5].

Local Area Networks (LAN) are located within a single building or campus (at most a few kilometres wide); they usually belong to a firm, department or institution and aim at sharing resources and exchanging information. They have small dimensions, therefore data transmission is performed without notable delays, within predicted periods. Transmission speed ranges between 10 and 100Mbps, even a few hundreds in latest networks and errors are seldomly encountered. Usually, LANs are administrated using Novell Netware or Windows NT network software.

Metropolitan Area Networks (MAN) are extended LANs, which use similar technologies, without package routing systems. They can cover up to a whole city and can be connected to local TV cable systems.

Wide Area Networks (WAN) covers a large area - at least a country or a continent. The basic design principle of wide networks aims at creating a simple, functional model by separating communication activities (performed by dedicated sub-nets) from application ones (performed by hosts). Therefore, the network contains machines that run users' programs (applications), named *hosts*; they are inter-connected within a *communication sub-net* that transports messages between hosts (like in the phone system). Transmission routing within the communication sub-net is performed by special commutation nodes, named routers, which are connected, sometimes, even by communication satellites (therefore, packages "travel" from a router to another, following in each node the best path obtained in that moment). If many LANs are connected, each of them must contain (at least) a host for applications and a router for communication (through other routers) with the global network

Radio networks. It seems that the field with the most dynamic evolution in computer industry is dedicated to mobile computers, based on radio type digital communication[1]. Mobile computers are usually used in radio networks, which, obviously, are not as efficient as classical networks (they have smaller speed, stronger interference) but may also be connected using network cables or phone lines. The possibility of connecting mobile computation devices within LANs or WANs is very important when their owners travel frequently (by car, by plane, etc.). Radio networks are very useful in geographical zones where cable connections are difficult to establish. Sometimes, cable networks are combined with radio networks - it is the case of a transportation mean with a LAN that is connected by radio to a fix router.

By integrating mobile computers into a wide computer network, their owners may use e-mail services, send / receive faxes or access remote files, as in a usual WAN.

Networks of different types may be connected within a WAN by using special machines, named *gateways*, which assure all hardware and software necessary translations in order to obtain compatibility. A collection of inter-connected networks is named *inter-net*; an inter-net may be formed by many LANs connected within a WAN, where new hosts and users are therefore introduced. The *Internet* - the most popular network in the world - is a specific inter-net, which connects universities, commercial and governmental organisations, firms, and even private persons.

[1] Their inventor was G. Marconi who, in 1901, created a connection between a ship and a fix point on the coast by using a telegraph and the Morse code.

3. The Internet network

3.1. The evolution of Internet

The global network known today as Internet was generated by two networks that appeared in the United States: ARPANET, initially created for the Department of Defence, and NSFNET, belonging to the National Science Foundation.

Predicting the importance of inter-connecting technologies, in the late '60 [3], the Defence Advanced Research Projects Agency (DARPA), belonging to the United Stated Department of Defence initiated researches in this field. As these events unfolded during the cold war, these studies aimed at creating a command and control network that would survive a possible nuclear war. One of the main goals of the network technology - based on commuting packages, after the revolutionary idea launched in the early '60s by Paul Baran from RAND Corporation - and of its software was to overcome accidental equipment loss, without interrupting existing communications. These researches gave birth to ***ARPANET,*** which would soon cover the whole US territory and constitute the kernel of the future Internet, by connecting a large number of American research centres (departments of energy, health, defence, research institutes, such as the famous MIT and universities: Stanford, Princeton, Yale, University of California). Afterwards, Internet expanded in the whole world.

After its creation, ARPANET constantly developed, integrating even radio and satellite transmissions. Researches for efficient protocols generated TCP/IP protocol, which was specially designed for inter-net communication, an essential goal as more and more nets were connected to ARPANET. These protocols were integrated in Berkeley Unix: researchers from University of California in Berkeley developed a network programming interface and wrote a large number of applications, utility and administration programs in order to facilitate inter-connections.

In 1983, ARPANET contained over 200 IMPs (Interface Message Processors, similar to nowadays routers) and hundreds of hosts [5], was stable and successful. At that time, the Defence Communication Agency isolated the military net components (around 160 IMPs - 110 in USA and 50 abroad) within *Milnet* and implemented security mechanisms towards the rest of the net.

During the '80s, many nets were connected to ARPANET. In order to facilitate an efficient access to all hosts within the rapidly growing net, the Domain Name System (DNS) was introduced. DNS created correspondences between hosts names and IP addresses (see 3.2) and was later used in Internet, as a distributed data base system for retaining names.

In 1990, ARPANET was already overpowered by the modern net it gave birth to and was closed, but its tremendous contribution to the creation of Internet remains very important.

NSFNET. At the end of the '70s, ARNANET had an enormous impact upon university research since it enabled researchers to share data and co-operate in various projects. Though, not all universities had the necessary research contracts with the Department of Defence, which would allow them to connect to ARPANET. Aiming at creating to possibility of a universal access, the National Science Foundation (NSA) organised a virtual net, named CSNET [5], which supported phone links and was connected to ARPANET and other nets. Using CSNET, researchers could ring and leave e-mails for their partners, which would be read later.

In 1984, NSF initiated the development of a high-speed net, successor of ARPANET, which would be open to all university research groups. Therefore, the first TCP/IP wide area network appeared; it contained a sub-net similar to ARPANET one, constituted of six supercomputers spread on the US territory. Afterwards, NSF financed 20 regional networks connected to the basic sub-net, linking thousands of universities, research laboratories, libraries and museums. This net, named NSFNET, was a great success and was connected to ARPANET.

As time passed, NSFNET connection requests started to overpass governmental financing capabilities; moreover, many commercial organisations were interested in a network connection but their status did not match NSF's formerly stated principles. The first step in the commercialisation process was the appearance of a non-profit corporation, named Advanced Networks and Services (ANS), which was constituted by MERIT, MCI and IBM firms, and supported by NSF. In 1990, ANS took over NSFNET, upgraded communication links speeding them from 1.5Mbps to 45Mbps and formed ANSNET [5].

In December 1991, the US Congress authorised a new research and educational net, named National Research and Educational Network (NREN), a giga-byte speed network (therefore, faster than NSFNET). The final goal was to create a fast national informational highway before the end of the millennium. In 1995, when America Online bought ANSNET, the main NSFNET became unnecessary, since many companies had IP commercial nets; consequently, regional NSF nets were disconnected and acquired IP inter-connection services.

In Europe there appeared wide nets similar to NSFNET: EBONE - oriented on research and EuropaNET - in the commercial field. Moreover, each European country has one or more national networks, similar to regional NSF nets.

Internet. After the 1st of January 1983, TCP/IP became ARPANET's unique official protocol; this fact considerably increased the number of users and nets connected to ARPANET. The growth became exponential after connecting ARPANET and NSFNET, so that around the mid '80s, people started to refer to this independent wide area net as ***Internet***.

The US Internet has expanded in the whole world, forming a global network, which enables a large number of users, world-wide, to access considerable amounts of information retained in special nodes of the net.

In 1990, Internet comprised 3000 nets and 200,000 computers; in 1992, there were over 1 million hosts and in 1995 there existed many backbones (main nets), tens of thousands of LANs, millions of hosts and tens of millions of users [5]. It was estimated that Internet's size almost doubles each year. The growth of

Internet is also sustained by the integration of existing nets, such as NASA, IBM, high energy physics nets in the USA, as well as academic European nets. Personal computers may be connected to Internet using a modem for the connection to the router of a service provider and being assigned a temporary IP address.

In 1992, the ***Internet Society*** was founded, in order to promote Internet and to take over its administration.

Traditional Internet applications [5] are:

- *E-mail* (see 4.1) - used since ARPANET. Nowadays, these electronic communications overpower classical ones (telephone or postal services). Various e-mail programs are available on any type of computer
- *News* (see 4.3) are transmitted within groups with common interests, which may exchange messages. There are thousands on news groups on various technical or non-technical subjects (science, art, hobbies, politics, etc.). Each group has specific etiquette and customs.
- *Remote connection* enables a user to access a remote machine, on which he has an account, by using specific programs (Telnet, Rlogin) [3], [4]
- *File transfer*, i. e. file copying from a machine to another (a local and a remote one), is performed using FTP program [1], [4]. All types of files may be transferred, therefore FTP is used for document as well as for data base information transfer.

The academic, governmental and commercial character of Internet transformed in 1990, when World Wide Web appeared, since its accessibility extended Internet access for millions of non-professional users. WWW was invented by Tim Berners Lee at CERN (see 4.4) and it strongly simplified existing Internet facilities. By means of navigation programs (or browsers, such as Mosaic, Netscape Communicator or Internet Explorer), WWW makes available sites containing Web pages with all kinds of information - texts, pictures, audio and video information - and links to other pages (usually, there is a main page with multiple links corresponding to the most important subjects the page deals with). By clicking the item associated to a link, the associated page appears. This system proved to be very useful as a thorough information provider for various fields - a genuine electronic world-wide library. A year after Mosaic was launched on the market, the number of Web servers increased from 100 to 7000 [5] and this evolution tends to become even more dynamic, as WWW turns into a new information and communication system. Internet information and communication facilities will be described in detail in section 4.

Concluding, we may say that *Internet* is a net of nets and an informational medium, which provides various services, computation resources, electronic libraries and databases; by means of its information and communication facilities, Internet is an answer for many requests and creates a specific community of people, interested in using this world-wide net.

Computer network evolution continued with the design of high speed nets (giga-byte nets [5], whereas Internet functions at mega-byte speed) These nets have very important applications in: distance medicine (lab test results may be

send to the net or remotely examined by specialists), virtual meetings, similar to videoconferences, meteorological modelling, radio astronomy, geological prognosis, chemical reactions, complex image processing, etc. Since these problems require complex modelling, very demanding both for hardware and software resources, supercomputers were frequently used within these nets. Giga-byte networks are continuously expanding.

3.2. Addressing and confidentiality in Internet

Network software is based on communication protocols (see 2.1), which are elaborated on hierarchic principles. TCP/IP protocol (Transmission Control Protocol / Internet Protocol), used in Internet, was early integrated in Unix and consists of a set of programs that specify details for computer communication (interconnection conventions, traffic routing, etc.). Briefly, Internet protocol is in charge with package routing (from a router to another) and uses IP addresses, consisting in 4 bytes that encode the name of the destination net and the identifier of the destination machine. IP addresses may be noticed when using Internet services as typical sequences of 4 numbers separated by '**.**'. TCP protocol ensures correct transmission for data flows between different machines (addressing mechanisms use IP addresses).

3.2.1. Domain name system in Internet

The system of 4 bytes IP addresses from Arpanet / Internet was soon improved by a application that simplified user addressing by replacing these "odd" addresses (for a common user) with a system of names. The new system was motivated both by the fact that IP addresses would have been difficult to be used extensively and because a single file containing name - addresses correspondences (the first approach for an addressing system) was highly inefficient. Therefore, the *Domain Name System* (DNS) was introduced in order to convert names into IP addresses and vice-versa. This system appeared as an application that replaced, as Internet expanded, the early system of unique names retained in a special file, which became inadequate for an increasing number of users. DNS solves accurately and in a friendly manner from the user point of view accesses to each node of the net.

DNS is based on a hierarchical scheme of domain names and on a system of distributed databases that implements this hierarchy. DNS aims at creating correspondences between host names or e-mail addresses and IP addresses. The adopted principle is similar to postal addressing, where the destination is specified by: country, county, city, street, number and addressee's name. Within DNS, a name contains a variable number of domains (at most five), separated by '**.**'; each domain corresponds to a group and the last domain has the highest level (is the largest among the ones contained in that address). Domains restrict successively from right to left (from left to right, the first domain is contained in the second, the second - in the third and so on) and no differences are made in respect with letter

case. Each domain name is at most 64 characters long and the whole address must not exceed 255 characters [3]. For example, in *math.mit.edu*, the highest domain is *edu* (corresponding to educational organisations), *mit* is associated with MIT (Massachusetts Institute of Technology) and *math* refers its Mathematics Department; *euro.ubbcluj.ro* denotes the Faculty of European Studies within "Babeș-Bolyai" from Cluj, Romania

Usually, the last domain name corresponds to the country code (for example, Romania's code is *ro*) but the highest level names from ARPANET, the oldest Internet component, have been preserved: *com* for commercial organisations, *edu* for educational organisations, *gov* for governmental (USA) organisations, *mil* for military (USA) organisations, *org* for other organisations, *arpa* for ARPA net within Internet and *net* for network resources [3].

It can be noticed that, following the hierarchical principle stated above, there are a few high level domains; each of them contains many hosts. Every defined domain is partitioned in sub-domains, which are as well divided, and so on, up to sub-domains without descendants (they may contain one or more hosts). This representation method differentiates two identically named sub-domains that are included in two superior domains with different names. Each domain controls its sub-domain allocation. When a new sub-domain is created, the permission of its superior domain is necessary in order to maintain correct sub-domain evidence and to avoid name conflicts.

Practically, the association between IP addresses and domain names is created using resource records (as data) and name servers (machines) [5]. Each domain - either of high level or just a host computer - is associated with a set of resource records, which contain specific domain information (in the simplest case, just the IP address). In fact, DNS establishes correspondences between domain names and their resource records, retained in a specific file, for each domain. This file will be interrogated when a name address is searched for.

Each *name server* "is aware" of all addresses in the zone it manages (for example, a local net) and of other name servers addresses (usually, situated in its proximity). Therefore, addressing may be solved locally or by using other name servers, which have evidence of that address - practically, resource records are used. In order to perform correct addressing, remote name servers retain resource records for a certain period, depending on their type. Name server responsibilities may also be represented as hierarchical structures, which contain information regarding names and addresses in a distributed manner, within responsible servers.

3.2.2. Methods for ensuring data security within computer networks

In a local network, user rights for sharing physical and logical resources are established by the network administrator, by means of specific mechanisms available in the network software (usually, user groups are characterised by certain rights). These restrictions ensure confidentiality among users and an adequate exploitation of the network, diminishing or even eliminating the risks of (intentional

or non-intentional) information loss. Access to local networks integrated in wide area networks is usually protected by fire-wall mechanisms. Though, common data transfers between routers (in WANs) may be intercepted by unauthorised persons (usually, data flows in Internet are not protected); therefore, when confidential data are transferred, encoding becomes necessary.

Since first nets provided only e-mail services or hardware sharings for researchers and firm personnel, they did not rise security problems. But as computer networks became an instrument to perform banking operations, tax payments or shopping, security aspects turned to be very important.

In the simplest form, network security ensures that:

- curious or bad-intentioned persons can not intercept and (worse) modify messages addressed to other persons
- remote services are used only by authorised persons
- problems regarding intercepting and faking authorised messages are solved.

Most security problems are caused by bad-intentioned persons who try to obtain personal benefits or just to test the security mechanisms, from students who amuse themselves trying to access protected data to people who try to deceive, steal and sell information, or even spies or terrorists who attack industrial or military secrets. Under so much pressure generated by all kind of hackers, hardware and software designers must take thorough precautions; often, common protection methods are not very efficient against trained and professionally equipped adversaries and better ones must be found.

Security problems within computer networks may be classified [5] in the following inter-dependent fields:

- *confidentiality* ensures information access only for authorised users and prevents unauthorised accesses
- *authentication* enables to find the real identity of the person someone communicates with, before revealing important information
- *integrity control* ensures information consistence.
- taking responsibility for messages or commercial commands and ensuring their authenticity (for example, if one of the parts in a contract later contests the initial terms, it is important that an authenticity procedure exist)

The above mentioned security aspects may also be found, in some extent, within traditional communication systems: for example, postal services must ensure integrity and confidentiality for the letters it delivers. In various cases, for example, in banking services, an original document is required, copies being rejected. The problem in electronic communications is that the distinction between original and copies is not at all obvious. In every day life, common authentication procedures are frequently applied by recognising human faces, voices, handwritings, but mostly signatures and seals. Manuscript fakes can be detected by graphology experts, who sometimes test even the paper type. Obviously, none of these methods may be applied for electronic messages and new solutions must be found.

3.2.3. A few cryptology methods

Cryptology is the science of encoding (encrytping) and decoding (decrypting). First encoding attempts in the military field are very old. The oldest known code is Cesar's code, which replaced each letter from the initial message with the third next letter in the alphabet, applying a circular principle for the last letters. Such a code, which replaces each letter with another, is a monoalphabetical *substitution* code. A message that was encrypted with a substitution code may be decrypted by applying a correspondence based on the particular letter frequence within a certain language. It can be noticed that the decrypting process is, in some extent, a trial and error process (for example, the original language may be unknown) but pursuing scientific principles, characteristic that is preserved for automatic decoding, too.

Another classical type of cipher is the *transposition* one [5], which does not change the letters, but their order in reading the message - for example, the message can be read column by column in order to obtain the code. The process of computing letter frequencies ensures that we deal with a transposition code.

From manual encoding and decoding, which usually used a well-known algorithm with secret keys for a few years, people passed to automatic encrypting, where the algorithm complexity was no longer relevant since it was computer-executed. These conditions generated algorithms that are so complicated that they are practically irreversible, even if their key is public.

Modern cryptography is characterised by the automatization of classical techniques (substitution and transposition) using simple, high speed circuits, applied successively, so that an output depending on the input after a very complicated function may be obtained [5].

Encrypted information usually contains redundant information for protection against unauthorised decoding. Another important aspect is to assure that unauthorised persons do not send old but authentic messages, which no longer reflect the current situation; the problem is solved using time marks.

The first automatic encryption system DES (Data Encryption System, with a 56 bits key), was developed by IBM and adopted in 1977, by the USA government, as an official standard for non-secret information (for secret information, the key length, in some extent imposed [5], was unsafe). Since 1977, cryptology researchers tried to design machines for breaking DES. The first one was created by Diffie and Hellman (1977), needed less than a day for finding the code and its cost was estimated at 20 million dollars. It seems that nowadays, such a machine would cost 1 million dollars and would need 4 hours [5].

Another famous cipher was IDEA (International Data Encryption Algorithm), created at the Federal Institute of Technology from Zürich (ETHZ) by two Swiss researchers. It uses a 128 bits key and is inspired from previous encrypting methods, DES and the attempts to break DES. A very efficient encoding method was developed at MIT (Massachusetts Institute of Technology) by Rivest, Shamir, Adelman and named, after its creators, RSA [5].

An important direction that modern cryptology evolved in develops techniques for verifying whether the communication partner is the right one and not an impostor, by using authentication protocols. This problem is very complex and requires electronic replacements for authorised signatures used on legal documents. Such a correspondent is named *digital signature* and may be, for example, a secret session key set by two communication partners.

3.2.4. Social implications of encrypting methods

Aspects related to the practical implementation of cryptology results were always very sensitive since they might influence, directly or indirectly, governmental informational strategies. Massive development of encryption techniques outside official institutions, even if their purpose were scientifical, may lead to new techniques that official institutions may not be aware of. Consequently, in some countries (France, for example), non-governmental cryptography is prohibited unless all the keys are provided. In the US there were made attempts to restrict the distribution of cryptographic software, even if the laws were not adequate - it is the well-known case of distributing the PGP e-mail protection program (see 4.1.2) through Internet. The problem of intercepting communications is another sensitive matter. USA government proposed an encryption technique for digital phones, which can offer to the police a special feature for intercepting and decoding any phone call, provided that a court order exists. This matter rose many controversies both from legal and technological points of view.

4. Information and communication services offered in Internet

4.1. E-mail

E-mail or electronic mail exists for over two decades, being a consecrated network application, directly used by a very large number of people.

First e-mail system provided only file transfer services, without verifying message reception, group transmission, message retransmission or combining various types of information within messages (formatted documents, sound, images, etc.). In short time, there appeared more complex e-mail systems, which would become Internet standards.

4.1.1. E-mail system characteristics

E-mail systems usually have of two components: one that enables users to read and send electronic letters, consisting of local programs, which create command, menu or graphic oriented interfaces with the e-mail system - component known as user agent - and the other one - that performs message transportation from source to the destination, consisting of background applications (daemons) - component known as message transferring agent [5], [1]. For keeping incoming

messages, users have mailboxes, which are managed by special commands: creation, destruction, content display, inserting or deleting messages, etc.

Therefore, user agents aim at managing, using various kinds of interfaces, user mail boxes, by means of specific commands (message display, sending or removing, mailbox display, etc.).

The message transfer system [5] uses, on the source - destination connection, specialised protocols, such as SMTP (Simple Mail Transfer Protocol), a program that runs on the destination machine and introduces all received messages into mailboxes.

When users are not directly connected to Internet but through e-mail servers, their PCs communicate with these servers using a protocol that ensures message delivery on local machines. POP3 (Post Office Protocol) is a simple protocol that transfers messages from remote mailboxes to local PC users. More complex protocols ensure message delivery towards users who posses more than one computer (for example, a workstation and laptop), connected to one or more servers.

Many delivery systems provide supplemental facilities, such as message filtering: in respect with certain conditions, appropriate actions may be performed (for example, messages received from particular users could be deleted as soon as they arrive). Another facility is useful when a user does not have access to a computer during a certain period: all messages can be sent, temporarily, to another address, which, in best cases, could be a computer connected to a commercial communication service that would instantly contact the user by alternate communication systems (for example, by pager). Moreover, when the user is unavailable (for example, during holidays), he can use a specialized program that would send a standard explanation reply for each incoming message, but never twice to the same address.

Professional users who receive many messages on certain subjects can install special filtering programs or indicate a general documentation source (possibly a personal one) which would answer the most frequently asked questions (FAQ).

E-mail systems provide a wide range of **functions** [5]:

- *message composition* - as a message creation process, including replying facilities. Besides editing facilities, the system provides assistance for addressing and filling in the message header.
- *message transfer* from the source to the destination is performed automatically, without user intervention. Practically, there is established a connection to the destination (or an intermediate) machine, which is used to transport the message and afterwards deleted.
- *information* about the state of the message (the addresser will be informed whether his message was delivered, rejected or lost). Usually, users are automatically informed in the case of undeliverable mails. When e-mails are used in important communications, confirmation mechanisms are crucial.

- *message display* is necessary for reading the mail. When specific conversions are necessary, they can be performed by specialised programs (for example, in the case of PostScript or sound files).
- *disposition* is the final step and represents the action performed upon a message, consequent to its delivery (reading, deleting, reading and saving, etc.). E-mail systems enable the user to process previously saved messages (they can be re-read or send forward).

Most e-mail systems provide supplemental facilities. For example, when users travel, they can use forward mechanisms to send their messages to a new address. E-mail systems also provide mailing lists facilities, so that messages can be sent to a whole group of persons (for example, a research group). E-mail messages may be sent as carbon copies, high priority messages, encrypted messages or to alternate addressees if the primary addressee is unavailable.

Nowadays, e-mail is used extensively in education and research, commerce, industry since it facilitates co-operation between persons separated by geographical distances. It was estimated that e-mail communication strongly improved productivity as it enabled valuable ideas to spread quickly.

Message components. A message sent by e-mail is, in some extent, similar to a common letter: it is encapsulated in an envelope containing addressing information (destination, address, priority, security level), which are used in routing processes, similarly to post-office routing. The message contains, besides its actual content, a header with control information that is used in routing processes (addressee(s), addresser, path, etc.) [3].

In order to enable the transmission of messages that contain non-Latin characters or audio-video sequences, a message encoding system was created: MIME (Multipurpose Internet Mail Extensions). MIME uses its own transmission and reception programs, without modifying the main transmission process. Message types are rigorously classified as: plain texts, images, audio or video sequences, applications, containing other messages (for example, forwarded messages) or combined types.

4.1.2. E-mail confidentiality

Usually, messages sent between two remote locations may be intercepted and read on any intermediate machines they pass through. When unauthorised persons must not read certain messages, it is necessary that encryption methods be applied. There exist two widely used systems of secure e-mail: PGP and PEM [5].

PGP - *Pretty Good Privacy* was created by Phil Zimmerman (and published in 1995) as a complete security package for e-mail systems, which provides confidentiality, authentication, digital signatures and compression mechanisms, in an accessible form. PGP is a portable system (may be used on MS-DOS/Windows, UNIX and MacIntosh platforms), freely distributed on Internet, and is used extensively due to its qualities.

PGP is famous for the controversy it created between the USA government and its author, supported by many people: the government stated that the (world-wide) free distribution of PGP violated US ammunition export laws - since no appropriate laws existed and because cryptology software is, as previously explained, a very sensitive matter. Later versions were produced outside USA, in order to elude further inconveniences.

Intentionally, PGP is based on existing encryption algorithms [5], which were thoroughly analysed. The system uses time marks and the famous ZIP compressing algorithm (created by Ziv and Lempel in 1977). The user may choose the (RSA type) key length: common (384 bits = 48 bytes, can be broken by specialists), commercial (512 bits = 64 bytes - can be broken by security agencies), military (1024 bits = 128O - it ought to be unbreakable).

PEM - *Privacy Enhanced Mail* is an official Internet standard, which ensures security and authentication services for e-mail systems. PEM is less flexible than PGP and uses complicated authentication and key certification mechanisms (although key length is smaller). Even if PGP is not an official standard, people consider that unlike PEM, it matches Internet style and etiquette. Zimmerman's program proved to be a very efficient solution and, moreover, it was freely distributed, whereas PEM developed in successive phases, using a rigid organisational structure, with three levels of certification authorities and supplemental notifications. As PEM implementations appeared later, were less inspired and portable than PGP, the latter remained the most widely used e-mail security system.

4.2. On-line dialog in Internet

Linux (UNIX) operating system [4] enables the users to carry on-line dialogs on TCP connections, using *talk* command [3]; the correct address of the future dialog partner must be specified and after the partner accepts the connection, the dialog may begin. Later, on-line dialog mechanisms were implemented in user-friendly software products, like mIRC or ICQ. This facility is very useful since it creates the possibility of direct, interactive communication between two partners.

4.3. Usenet news

The *news net* - named USENET - is a very popular application of computer networks; Usenet and Internet are not at all identical: some Internet sites do not receive news and some news sites are not integrated in Internet. All persons belonging to a *news group* are interested in the same subjects; they use specific programs (as user agents) for reading news messages that are sent within the group. Such programs are named *news readers* and, obviously, are also in charge with news messages transmission towards news groups (i. e. each message transmitted to a group is automatically sent to all its members, regardless their geographical location). News transmission may last from a few seconds to a few

hours, depending on the location of addresser and group member addressees. Although their implementation differs from the e-mail one, for the users, news groups are similar to mail lists.

4.3.1. News domains

As the number of news groups is very large (over 10,000), in order to be easily manageable, they were structured as a hierarchy descending from a few main domains. Officially, news domains derive from the following high level ones [5]:

- *Comp* - computers, computer science and industry. *Comp* groups are the first USENET groups, dedicated to computer scientists (and computer dedicated persons). Within the group, both hardware and software aspects are of interest.
- *Sci* - physical sciences and engineering. It was noticed that the real scientists' hierarchy is much larger than the human science one, probably because electronic means of communication are closer to the former.
- *Humanities* - literature and human sciences
- *News* - news group management. Interest items concern: management principles for the news hierarchy, assistance offered to network administrators, as well as means of providing information for news group creation.
- *Rec* - divertissements, sports, music. Unlike previously mentioned hierarchies, which adopt an academic and professional tone, within *Rec* groups, people express themselves more freely.
- *Misc* - for themes that do not match with the other high level domains
- *Soc* - concerned by political, religious, social or cultural themes
- *Talk* - debates, arguments, polemics, often on controversial subjects and expressing strong opinions.
- *Alt* - an alternate hierarchy, for all kinds of themes, having an unplanned structure (some of the consisting groups are very popular).

Besides the official hierarchies, which use English, there also exist regional hierarchies that use different languages.

- Each of the above-mentioned categories divides into sub-categories, and so on. A complete domain specification uses '.' as domain separator. For example, *comp.lang* refers to programming languages, *comp.lang.c* - to C programming language, and *humanities.lit.authors.shakespeare* - to Shakespeare's work. Obviously, there may exist many categories on the same level, for example, in *humanities.lit.authors* there are domains dedicated to different authors.

4.3.2. News programs

There are many news readers [5], [2] which are used by keyboard or mouse. In order to find out which news group a user belongs to, they search specific information files. For each news message, an abstract is displayed so that the user may select, one by one, the desired items, read their content and afterwards save, print or delete them. News programs also enable users to

subscribe to a news group or to retire from one (practically, subscriptions are retained in local information files). News programs provide e-mail facilities for news messages transmission. If desired, a certain message may be cross-posted, i. e. sent to more than one news groups. Another facility concerns geographical restriction of incoming messages since, for example, certain information useful to Europeans may not be of interest for Americans, etc.

In order to reduce information traffic created by new group members, many news groups created specific FAQ (Frequently Asked Questions) documents, which are supposed to reply to the most common questions.

If some persons want their messages to remain anonymous, there are used special servers, named anonymous re-mailers, which modify the addresser's fields by replacing the actual address with a reference to it. Some servers identify each user by a code and in special cases (for example, illegal messages), this correspondence can be recovered.

4.3.3. News groups and their implementation

USENET communications enabled a large number of persons, which do not know each other in person, to discuss on various themes. If a member of a group tries to solve a problem, the other group members might help him with ideas.

Unfortunately, there also appeared disagreeable situations, when an irresponsible use of the news service led to rude, abusive, even offensive messages, which did not respect the freely consented net-etiquette, generating genuine message wars, "flamewars". In such cases, there are two possibilities to eliminate undesirable messages [5]:

- individual installation of a special program, called "killfile", which would automatically erase incoming messages sent by certain persons or referring to certain subjects
- choosing a group moderator, who would filter all the group's messages and eliminate undesirable ones.

The frequent use of certain expressions created an electronic jargon: BTW - for "By The Way", IMHO - for "In My Humble Opinion", etc. Many persons use character symbols named smileys or emoticons as expression abbreviations: ":-)" - happy, ":-(" - sad, ":-|" - apathetic, ";-)" - eye dropping, ":-(0)" - shouting, etc. (a 90° rotation makes them more suggestive).

As more and more people subscribe to USENET, one can notice the tendency to create more specialised news groups. The group creation procedure is initiated by a person who specifies whether it would be moderated or not and rises the problem of creating the new group, which is discussed and voted for. If favourable votes from the majority, the new group is created and network administrators are informed about it. Group creation is less formal in *alt* hierarchy; although it contains a conventional part, some of its groups rise moral problems and would not be accepted by a public vote.

When news groups prove no longer to be useful, they can be expunged consequent to a voting procedure, where their members take part.

For ***implementing*** news groups, e-mail principles are not appropriate because the very large number of messages would overload the servers. Instead, messages are retained on each news server in a special directory (news), which contains subdirectories corresponding to interest sub-domains. If some news groups do not correspond to the status of a certain site, they can be made inaccessible for the corresponding (local) network. Users fetch their news messages from the corresponding sub-directory (after a certain amount of time, they expire and are deleted from the disk). This method has the advantage of retaining unique copies for news messages on each news server.

In order to access USENET, each site that uses a news server must also have a news-feed source - another USENET site. In fact, all the inter-connected sites that receive news form USENET. Practically, each site verifies whether its source received news after the previous connection and if so, they are transferred on the current server.

News messages format is similar to the Internet e-mail standard, but contains a few supplemental fields for specifying the destination group(s). This format similarity makes them easy to transport and compatible to e-mail software. News transmission uses a specific protocol (NNTP) [5], which is similar to the e-mail one (SMTP), and ensures message transportation between two machines, using a TCP connection. Finally, all users connected to that destination server will be able to read their messages.

4.4. World Wide Web

World Wide Web - WWW - or, shortly, the Web is an architectural context of accessing documents spread on thousands of inter-connected Internet machines [5]. In its present form, highly competitive and so popular that most people take it by mistake as identical to Internet, the Web evolved from an application used for data transfer in high-energy physics. WWW appeared in 1989 at CERN (European Centre for Nuclear Researches, Geneva) and was motivated by the necessity of information exchange regarding high-energy physics experiments, since a large number all scientists, some of them - from abroad, used CERN's particle accelerators. Such an application would enable distance co-operation, using the same collections of documents, plans, images and so on, which could be updated by each member of the group and available for the others.

The first idea of creating such a collection of related, linked documents (a web) dates from march 1989 and belongs to Tim Berners Lee, from CERN. The first prototype was presented in December 1991at the Hypertex'91 conference from San Antonio, Texas but the application developed continuously and in February 1993, at the National Centre for Supercomputer Application (NCSA), Marc Andersen released the first graphical interface for the web, named Mosaic [5], which soon became very popular. Anticipating the promising future of this new programming field, Marc Andersen founded a specialised software company, the famous Netscape Communications Corp. The company's recognised potential is suggested by the enormous sum its actions were sold in 1995, although it created a single product and, at that time, was not economically efficient. Today, the rivalry between Microsoft and Netscape Communications in designing web software is well-known.

In 1994, CERN and MIT signed the agreement of founding World Wide Web Consortium, directed by Tim Berners-Lee and aiming at developing the Web, creating standard communication protocols and ensuring compatibility between web sites. Many educational and research institutes joined the Consortium; the American part is co-ordinated by MIT, whereas the European one - by the INRIA French research institute.

Web's extremely high popularity as a software application is motivated by its user-friendly graphical interface, which offers an enormous amount of information in an accessible and expressive form.

4.4.1. WWW application

Browsing through Web pages. From the user's point of view, Web may be seen as huge collection of documents, spread world-wide, named *pages*; each page contains links or references to other pages, regardless their location. By selecting these links, the related page will appear and the operation may be indefinitely repeated, so that a user may easily browse through the pages he is interested in. The items that create the links (usually texts) are named *hyper-links* (*hypertexts*).

Pages may be visualised using *navigation programs* or *browsers* [2], the most widely used ones being Netscape Communicator and Internet Explorer. They bring the requested page from any web location (the user must not know which machine the page is loaded from), interpret its content and formatting commands (from HTML language, see 4.4.2) and display it for the user. Hyper-links have a specific format (already consulted links are displayed differently from the other ones); any hyper-link selection initiates the access to the corresponding page. Access to previously loaded pages is very fast since they usually are already locally retained. Most navigation programs provide buttons and options that facilitate web navigation (loading previous or next page, if they exist, selecting home page, etc.).

There also exists non-graphical navigators (such as Lynx) but they are not very popular; recently, voice oriented navigators also appeared.

Besides common texts and hypertexts, Web pages may contain icons, images, photos, which can even create links to other pages (when selecting the corresponding item). *Hyper-media* pages can be obtained by introducing audio and/or video clips into Web pages. There are a few types of hyper-media pages that can not be displayed by any Web browser and an external program (specified within a configuration file attached to the browser) must be used. If such an association does not exist, the user may save the page (in order to process it later) or even abandon it. Temporary storage on local disks of already transferred pages speeds up the access.

One of the biggest problems that appears using Web browsers is the slow loading of some pages, especially if they contain large images. For example, the transfer of a 640*480 (VGA) uncompressed page with 24 bits / pixel, which occupies 922KB, lasts around four minutes on a 28.8Kbps modem line [5]. The most frequent adopted strategy for browser implementation is to load texts before

images; consequently, if the user is not interested in the page, he may abandon the loading before it is completed. Moreover, image display is usually implemented in consecutive phases: from a low resolution - fast display the image quality is successively improved. Another possible (but rough) approach is to inactivate automatic image loading facility.

Special types of pages may contain maps and forms used to collect information. Pages containing maps enable the user to select and enhance certain parts. Forms provide accessible means to gather information- it is the case of electronic commerce, sociological questionnaires, tests administrated by Web, etc.; form pages mainly use list controls and are processed by specific applications, which search special databases for user entries.

Browsers may run on computers that are directly connected to Internet or by means of a router connected to Internet. This request is elementary since page transfer must be performed on TCP connections between the user computer and the ones that retain requested pages. In order to access the Web, private persons may use Internet service provider companies and connect their computer, by a modem and a phone line, to one of their routers.

Web resources addressing. Internet contains a large number of Web servers, linked by TCP connections that support Web pages transfer by means of a specific protocol, named HTTP (HyperText Transfer Protocol). HTTP describes rules for formulating connection requests to Web servers (from clients) and obtaining answers for the clients. For page addressing there is used a system named URL (Uniform Resource Locator) [2], which specifies three elements: the name of the protocol (usually *http*), the name of the computer that retains the page (for example, *www.ubbcluj.ro*) and the name of the file that contains the page. URL system has the advantage of also enabling resource addressing by means of other protocols than *http*, as it will be further shown; therefore it can be considered a uniform addressing system.

When a user accesses a Web page, the navigator determines the requested URL, converts this address in elementary IP address (using DSN, see 3.2.1), establishes the connection with the corresponding server, transfers the requested file and finally closes the connection. The file in HTML format (see 4.4.2) will be interpreted by the navigator and the its information will be displayed to the user in the appropriate form. Most browsers show the current stage of the loading process (in the state line or window). Therefore, if the reply is delayed, the user may deduce the cause (the server could be temporarily unavailable or the net could be overloaded).

One of the explanations for the slow loading of image pages, besides their dimension, is that for each image (icon, drawing, photo, etc.), there will be established a TCP connection [5]. This method is not efficient if all the images are transferred from the same server but maintains simple implementation principles, which are valid whatever page component locations may be; future versions will be improved.

Since there also exist servers that only use FTP or Gopher protocols, in order to make available their information for HTTP navigators, one of the following solutions may be adopted [5]:

- navigators will use FTP or Gopher protocols in communicating with the corresponding servers. This approach is not very efficient since it increases browser dimensions, therefore the following one is preferred.
- intermediate (proxy) servers are introduced as gateways; they use HTTP in communicating with the browsers and FTP, Gopher or other protocols - with the appropriate servers. Proxy servers accept HTTP requests and translate them into other types of protocols, therefore the browser can use only HTTP. Proxy servers are programs that run on the same local computer as the browser or, usually, on a server that controls many local computers. They also have the advantages of speeding up page access by locally saving previously loaded pages (cache memory mechanism) and of implementing protection access mechanisms (they can restrict user access to the Web).

4.4.2. Web pages

Web pages are written in *HyperText Markup Language* - *HTML*. This language enables the creation of Web pages, containing texts, graphics and links to other Web pages, which connect Web information. HTML specifications are based on specific (begin and end) marks for each type of objects that may appear in a Web page [2]. Existing software products (such as Front Page) provide accessible means of creating Web pages, based on visual tools. Moreover, latest versions of various software products, from office automation ones to data base systems and programming environments, supply special facilities for integrating their products into the Web. Hyper-links use URL addressing system; in order to create a hyper-link it is necessary to specify the text that represents the link and the address of the associated page.

URL addressing system is used for naming, locating and accessing Web pages (the system may be compared with classical postal addressing). Pages are identified by general URL names, which contain the access protocol (followed by "//"), the DNS name of the machine that contains the requested file (followed by "/") and a local name that identifies the page (usually, a file name) - for example, http://www.ubbcluj.ro/index.

URL's principle is extremely ingenious, since it enables the use of many protocols [2]: *http* - hypertext (the native Web protocol), *ftp*- for file access and transfer (File Transfer Protocol, which uses FTP servers, see 3.1), *file* - for accessing local files, specified by their name, *news* - for news groups and accessing news messages, *gopher* - used by Gopher system, *mailto* - for sending e-mails from a browser, *telnet* - for remote connections (see 3.1).

Making WWW compatible with *ftp*, a file transfer protocol widely used for over 20 years, is very important for the Web development; this facility creates a user-friendly interface for *ftp*. Moreover, *news* protocol, usually applied by news readers, is also integrated into Web browsers.

The Web was preceded by Gopher system, designed at the University of Minnesota, as an application for retrieving information (texts and images) [5]. The users connected to a Gopher server may use a global menu of files and directories

(each entry may be connected world-wide, to any Gopher menu). As Gopher system is based on text, its access is quicker than within the Web and functions well on text type terminals.

mailto and *telnet* protocols are also useful, although they are not compatible with all types of browsers. The former enables e-mailing from a browser by specifying the destination address (preceded by *mailto:*); consequently, the browser will display an e-mail frame, which will be filled in by the user.

One can notice that URL system was designed not only for Web pages browsing, but also for integrating existing protocols and applications: FTP, news, Gopher, email and telnet, which therefore acquired a user-friendly interface.

The rapid growth of Internet revealed a perfectible feature of URL: for pages that are accessed many times, it would be more efficient to retain a number of copies in order to reduce network traffic. This is the basic principle for the URI (Universal Resource Identifiers) system [5], which is currently developing.

4.4.3. WWW and its users

The tremendous influence of the Web upon its users is mostly caused by its user-friendly interface, which opened the Internet to all kinds of users, including non-professional ones. In fact, after WWW appeared, the number of Internet users increased exponentially.

Web's role in communication is crucial: minimising geographical distances, it enables access to a huge amount of information, which would probably be otherwise inaccessible. But this enormous advantage also has its drawbacks: the Web may also be a medium for promoting, without a rigorous control, philosophies and even anti-social deeds or violence. Beside the fact that, considering present Internet dimensions, such verifications would practically be extremely difficult, legal regulations, although continuously evolving, are still insufficient.

Web's accessibility promoted electronic means for performing operations that would otherwise require physical presence, such as electronic commerce or virtual banking. Using adequate infrastructures and software, people can shop or confidentially operate their banking accounts using computers. For sociologists, the Web is a perfect medium for administrating various questionnaires (which can be designed as HTML forms) since it attracts a large number of subjects with different professions and interests. WWW has also a major impact in the educational field because it creates perfect conditions for distance learning.

4.5. Multimedia and Internet

The concept of *multimedia* refers to the combination of different media, usually audio and video (sounds and movies). Multimedia facilities provided by computer networks are extremely attractive for a large number of users. Therefore, more and more specialists are interested in integrating quality multimedia services within computer networks.

Audio and video data are digitally encoded in files that can be processed by specific (multimedia) software products. As images, especially motion ones, generate very large files, it is very important to be compressed before storing. In this respect, there appeared two standards, which were internationally adopted in 1993: JPEG (Joint Photographic Experts Group) for encoding images with continuous tones and MPEG (Motion Picture Experts Group) - for movies (MPEG uses JPEG encoding for each snapshot) [5].

4.5.1. Video on demand

A service that seems to become more and more popular in the countries with an advanced infrastructure is video on demand, which must be able to satisfy almost instantaneously any film transmission request from a client. Although technical and legal details of such a system are not completed yet, the persistent requests encourage many firms to invest into this field.

A video on demand system must contain [5] a wide area (national or international) main network for connecting thousands of local distribution networks (for example, a TV cable net or a phone company net) containing local servers and specialized personal computers (connection devices) for linking each client to a distribution network. Within such a system, information providers connected to the main net may provide various services: home shopping, radio broadcasting, video transmissions, even Web access.

A *video server* should retain and simultaneously "broadcast" a large number of films, television programs, sport reviews, etc.; as a MPEG compressed film needs about 4G [5], the external memory space becomes a big problem. For films that are not frequently requested, magnetic tape storage, which is cheap but has a rather slow access, is convenient, whereas for more frequently accessed information a faster storage device is required, such as the magnetic disk. From magnetic or optical (CD-ROM) devices films that are simultaneously transmitted towards different destinations will be transferred in RAM.

In order to cope with user requests, locating films, moving data between devices and charging clients, video-servers must have a competitive architecture [5]: many processors with local memories and a shared memory, connected by a high speed bus, storage devices, network interfaces and an adequate software. Since many operations must be performed almost instantly, these systems must function in "real time". Multi-user software packages must provide, by means of an accessible interface, services for opening, rewinding, pausing, etc. video sequences from files.

For implementing the *distribution network*, phone companies and TV cable companies are competing. The most important projects aim either at using optical fiber for connecting local (individual or groups of) clients to servers, or at using high quality cables to replace the existing TV cable system. It seems that the latter solution, promoted by TV cable companies, is preferable, because it facilitates flow encoding, therefore a fare charging for various services.

For *connecting* clients to distribution networks, there can be used [5]:

- personal computers, with high resolution monitors, interface for the local distribution network and a user-friendly software - the films will appear on the computer display. This approach is not expensive, enables Web integration but has a drawback: common display resolution is not adequate for watching films.
- connection devices for integrating TVs into distribution networks. These devices are in fact very similar to computers: they must contain a processor, ROM and RAM memories, input/output controller, MPEG decoder, network interface and a real-time operating system with the kernel in the ROM memory. The advantage is that every TV owner may use video on demand services but there are drawbacks in respect with option selection using a remote control and the low resolution TV screen. Though, it seems that this model is wider adopted than the previous one.

The process of implementing video on demand systems is very expensive, from video-servers (estimated around 10 million dollars) to connection devices. Under these circumstances, it seems that the costs would be recovered if connection devices were rented with 300 dollars and each client bought at least two films each month, with 5 dollars / film [5]. Another important implementation aspect regards its standardization, an essential condition for mass production. Unfortunately, only film format (MPEG) is standardized. It would be necessary to find standard solutions for: main net technology, local distribution method, film encryption system, connection devices ownership, whether the phone system and, more important, the Web system will be integrated or not.

4.5.2 Internet transmissions through MBone

The Internet community implemented its own multimedia digital system, named *MBone* (*Multicast Backbone*) [5]. It can be viewed as a worldwide radio and television system that functions within the Internet. Operational in 1992, it was used for broadcasting significant events, such as space shuttle launching.

MBone transmissions may be digitally recorded, using adequate software; encoding technologies use MPEG standard, as well as other methods.

Technically, MBone is a virtual network that covers the Internet. It is formed by LANs or groups of LANs with *multiple transmission* capabilities, named *islands*, interconnected by *tunnels*. Each "island" performs multiple transmissions towards hosts and the "tunnels" transmit packages between the "islands". Presently, MBone has 1-2 tunnels that cross the Atlantic and Pacific Oceans. The island-tunnel structure is necessary since routers can not (yet) control multiple transmission traffic. MBone packages are encapsulated into IP packages and sent to the destination router by an IP addressing mechanism.

5. Conclusions

Computer networks enable users to share hardware and software available resources; therefore, people separated by considerable geographical distances may easily co-operate on various projects. Computer networks became genuine electronic information and communication media, which, sustained by an accessible software, tend to overpower classical means of communication. Electronic means of communication proved to be so useful, both on scientific and commercial fields, that people become more and more dependent of Internet services.

Moreover, not only classical means of information / communication start to be replaced by electronic one, but more and more every-day activities become computer controlled: computer networks ensure remote access to various services, consequently the person's physical presence becomes unnecessary. The new features of the informational society were strongly promoted by computer networks and their applications. Taking into account the vivid rhythm these transformations took place during the last decades, the continuous development of information technologies, which constantly emerge into every-day life - in fact, computer history has less than six decades - we can imagine that the future of computers will also bring spectacular mutations into the human society.

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STUDIA UNIVERSITATIS BABEŞ-BOLYAI, STUDIA EUROPAEA, XLIII, 1-2, 1998

INFORMATION - DESINFORMATION - GEOMORALE DANS LES MEDIAS

NICOLAE SERA

On appelle information tout fait ou jugement qu'on porte à la connaissance d'une personne, d'un public à l'aide de mots, de sons ou d'images, mais aussi l'action d'informer l'opinion sur la vie publique, les événements récents. De nos jours, information et communication forment un couple et, le plus souvent, les deux termes se confondent dans le flou terminologique. Par raport à l'information, la communication est un

> *"ensemble de techniques médiatiques utilisées (dans la publicité, les médias, la politique) pour informer, influencer l'opinion d'un public en vue de promouvoir ou d'entretenir une image."*[1]

Dans cet efort de promouvoir ou d'entretenir une image - vraie ou fausse -, au lieu d'informer ou de communiquer, on atteint l'autre extrême, celui de la désinformation, qui repose essentiellement sur l'utilisation des techniques de l'information, notammaent de l'information en masse, pour induire en erreur, caher ou travestir les faits. Dans la terminologie de la psychologie sociale on appelle ce processus "intoxication", car il s'agit d'une action insidieuse sur les esprits, tendant à accréditer certaines opinions, à démoraliser ou à affaiblir le sens critique. On pourrait donc établir une relation dialectique entre information / communication - désinformation / intoxication - manipulation. Ce dernier élément de la relation n'est que le corollaire des précédents, car, manipuler veut dire influencer habilement (un individu, un groupe), pour le faire penser et agir comme on le souhaite.

Si la technologie de désinformation est ancienne, le mot lui-même n'apparaît qu'en 1963 lorsque le KGB a créé une section spéciale chargée de "désinformer" les buts politiques réels de l'Union Soviétique. Si on prend l'exemple de ce pays, en U.R.S.S. l'histoire et la mémoire ayant été nationalisées, au même titre que les mass média, la désinformation a été l'unique technique d'information. On voit donc combien est indécise la frontière entre information - désinformation et on a vu récemment les effets de dizaines d'années de conditionnement de l'opinion publique: les stéréotypes "Patrie", "Anti-Patrie" opposant l'U.R.S.S. (magnanime et pacifiste) à l'Occident "ingrat" où la "démocratie" (véritable, socialiste) à l'"antidémocratie" (bourgeoisie pourrie) sont solidement ancrés dans la conscience collective.

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[1] cf. *Le Nouveau Petit Rober 1*, 1993

Qu'il s'agisse de l'information ou de la désinformation, on peut remarquer dans les définitions proposées la référence à un terme majeur concernant les médias: l'"image". Ce n'est pas accidentel, car les médias en général et la télévisions en particulier sont les principaux producteurs et transmetteurs d'images. Cette obsession de l'image se conjugue avec le primat de la communication, car la loi non-écrite de leur fonctionnement s'énonce ainsi: pour être attractif, il faut être visible; pour être visible, il faut ne jamais perdre une occasion de se montrer ou de se faire entendre. Ainsi, toute la société se trouve concernée et chaque individu subit les effets de la médiatisation sociétale.

Les performances techniques ont entrainé une surenchère dans la rapidité, une "dictature du direct qui empêchent les vérifications et conduisent au "syndrome Timisoara". Les nouvelles méthodes de communication inversent de plus en plus souvent la mission des journalistes: au lieu de chercher l'information, ils doivent trop souvent faire le tri entre les informations dont ils sont abreuvés.

LA SOCIETE MEDIATISEE

Le développement des techniques audiovisuelles vient de franchir un point de non - retour et, c'est la notion même de l'image qui change avec l'apparition d'un nouveau vocabulaire et d'une nouvelle grammaire numérique du visible. Avec la technique numérique, une des plus nouvelles, on acquiert une capacité presque infinie de manipuler l'information: non seulement on peut truquer ou même synthétiser n'importe quelle image, mais on peut se servir de la simulation pour accréditer une thèse quelconque et la démontrer par la pseudo-évidence du visible. Voilà pourquoi il faut se déshabituer de toute confiance *a priori* en l'image. Selon Roland BARTHES, les nouvelles techniques qu'on appelle "numériques" sont capables de tout modifier, elles peuvent mélanger des images d'origine diverses, on peut homogénéiser leur éclairage, on peut les retoucher ou éliminer tout détail indésirable, avec une précision parfaite. Toujours les nouvelles techniques sont capables de créer des décord *ex nihilo*, on peut rendre présents des acteurs imaginaires ou bien faire participer à des actions irréelles des acteurs réels. Lors d'une campagne éléctorale, un homme politique pourrait produire des spot publicitaires à sa gloire, mettant en scène des foules enthousiastes de suporters virtuels, au cours de meetings imaginaires. Tout doit donner le sentiment qu'on assiste à un événement exceptionnel comportant un gagnant dans un climat d'euphorie.

Finalement, c'est une insulte permanente à l'intelligence du téléspectateur, car l'objectif est d'attirer la plus grande audience et de lui *vendre* le plus grand flux de messages.

Dans le domaine de l'information on n'hésite plus à reconstituer les événements afin de rendre les journaux télévisés plus sensationnels. On fait également appel aux millions de propriétaires de camescopes qui proposent des séquences généralement sans intérêt, mais filmées sur le vif. "*La vulgarité et le mensonge, déjà fortement présents, sont en voie de généralisation"* affirme le sociologue américain Mouny BERRAH[2] .

[2] Mouny BERRAH, *Démons et merveilles de la télévision américaine*

Les journaux télévisés sont de plus en plus concurrencés sur le terrain de l'information par les "tabloïds", émissions spécialisées dans la reconstitution des faits divers ou de grands événements. La proximité de la fiction détient ainsi sur l'information, et cela d'autant plus fortement que la production fictionnelle emprunte beaucoup de ces techniques à la rédaction de journaux télévisés. La fiction parasite la réalité de plus en plus fréquemment et il arriveparfois que, soutenu par un seul commentaire en voix-off, un fait divers soit entièrement reconstitué. L'exemple de la présentation télévisée de la délinquence est éloquent en ce sens: c'est un des sujets préférés de la télévision et, dans la majorité des cas, elle est totalement remise en scène. Et ce sont les plus spectaculaires manifestations de la télévision à sensation, bénéficiant d'une large audience.

Les techniques de montage sont si sophistiquées, que devant les émissions, le téléspestateur est souvent incapable de déceler la frontière entre la réalité et la fiction. Cela ne choque plus le téléspectateur, car élevé dans l'esprit du "voir c'est croire", règle d'or du cinéma hollywoodien, l'image a d'abord pour lui une réalité matérielle. Fiction et réalité se confondent et les concepts de distanciation et de crédibilité perdentleur validité et deviennent inopérants.

Les techniques des tabloïds - devenus si efficaces - ont été adaptées aux informations aussi, de sorte qu'on peut parler de vrais producteurs de news. Ceux-ci estiment que la conquête de l'audience autorise quelques entorses à la déontologie et, notamment, le recours à la reconstitution pourvu qu'elle soit signalée par le mot "dramatisation". Pour reconstituer la réalité où elle fait défaut, ce mot "dramatisaion" apparaît déjà pratiquement dans toutes les émissions et il finit par ne plus rien signaler, il banalise plutôt. Car il est noyé dans le flot des informations écrites et donc l'avertissement fait partie intégrante du "spectacle". L'objectif à atteindre est toujours d'attirer la plus grande audience et parfois le présentateur devient journaliste-interprête, soignant en priorité son image, ce qui ne va pas sans altérer la nature et la portée du message qu'il transmet.

Dans le couple information - désinformation, la simulation devient un outil d'aide très répandu. Du point de vue militaire, la simulation s'insère dans le dispositif C3I (Communication, Commande, Contrôle, Information) et permet une conduite de la guerre en temps réel, comme un immense jeu vidéo. Mais, c'est aussi un bon outil de propagande: car la simulation, permettant en temps réel de suivre le champs de bataille, mais aussi le retouchage instantané des scènes simulées, nous fait plonger dans le domaine de l'invérifiable touchant l'intoxication, utilisée par les autorités militaires et politiques pour faire prévaloir leur point de vue.

Cependant, personne ne nie l'indispenssable fonction des médias dans une démocratie et que l'information demeure essentielle à la bonne marche de la société.

On peut affirmer que nous nous trouvons à un tournant de l'histoire de l'information, car au sein des médias, la télévision a pris le pouvoir. C'est la télévision qui dicte les normes, c'est elle qui impose son ordre et contraint les autres médias, surtout la presse écrite, à suivre. A l'occasion de l'affaire de Timisoara, des responsables de journaux ont admis publiquement que, impressionnés par les images vues à la télévision, ils avaient réécrtit le texte de

leur correspondant. La télévision produit un impact si fort dans l'esprit du public, que les autres médias se sentent en quelque sorte obligées d'accompagner cet impact, de l'entretenir et de le prolonger.

La télévision s'est ainsi imposée parce qu'elle propose un spectacle, mais aussi parce qu'elle est devenue un moyen d'information plus rapide que les autres. Par les satellites, technologiquement, elle est apte à transmettre des images avec la même vitesse que d'autres médias transmettent le son, par exemple la radio. Elle s'impose comme média à suivre par les autres, mais aussi elle impose aux autres moyens d'information ses propres perversions. Il s'agit d'abord de la fascination pour l'image appuyée par l'idée fondatrice que seul le visible mérite information. Selon cette logique, ce qui n'est pas visible et n'a pas d'image, n'est pas télévisable, donc n'existe pas. La violence, les catastrophes, la souffrance, en tant qu'événements producteurs d'images fortes, prennent le dessus dans l'actualité et s'imposent aux autres sujets, même si leur importance dans l'absolu est secondaire. Le choc émotionnel que produisent les images n'est pas comparable avec celui que peut produire le mot de la presse écrite. Contrainte ainsi de suivre l'actualité télévisée, la presse écrite croit pouvoir recréer l'émotion ressentie par les téléspectateurs, en utilisant le registre affectif et sentimental du discours écrit, qui s'adresse plutôt au coeur et non pas à la raison. C'est pourquoi les crises même graves, dont on n'a pas d'images, sont négligées.

Cette loi de base de l'information moderne est bien connue par les pouvoirs politiques, qui tentent de l'utiliser à leur profit. Ainsi, certaines réalités sont strictement interdites d'images et à propos de questions délicates ou compromettantes les pouvoirs politique utilisent une forme séléctive de censure. Car ils savent que pas d'image, pas de réalité: même si les récits écrits de la presse existent, le poids des mots ne vaut pas le choc des images, car comme disent les experts en communication, *"l'image oblitère le son et l'oil l'emporte sur l'oreille"*[3]. C'est ainsi que la télévision emploie la version moderne, "démocratique" de la censure, qui repose sur deux figures majeures: *la rétention*, forme classique de l'information nulle et *la saturation*, forme contemporaine de l'âge de la communication. Le journaliste est envahi par una avalanche de données plus ou moins intéressantes qui le mobilisent, l'occupent et le distraient de l'essentiel. En fait, il ne doit plus chercher l'information puisqu'elle vient toute seule.

C'est ansi que deux logiques s'affrontent: celle du "tout image", voulue par la télévision, et celle du "zéro image" défendue par les pouvoirs. La logique du "tout image" conduit à des abus de plus en plus fréquents, comme l'élaboration de faux, le recours "discret" aux archives, la reconstitution de scènes à l'aide de comédiens ou d'images numériques de synthèse, etc. … L'autre logique, celle du "zéro image" est celle de la censure, car dans un Etat de droit, le statut de l'image est règlementé: on ne peut pas filmer n'importe quoi ou n'importe qui. Mais si, par exemple, dans le cas d'une guerre, le journaliste doit se plier aux règlements militaires et ne pas filmer certaines zones de combats, ne sera-t-il pas le complice d'un "mensonge" d'avoir utilisé la censure? Cemme tout événement majeur, la

[3] Marshall McLUHANN, *Pour comprendre les médias*, p.40

guerre aussi relève du politique et concerne donc directement le citoyen qui a le droit d'être informé correctement. Un tel affrontement de logiques contradictoires cosntitue la toile de fond de l'âge de la communication télévisée, quand la télévision peut non seulement suivre un événement sur toute sa durée, mais, grâce aux transmissions par satellite et aux connexions multiples, elle peut aussi transformer un événement en affaire centrale de la planète.

En faisant réagir les principaux dirigeants du monde, en amplifiant l'inportance des événements, l'information télévisée s'abandonne à la griserie du direct et l'information principale devient cette aptitude à joindre le bout du monde. L'important étant que le système fonctionne et que la machine communique, et non pas qu'elle informe, la conséquence de cette fascination pour le direct est le changement de modèle de représentation du journal télévisé. Avant, spectacle structuré comme une fiction, le journal télévisé a fonctionné sur une dramaturgie de type hollywoodien: c'était un récit dramatique où se succédaient dans un mélange de genres des coups de théâtre et des changements de ton autour des trois registres centraux: amour, mort, humour, et tout cela reposait sur l'attraitprincipal d'une "star", c'est-à-dire le présentateur unique. Pendant le journal télévisé structuré de la sorte, l'information principale n'était pas ce qui s'était passé, mais comment le présentateur disait ce qui s'était passé.

Actuellement, ce modèle est remplacé par un autre: celui du "journaliste sportif"[4]. Pour ce t autre type de journal télévisé, l'important ce sont les images de l'événement sur lequel, comme pour un match, il n'y a pas grand-chose à dire. Le commentaire est minimal et ainsi, le r6ole du présentateur diminue. Le jourmaliste se limite à ajouter un minimum de renseignements, car c'est la force de l'image qui l'emporte. De même que l'on peut suivre un match en supprimant le son, on peut pratiquement suivre les événements en supprimant les commentaires et, comme s'il suffisait de voir un événement de comprendre, la télévision croit pouvoir montrer l'histoire en train de se faire.

Mais l'actualité fort impreignée du politique n'est pas un match et informer ne sisgnifie pas commenter un match. Le journaliste qui accepte cela, s'auto-abolit tout en admettant que sa fonction est pratiquement inutile et que l'essentiel est de montrer.

De là l'idée de plus en plus répandue par l'information en continu et en temps réel que n'importe qui peut être journaliste. Ainsi, dès qu'un événement éclate quelque part, les médias - surtout la radio et la télévision - ont pris l'habitude d'établir un contact avec quelqu'un se trouvant sur place qui dit "tout" ce qu'il sait, même si c'est peu, ou faux ou bien même si ce n'est qu'une rumeur. L'important c'est le branchement et son effet de réel car, celui qui parle est sur place, ce qui est une garantie d'authenticité, il est un vrai témoin, et cela suffit. Ce témoin devient dans l'idéologie du direct une valeur absolue, de telle sorte qu'on cherche à transformer le journaliste en simple témoin. Le journaliste est envoyé dans des endroits qu'il ne connait pas, donc il ne connait pas le contexte socio-politique, parfois ni l'histoire et, après avoir débarqué, sa chaîne le contacte lui demandant à

[4] Henri MAELIN, *Les médias à l'assaut de la société*

chaud les premières impressions. Cela donne l'effet du vivant et qu'il y a vraiment communication.

Face à ces changements, le téléspectateur reste interloqué et désorienté parce que ce qui change également c'est l'instance de crédibilisation. On peut se demander à juste titre, pourquoi croit-on un discours audiovisuel d'information? Selon Jean CAZENEUVE, "*dans l'histoire de l'information audiovisuelle, il y a eu deux modes de crédibilisation, et nous nous trouvons au seuil du troisième*"[5]. Dans la logique de cet auteur, il y avait d'abord les actualités cinématographiques, quand chaque semaine les salles de cinéma présentaient un aperçu de l'actualité nationale et mondiale en images et sons. On croyait ce discours à cause du commentaire qui fixait le sens des images et rendait ce sens évident. Le commentaire était proféré par une voix anonyme, c'était la voix d'une abstraction, voire d'une allégorie qui est celle de l'information. Cela ressemblait à un rituel théologique qui se passait dans une salle, dans le noir, et on la croyait.

Au début des années '70 on est arrivé au deuxième mode de crédibilisation avec le journal télévisé de model hollywoodien. Dans ce cas la voix qui parlait avait un visage et un nom, donc elle était parfaitement identifiée et c'était celle du présentateur qui parlait au téléspectateurs, les yeux dans les yeux. Ainsi, un rapport de connaissance et de confiance s'établissait entre l'émetteur (le présentateur) et le récepteur (le téléspectateur) et cela validait l'hypothèse que quelqu'un de connu ne peut mentir. La crédibilité de l'information était de ce fait plus grande à l'époque de la télévision que les autres médias.

De nos jours, dans le nouveau dispositif du "journal sportif" la figure du présentateur s'estompe, car l'information en direct et en temps réel ne peut reposer sur un présentateur unique. Le studio central fonctionne plutôt comme centre de triage, comme carrefour, ce qui est important c'est le réseau des correspondants, la multiplication des connexions entre eux. C'est donc un appareillage de stimulation électronique qui communique et les téléspectateurs n'on pas encore des repères pour établir des rapports de confiance avec une pareille machinerie, confiance qui est indispensable à la crédibilité. Pour l'instant, rien ne ressemble à la voix abstraite de l'information ou à la présence souriante d'un présentateur, on sait seulement que l'immense machine informationnelle communique, mais le citoyen sent confusément que tout ce processus l'exclut.

Trop préoccupés à saisir le plus d'informations et à les interprêter, on oublie que la télévision n'est pas une machine à produire de l'information, mais à *reproduire* des événements et que de nos jours, son objectif n'est pas de nous faire comprendre une situation, maisde nous faire assister à un événement à travers le images diffusées. C'est une des causes aussi pourquoi on ressent une sorte de méfiance à l'égard des journalistes et des médias. Cela arrive quand les médias et le journalisme, en tant que "quatrième pouvoir" étaient présentés comme un recours possible contre les abus des trois autres pouvoirs et à la fois comme une garantie pour les citoyens d'un contrôle démocratique. Présentés avant comme les honnêtes et authentiques chroniqueurs de la vérité, comme le

[5]Jean CAZENEUVE, *Les pouvoirs de la télévision*, p.359

fidèle allié du citoyen désemparé, aujourd'hui les journalistes doivent affronter les sarcasmes et la défiance de citoyens. Le citoyen sait que d'une information de qualité dépend sa participation à la vie civique, et donc la qualité de la démocratie. Mais ce même citoyen s'est laissé conduire par l'idée que la télévision pouvait l'informer en le divertissant, en lui présentant un spectacle passionant comme un film d'aventures. Il y a une contradiction fondamentale, car devant un journal télévisé qui suit la logique du suspense et du spectacle, le citoyen commence à comprendre les périls de son abandon et de sa fascination par une pareille information. On découvre de la sorte que s'informer n'est pas aussi simple que de regarder un journal télévisé qui nous propose chaque fois une image fragmentaire de la réalité quotidienne.

Dans la littérature sur les médias et leur impact sur notre société, il y a une oscillation entre deux types d'explications de la médiatisation: on l'explque d'abord par un modèle linéaire,appelé "naturel", qui s'oppose à un modèle circulaire, ou "culturel" et que leterme de médiatisation sert à marquer le passage entre ces deux modèles. Selon Antoine HENNION, on appelle médiation "*toute opération qui déplace, vers le modèle linéaire ou vers le modèle circulaire, la cause que se forge les acteurs d'une réalité*"[6] et que le sens de ce mot médiation *"rétablit la continuité du domaine de la communication avec des disciplines voisines, confrontées du fait des objets qu'elles rencontrent à des problèmes méthodologiques tout à fait analogues"*[7] ; quant il parle de disciplines connexes à la médiation, l'auteur pense surtout à l'ethnologie, à l'histoire de l'art et plus généralement à la sémiologie de la représentation (religieuse, artistique, politique).

Dans cette logique, l'ethnologie durkheimienne nous fournit l'une des origines de l'idée de médiation culturelle, en afirmant que "*certains objets culturels ne tiennent pas leur force d'eux-mêmes, mais du collectif dont ils sont le symbole*"[8]. D'où l'idée fondamentale que avant tout, les médias sont les symboles de notre société contemporaine, symboles d'une force invisible et extérieure à l'individu que celui-ci a le besoin de la repésenter, de la matérialiser dan un emblême. Devant cette force des images véhiculées par les médias, l'homme moderne en tant que téléspectateur ou comme "homo communiquans" dans la terminologie durkheimienne, attribue à l'objet ou à l'événement vu les effets qu'il sent pour lui, pour s'y soumettre ou pour les repousser.

Du point de vue de la sémiologie de la représaentation, surtout chez H. GOFFMAN[9] et Marshall McLUHAN[10], la question que pose l'étude des médias est

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[6] Antoine HENNION, *De l'étude des médias à l'analyse de la médiation: esquisse d'une problématique,* in *Médiapouvoirs*, p.41

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[8] M. DURKHEIM, *Les formes élémentaires de la vie religieuse*, Paris, PUF, *Quadrige*, 1985, p. 331

[9] H. GOFFMAN, *Façons de parler*, Paris, Minuit, 1987

[10] Marshall McLUHAN, *Pour comprendre les médias*

la même: à travers leur messages, les médias nous montrent-ils un référent ou bien produisent-ils à travers la transparence de l'écran les messages? Dans le premier cas, le référent est le monde autour de nous, physique et social, mais toujours naturalisé, ce qui relève des questions portant sur la fidélité des images, sur la sélection des points de vue, etc. Par contre, si on accepte l'hypothèse que les médias produisent le message - à travers l'image -, on tombe dans la double illusion du regard, celui du spectacle et de son spectateur et la question que l'on doit se poser est celle si le message ne se confond-t-il pas avec les médias.

Mais, finalement, une analyse correcte de la médiatistion devrait remettre en cause et contester la force des médias, montrer d'où elle vient et, surtout, la socialiser. Car l'oscillation entre le modèle linéaire, ou une cause et un effet sont *reliés* par un intermédiaire, et le modèle circulaire, où la distribution des rôles entre causes et effets est le *résultat* d'une médiation, conduit à un monde composé à plusieurs entrées.

Dasn ce monde composé - résultat de la médiation - le journal télévisé est présent en tant que rituel qui confronte notre vision commune du monde, mais aussi instrument aux mains des puissances de la manipulation de l'opinion publique. Voilà le sens dernier de l'interrogation sur la médiatisation de la société et implicitement du politique, car l'opinion publique n'est ni fabriquée entièrement par les médias, ni une cause externe à leur travail.

> *"L'opinion publique c'est bien ce composé, sans cesse remis en cause, entre des humains et les choses par lesquelles il passe, à travers la médiation qui en fait tour à tour une cause agissant sur le groupe et un produit de ce groupe."*[11]

Façonnée par le temps des médias, l'opinion publique perd peu à peu ses capacités de réflexion et cela est dû également au fait que les médias simplifient et raccourcissent leurs présentations des événements majeurs, pour ne pas perdre le temps de leurs utilisateurs. Selon la nouvelle logique des médias, le journaliste doit savoir "être dans le temps" et l'information doit être donnée "à temps". La question porte finalement sur la notion de "temps" et pour comprendre son temps - époque - il nous faut un certain recul pour mieux discerner la vérité. Or, la télévision nous prive de ce recul.

Voilà pourquoi, avec un recul de quatre ans, on va analyser dans ce qui suit l'effet de la médiatisation de deux événements majeurs de notre époque qui sont autant de cas de figure pour la présente étude: il s'agit de la guerre du Golfe et des événements de Timisoara qui ont déclenché la révolution roumaine.

[11] Florence DORMOY, *Les "décideursî publics de la communication*

ETUDE DE CAS:
L'"AFFAIRE" TIMISOARA ET LA GUERRE DU GOLFE

Depuis presque un demi-siècle, les directeurs des journaux et les responsables gouvernementaux américains et occidentaux font la leçon au monde entier sur les vertus de la liberté de la presse, de la libre-circulation de l'information et sur la nécessité d'éviter toute main-mise sur les sytèmes de l'information.

On a pu constater que la guerre du Golfe n'a pas seulement servi de "théâtre" grandeur nature pour 'evaluer les performances des armements du Pentagone; elle a aussi fourni une occasion spectaculaire pour la mise en oeuvre des techniques de manipulation et de contrôle de l'information offertes au grand public. Avec le recul de quatre ans, on constate le remarquable contrôle des consciences des Occidentaux pendant et même après la guerre, ce qui, en matière d'information - désinformation / manipulation des esprits constitue une réussite encore plus impressionnante que la rapide victoire militaire. La vérité qui s'impose est que les technologies les plus éblouissantes non seulement ne remplacent pas, mais, au contraire, peuvent dissimuler les faits concrets les plus élémentaires. La surinformation pratiquée par la chaîne américaine CNN a entraîné plutôt la désinformation, même si l'avalanche de nouvelles retransmises plusieurs fois - mais souvent creuses - donnait l'impression de l'information. Le recul montre que le modèle CNN est un leurre et confirme une idée selon laquelle être sur place ne suffit pas pour savoir et comprendre.

Pendant la guerre du Golfe, le théâtre principal de guerre de l'information a été la télévision, la presse écrite suivant dans l'ombre et fidèlement d'informations transmises par les journaux télévisés et les émissions spéciales consacrées à cet événement. Le mécanisme de contrôle des programmes fonctionnait grâce à une étonnante coordination volontaire de centaines de gardiens des médias, tous, commençant avec les rédacteurs en chef et jusqu'aux présentateurs faisant intervenir leurs invités en direct, grâce à qui le conflit a reçu la dimension d'un amalgame entre les *1001 nuits* et la "Guerre des étoiles".

On a vu très peu de personnalités apparaître sur les écrans et pratiquement tous les comentaires sur la crise et la guerre, portaient sur les questions militaires. On a créé ainsi un grand déficit d'information et, heureusement, que la presse écrite l'a diffusée, l'omission la plus importante a été celle de la présentation des entretiens entre M. Saddam HUSSEIN et l'Ambassadrice April GLASPIE, au cours desquels, selon la transmission de Bagdad, la diplomate aurait affirmé que les Etats-Unis étaient indifférents à la querelle entre Irak-Koweit, qu'ils considéraient comme un problème interne du monde Arabe.[12]

A part cette omission fondamentale, qui aurait eu des répercussions politiques et diplomatiques autres que souhaitables, particulièrement significatif a été le désintérêt total des médias américains et occidentaux à l'égard des pertes civiles irakiennes, occasionnées par les bombardements incessants. Pourquoi vouloir nous faire croire que l'armée irakienne est immortelle?

[12] Information trouvée dans un article de la revue "*Times*î, référence inconnue

Si on regardait attentivement la télé pendant la guerre du Golfe, on avait l'impression que quelque chose de central manquait: à savoir, la guerre est devenue paradoxalement invisible. En fait, cette frustration des téléspectateurs repose sur un malentendu qui a pour origine deux pratiques récentes de la télévision, spectaculaires et contradictoires à lafois. Dans son essai, *La télévision est loin des fronts*, Ignacio RAMONET[13] explique ces deux pratiques comme sous-ensembles du modèle CNN.

En premier lieu, la télévision a créé de nouvelles habitudes pour couvrir quelques grands événements de politique internationale survenus en 1989: qu'il s'agisse de Pékin en juin, Berlin en novembre, ou la Roumaine en décembre, chaque fois une situation imprévue a fait irruption dans la réalité et son importance a paru si grande qu'on a bouleversé la grille de programmes des chaînes, pour mieux informer le citoyen. Mais chacun de ces événements avait une telle richesse d'émotion, de drame et de tragédie, qu'il constituait une sorte de spectacle complet, telle la tragédie grecque de l'antiquité.

La fascination pour cette bouleversante information - spectacle a masqué un fait important, plus précisément, à l'occasion de ces événements, la télé s'est imposée aux autres moyens d'information, prenant la tête dans la hiérarchie des médias. Car la télévision a joué sur sa capacité de focaliser l'attention du monde entier, ce qu'elle a utilisé auparavant puor la couverture d'événements sportifs majeurs, de genre Jeux Olympiques, ou le Mondial de Football. A travers cette focalisation, l'information a été traîtée sur le modèle du sport, c'est-à-dire en direct et en temps réel.

Décrire en direct et en temps réel un événement ne permet pas au journaliste de prendre le moindre recul, de se donner le temps de la réflexion, de la vérification et de comprendre ce qui se passe sous ses yeux. Et s'il emploie le modèle du sport pour traîter l'information, se passant de la règle du jeu du réel, le journaliste confond information et actualité, journalisme et témoignage. Ainsi, à travers son discours qui est essentiellement hésitant, il risque de tromper le téléspectateur.

La deuxième pratique employée par la télévision et faisantpartie du mème modèle CNN est basée sur l'idée que le rapide triomphe de la démocratie transformait l'Allemagne de l'Est et la Roumanie, jadis territoire de secret et de censure, en maison de verre ayant une transparence totale. On a voulu suggérer ainsi que la fonction civique de l'information télévisée était justement de traverser l'apparence des choses et de dévoiler la vraie nature d'une société. Il y avait comme une sorte de promesse de la part des journalistes, d'images fortes, susceptibles de satisfaire le goût de téléspectateurs. Mais ces mêmes journalistes faisaient semblant d'oublier ou d'ignorer que depuis les années '80, aucune puissance occidentale engagée dans un conflit n'a permis à la presse et à la télévision de voir la guerre de près et que les images prises sont celles autorisées par le contrôle des armées. Caar les images-choc des souffrances humaines pendant une guerre peuvent éroder rapidement l'image "chevaleresque" des

[13] paru dans *Le Monde Diplomatique*, réf. Février 1991, p.5

armées. Tout cela relève du non-dit, et les états majors se contentent de limiter l'accès des journalistes dans le périmètre des combats, sous prétexte de protection des risques du combat.

Cela fait que les journalistes présents dans la région étaient frustrés d'images du front. Les téléspectateurs habitués à la promesse de tout montrer tombaient dans la déception car la guerre du Golfe est restée presque invisible, puisqu'après peu de temps d'information en continu, les chaînes ont constaté qu'elles n'avaient pas beaucop de choses à montrer en direct.

"*Le modèle CNN qui fascine tant certains animateurs de télévision, est apparu comme un leurre*"[14] , telle est la conclusion des spécialistes des médias, en soulignant les failles de l'immense machine à communiquer. Leurre, parce qu'être sur le terrain, mais immobilisé le plus souvent dans un studio ou une chambre d'hôtel, cela empêche le journaliste de cherhcer lui-même des informations et réduit sa fonction à celle d'un simple témoin.

On peut se demander si la télévision nous a menti ou bien si nous sommes devant une nouvelle "afaire Timisoara". Quelle que soit la réponse, la couverture de la crise du Golfe et de la guerre par la presse écrite n'était pas de la même facture que le travail effectué par les grands networks et CNN particulièrement.

Si la couverture de la guerre du Golfe par l'information télévisée a constitué un cas de figure de médiatisation - à travers le modèle CNN - la présentation des événements de la révolution roumaine de 1989 en est un autre, dans le sens qu'il illustre les pires penchants en quelque sorte morbides des médias.

> "*La course au sensationnel l'a conduite [la télévision] jusqu'au mensonge et à l'imposture, entraînant dans une sorte d'hystérie collective l'ensemble des médias. Et même une partie de la classe politique. Les images du faux charnier de Timisoara, en particulier, ont bouleversé l'opinion, victime de grossières manipulations.*"[15]

Résultat d'une mise en scène presque scientifique, le faux charnier de Timisoara est sans doute une des plus importantes tromperies de la télévision depuis le debut du siècle. Cependant les images transmises ont eu un formidable impact sur les téléspectateurs, qui suivaient pendant plusieurs jours avec passion les événements de la révolution roumaine.

En les regardant, da'utres images nous venaient inévitablement en mémoire: celles des documentaires sur les horreurs des camps nazis et tandis que les esprits s'enflammaient, on éprouvait une profonde compassion, un sentiment de révolte, et de solidarité.

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[14] Ignacio RAMONET, *La télévision loin des fronts*, *Le Monde diplomatique*, février 1991, p.5

[15] Ignacio RAMONET, *Télévision nécrophile*, *Le Monde Diplomatique*, mars 1990,p.3

On sait aujourd'hui, avec un recul de cinq ans, que tous les aspects horribles que la télévision confirmait, sont faux, que tout cela a été une grande invention, une mise en scène ayant comme point de départ les rumeurs.

Les discours accompagnant les images télévisées étaient fondés sur deux éléments, utilisés d'une manière alternative: il y avit d'abord le recours à deux mythes anciens, celui de la conspiration et celui du monstre; mais aussi le recours à une figure rhétorique classique, l'analogie.

Si la présence des deux mythes n'est pas tellement significative, de notre point de vue - ce sont des références plutôt au système culturel qu'aux médias en tant que pouvoir -, l'analyse du recours à l'analogie est important. En fait, il s'agit de l'analogie entre communisme et nazisme, qu'on a pu ressentir dès le début des événements transmis par la télévision. Certains journalistes ont senti comme un risque que le communisme, autre barbarie du XXe siècle, avec le nazisme, achève son parcours historique sans que sa fin puisse être associée à des images fortes et symboliques.

Pour mieux montrer la nature "cruelle" du communisme, il fallait montrer des images tragiques qui bouleversent les esprits. Partout, sauf en Roumanie, l'effondrement du communisme s'est passé dans lajoie, et on a vu des images festives de berlin, des images joyeuses des Tchèques à Prague. Mais ce qui avait été une tragédie pour les peuples d'un demi-continent, ne pouvait pas s'achever sur des images euphoriques, et donc les médias ont "fabriqué" les images du charnier de Timisoara. C'étaient des images nécessaires en quelque sorte, car elles clôturaient la Guerre Froide, et condamnaient à jamais le communisme dans l'esprit des peupples, tout comme les images des camps de concentration avaient définitivement condamné le nazisme en 1945.

Puisque tout a été transmis en direct et en temps réel, sans avoir le temps d'analyser sérieusement la situation, personne n'a songé à vérifier l'authenticité des informations. On a oublié également que l'information télévisée est essentiellement un divertissement qui obéit à la logique du spectacle. Mensongères, puisque fiction, les images étaient logiques et ratifiaient la fonction de la télévision dans un monde où on tend à remplacer la réalité par la mise en scène. En plus, on a crée l'illusion que la Roumanie est une sorte de territoire sauvage, où il n'y a aucune règlementation en matière de tournage et que donc tout est filmable.

Pour la couverture des événements de la révolution de 1989 en Roumanie, la télévision a imposé ses perversions aux autres m'edias aussi, notamment à la presse écrite, qui a dû renchérir sur le sensationnel: des articles parus dans "Libération", "Le Figaro", "Times", "Le Nouvel Observateur" et tant d'autres sont édifiants en ce sens.

On a vu à travers ces deux cas de figure que la mobilisation planétaire par le biais des médias a semé la confusion entre communication et information, ce qui dénature la notion d'information démocratique.

On peut se demander à juste titre si notre "société de communication" n'est pas celle qui s'est proposé de "coloniser" les esprits. Cela nous amène à penser différemment sur les questions de la liberté et de la démocratie, sur la création d'une géomorale, qui ne pourrait pas exclure une déontologie nouvelle pour le journaliste et son métier.

GEOMORALE ET NECESSITE D'UNE ETHIQUE DU JOURNALISME

Qu'ils soient bons ou mauvais, on doit vivre avec les médias et on imagine mal comment serait notre société sans télévision et sans journaux. En tant qu'émetteur principal d'informations et des idées, la télévision est devenue un élément primordial du nouvel ordre mondial par le fait même qu'elle crée un environnement et un climat international qui pénalise de plus en plus les décisions politiques. Puisqu'elle devient le "quatrième pouvoir", l'impact de la télévision sur le public modifie notre rapport au monde et pose le problème de lalecture de l'image qui a largement remplacé le mot.

L'impossibilité de la vérification des sources, l'idée que toute information est le fruit d'une manipulation - car on ne diffuse pas une information sans une raison précise -, tout cela nous amène à réfléchir sur la déontologie du journalisme et sur l'objectivité de l'information. Les études faites par l'O.N.U. et l'U.N.E.SC.O. ontmis en évidence l'un des défis de notre temps, à savoir celui de l'information qu'on ma^itrise de plsu en plus mal, ce qui va générer tôt ou tard une "dictature" des médias.

Il y a certes une relation étroite entre information et démocratie, car les deux sont les faces de la même réalité; d'une part, il y a l'habitude des dirigeants politiques de contrôler l'information (c'est ce qu'on pourrait appeler "censure démocratique"), et d'autre part, la mise en question des avantages des journalistes. Les deux aspects sont autant d'atteinte à l'éthique du journalisme et en même temps renforcent l'idée d'une géomorale qui est censée être la valeur de la civilisation. La finalité ultime de toute information est de "civiliser la Terre", pour reprendre le sparoles d'Edgar MORIN, et non pas de coloniser les esprits.

C'est ainsi que le métier de journaliste revêt un caractère difficile et la situation ne s'est pas du tout simplifiée avec l'explosion des technologies de l'audio-visuel. Car il ne suffit pas de recevoir des images en abondance, il convient aussi de savoir les lire, parce que par leurs actes et leurs paroles, les journalistes relèvent des jugements d'une morale sociale. Et la dégradation gagne quand les hommes des médias tombent dans la confusion entre la vérité, la sincérité et le non-dit, même si leur subjectivité est orintée par de bonnes intentions.

On sait que le journal télévisé ne peut reproduire qu'une partie infime des nouvelles du monde qui parviennent chaque jour sur les téléscripteurs. Il faut donc choisir vite, car la diffusion est limitée dans le temps de l'économie des programmes. Mais dans ce choix, à force de magnifier un certain type de nouvelles, on fini par les amplifier, quitte à les abandonner quelques semaines plus tard, quand d'autres événements les chassent. La présentation de laguerre en ex-Yugoslavie est éloquente en ce sens, lorsqu'on a vu que les journalistes pratiquaient effectivement, *nolens, volens*, la politique de l'agenda.[16]

[16] Les américains appellent "*politique de l'agenda*î la pratique des médias qui consiste à orchestrer des thèmes censés être ceux qui préoccupent l'opinion publique à un moment donné.

Au nom des désirs de transparence d'une opinion publique qu'ils représentent, les journalistes établissent l'ordre du jour prioritaire pour les hommes politiques, les responsables de l'Eglise, les créateurs en matière de culture et de mode, les dirigeants syndicaux et les chefs d'entreprise. En conséquence, tout responsable invité dans les studios de télévision doit répondre à des questions de "l'agenda de la société", tenu par les professionnels des médias.

Ces nouvelles technologies de l'information et de lacommunication posent de graves problèmes éthiques dans la mesure où aucune règle n'a été d'efinie et où chaque technologie nouvelle a créé de nouvelles libertés. Ainsi, les frontières du bien et du ml, du juste et de l'injuste, ne sont pas encore définitivement fixées, mais sont laissées à l'appréciation du débat publique.

Le conditionnement à la violence et à des images choquantes auquel participe le journal télévisé, relativise les critères consensuels du beau, du bien, du juste et du vrai, c'est-à-dire les quatre valeurs sur lesquelles s'édifie la vision morale et esthétique du monde. La télévision peut imposer très viteles arguments émotinnels comme supérieurs aux arguments rationnels; on se souvient en ce sens de l'appel à la raison avec recours à l'information véridique, pratiquée déjà après la duexième guerre mondiale,par le journaliste Léon BLUM.

Plutôt que de parler de la liberté de l'information, il vaudrait mieux le faire, comme composantes possibles d'un système politique, de l'exercice d'un double droit: celui de connaître et celui de faire savoir.

Car informer,c'est valoriser un contenu qu'on va communiquer et choisir entre plusieurs informations possibles, c'est peser aussi sur la réalité politique à partir d'une hiérarchie des valeurs. Si CAMUS a affirmé que "la seule façon de lutter contre la peste, c'est l'honnêteté", il voudrait insister également sur le fait que le contenu de l'information n'est pas séparable de la relation de confiance qui doit exister entre l'informateur (le journaliste dans notre cas) et l'informé (c'est-à-dire le public).

Si on parle de géomorale de l'information et du fait que les journalistes devraient privilégier les appels à la raison et non pas à la passion, c'est parce que le mérite d'un journal télévisé vient de la valeur de ses critères, qui, normalement, devraient être les suivants:

- le souci d'élargir les connaissances du public;
- le respect de la capacité de jugement;
- le goût de la vérité.

Les règles éthiques qui gouvernent la presse écrite apparaissent insuffisantes et mal adaptées à l'information télévisée; on pourrait certes se rassurer en prenant pour acquis que la presse écrite et la télévision se complètent l'une l'autre, mais cela serait une approche simpliste et réductrice du rôle de la télévision.

Pour répondre à cemanque de principes déontologiques, au cours d'un séminaire organisé à Deauville en juin 1993, la direction et la hiérarchie de TF1 ont achevé un code de dix-huit règles déontologiques aadaptées au développement de la télévision. Les journalistes de TF1 ontchoisi de s'imposer, outre les règles

générales - insuffisantes - édictées dans les textes professionnels de référence[17], ce dix-huit règles déontologiques particulières,rendues nécessaires par le poids et l'influence de l'image aujourd'hui.

Rédigés pour fixer les limites à ne pas franchir et, en même temps, pour aboutir à des règles inter-chaînes, les dix-huit principes de TF1[18] cosntituent plus ou moins une réponse à toutes les perversions de la télévision aujourd'hui.

Loin d'être parfaits, ces principes comportent encore des failles considérables dues à l'ambiguité de la formulation. Ainsi, les principes 2,3, et 4 veulent limiter le comportement "exhibitionniste" des journalistes qui, pour mieux convaincre, au lieu d'expliquer par des mots, font recours à des images trop choquantes pour le téléspectateur.

Le principe 6 joue sur les critères de sélection - et on a vu combien ces critères sont subjectifs! - et sur la fameuse devise du "New York Times" avec le choix des nouvelles *propres* à être imprimées. On peut se demander comment le journaliste va-t-il décider l'honorabilité d'une personne quand les faits confirment le contraire. Il n'y a aucune clarification en ce sens dans le corpus de ces principes.

Finalement les principes 16 et 17, concernant l'utilisation des images d'archive et la reconstitution des événements, nous font penser à la légitimation des images numériques qui transforment la réalité en fiction et qui, en dernière instance produisent des images trompeuses, voire mensongères.

Beaucoup plus complexe est la *Résolution 1003 (1983*), relative à l'éthique du journalisme, adopté par l'Assemblée Parlementaire du Conseil de l'Europe[19] . Même si les textes adoptés par l'Assemblée ne sont que des orientations, ayant donc un caractère consultatif, cette *Résolution 1003 (1983)* vient compléter les textes de référence pour une nouvelle éthique du journalisme.

Postulant dès le début la responsabilité morale des médias vis-à-vis de citoyens, cette Résolution parlementaire est structurée autour de deux principes: le principe de base est que le travail du journaliste doit reposer sur une claire différenciation entre nouvelles et opinions, en évitant toute confusion. En fait, il s'agit du principe de l'objectivité du journaliste et de l'information, ce qui fait l'objet de plusieurs articles (3,5,25,29) de la même Résolution.

La deuxième ligne majeure de la Résolution repose sur le principe de véracité, explicité, comme le principe précédent, dans plusieurs articles. L'idée fondamentale est que les nouvelles, après avoir fait l'objet des vérifications de rigueur, doivent être présentées, exposées et décrites avec impartialité (voir article 4). La même idée est reprise dans l'article 35, qui postule que les citoyens ont le droit fondamental de recevoir des informations vraies et des opinions honnêtes. On insiste surtout sur la clause de conscience (article 14) qui vient renforcer l'impartialité et l'objectivité recquises dans l'article 13: "*/…/ l'orientation idéologique des éditeurs ou des propriétaires est limitée par les exigences incontournables de la véracité des nouvelles et de la rectitude morale des opinions";* on retrouve la même idée exprimée dans l'article 21 également: "*dans ce sens, le journalisme*

[17] Cf. Annexe 1

[18] cf. Annexe 2

[19] cf. Annexe 3

d'investigation légitime trouve ses limites dans la véracité et l'honnêteté des informations et des opinions, /…/".

A part ces deux principes de base, on insiste dans le texte de la Résolution sur le fait que l'information doir échapper à la logique marchande ("*l'information /…/ ne doit pas être traîtée comme une marchandise*" cf. Article 15), qu'il faut éviter à instaurer la "médiocratie" (/*ne pas/ "convertir les médias et le journalisme en pouvoir et contre-pouvoir*" cf. Article 20), de même que l'information doit être obtenue par des moyens légaux et moraux *("dans l'exercice de la profession de journaliste, la fin ne justifie pas les moyens*" cf. Article 25).

Si dans le cas où il s'agit de défendre les valeurs démocratiques, le journaliste ne doit pas rester neutre, le principe de la neutralité fonctionne dans tous les autres cas:

> *"Les opinions sous forme de commentaires sur des événements ou des actions ayant traît à de personnes ou de institutions ne doivent pas viser à nier ou à cacher la réalité des faits ou des données."*(cf. Article 6)

Cela est en contradiction avec le principe 6 établi par TF1 et qui autorise en quelque sorte la non - atteinte à l'honorabilité de certaines personnes.

Mais une contradiction beaucoup plus nette entre les deux types d'éthique proposées et entre l'article 8 de la Recommandation (/…/ "*l'information donnée par le journaliste doit êter transmise fidèlement dans les nouvelles e commentée avec honnêteté, sans ingérences extérieures /…/")* et l'affirmation du directeur de l'information de TF1, M. Gérard CAREYROU:

> "*Je pense effectivement qu'il y a certaines choses qu'il vaut mieux éviter en certaines périodes."*[20]

En ce sens, le texte de la Résolution prévoit également l'absence de toute censure préalable (cf. Article 9) et que *"les journalistes doivent éviter d'arriver à une connivence de nature à nuire à l'indépendance et à l'impartialité de leur profession"* (cf. Article 29).

Il suffit de regarder attentivement les journaux télévisés pur se rendre compte laquelle des deux voies proposées est choisie par les journalistes.

Tous ces efforts de trouver une nouvelle déontologie du journalisme renforcent l'idée qu'il y a des "pathologies" propres aux médias. Mais les médias sont aussi le reflet des balbutiements, des contradictions et des limites de la démocratie moderne. Toutes les fonctions que n'accomplit pas le système politique, trouve souvent une réponse déformée et perverse dans le système médiatique, de sorte que les médias tendent à devenir une alternative au déficit du politique.

[20] Entretien d'Alain ROLLAT et Michel COLONNA d'ISTRIA avec le Directeur de l'Information de TF1, paru dans *Le Monde*, 26 janvier 1994, p. 21

Il faut donc prendre en compte le fait que ces défauts ou ces "pathologies" des médias sont aussi dérivées de insuffisances de la démocratie moderne.

* * *

Nous voilà au terme de notre étude, et on se demande quelles sont les bonnes médias, quelle serait la meilleure utilisation de la télévision en tant que moyen d'information.

On a vu que le questionnement sur les médias, par leur nature même, s'inscrit au coeur même du débat concernant la démocratie.

Il est peut-être plus utile de réfléchir aux conditions dans lesquelles peut renaître une plus grande lisibilité sociale du politique, que de simplement dénoncer les perversions médiatiques. C'est l'utopie positive des médias - croire qu'ils vont pouvoir résoudre les questions que la démocratie ne peut pas régler sur le terrain des institutions politiques - et pas leur disfonctionnements qu'il faut vraiment critiquer.

Il y a en effet, une sorte d'utopie dangereuse dans le fait que les médias, surtout la télévision, en viennent à ces pensées qu'aujourd'hui presque comme des vrais représentants du peuple. A la limite, les médias rêvent même de produire de la décision politique ou judiciaire.

Il y a enfin aussi l'idée que les médias vont permettre de dépasser les limites techniques de la démocratie rendant possible le passage de la démocratie représentative à la démocratie directe. Là, c'est toute l'utopie de la télé-démocratie.

Pour essayer de traiter de façon renouvellée les rapports entre les médias et démocraties, il faut tracer un cadre d'analyse commun aux deux problèmes: il faut partir d'une économie générale de la représentation dans laquelle on saisirait en même temps les problèmes d'information, mais aussi les phénomènes de représentation proprement politiques.

En somme, il faut faiarae avec ce qu'on a, qui est déjà bon, mais on doit en préciser les limites. Mais on se demande si nous devons n'être que spectateurs ou aussi, parfois, être acteurs. Nous devons nous comporter comme des conducteurs d'automobile, quine commandent pas la voiture mai la conduisent en s'adaptant à elle, en anticipant les perturbations possibles, tout en connaissant ses limites techniques souvent aveugles. On ne peut encore maîtriser clairement le changement, ni son vrai impact, mais nous pouvons travailler à un dévoilement, tout en sachant que les machines sont fondamentales pour agir et qu'elles nous amènent à nous demander ce que nous pouvons faire et ce que nous sommes.

On se demande également quel temps donner à l'information, qui n'annule pas le temps de la réflexion, de la méditation, mais qui la valorise. Question légitime dans ce contexte actuel où on est en présence des tendances à faire prédominer le spectaculaire sur l'essentiel, le paraître sur l'être, ce qui donne une nuvelle vision du monde et une nouvelle échelle des valeurs.

Finalement, sous diverses formes, c'est l'univers tout entier qui à chaque instant est présent comme spectacle devant chaque individu. A lui de faire les choix entre les aspects de cet ensemble qu'ilveut entendre et regarder avec le type de relation qu'il veut entretenir à tel ou tel instant avec chacun de ses aspects. Heureusement, il lui restera aussi la liberté, quand il le voudra, de fermer tous les boutons et de couper les sources du message. Certains craignent que ce choix démultiplié ne finisse par submerger les esprits; mais, à mesure que foisonnent les espaces de diffusion, on trouve de nouveaux équilibres, élabore de lui-même un "modus vivendi" avec ce monde mécanisé. Il ne dépend que de lui en effet que les progrès soit source d'enrichissement. C'est à chaque individu qu'il appartient d'être le modératuer de flots d'images et des sons transmis par les médias.

Même si l'univers s'installe chez nous, à notre domicile, la personne humaine n'a aucune raison de capituler. Elle est, au contraire, encouragée à maîtriser ses espaces extérieurs pour les faire contribuer à renouveller son monde intérieur. Il lui arrivera de perdre et de gagner à la fois dans cette confrontation avec une possibilité sans cesse élargie de jouer avec ces espaces. Et la génération qui naît dans la familiarité avec le spectacle divers et permanent reconstitué pour elle par les médias et par les divers communicateurs, devra s'éduquer de manière à n'être pas uniquement un public, mais aussi une collectivité vivante et pensante.

Annoncé comme apocalyptique, le monde de l'audiovisuel est le "quatrième pouvoir" qui l'instaure par la télévision, au lieu de nous introduire dans ceque certains appellent "l'âge de la massification", il va devenir la base de l'âge de raison; et cela renforcera le choix entre la définition de la culture comme "avoir la tête bien faite" ou "avoir une tête bien remplie", pour reprendre les termes d'une phrase célèbre de Montaigne.

Afin de faire prévaloir les valeurs de la géomorale dans le monde à venir, "nous pouvons envisager le seul grand dessein: civiliser laTerre".[21]

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DATA TRANSFER BETWEEN WORD AND ACCESS

HOREA TODORAN

ABSTRACT. Microsoft Office is probably the most famous software package all around the world and one of the "best-sellers" of the Microsoft Corporation. It was created exactly to facilitate office activities, and it really became one of the building-blocks of the office automation process. The package includes at least four important application programs: a word-processing program - Word, a table processor - Excel, a database program - Access and a presentation builder - PowerPoint. The most recent versions of MS Office provide the Microsoft Mail program dedicated to exchange information between users connected both to a Local Area Network (LAN) and to Internet.

Why do we need a software package (Office)? Is it not enough to have all the above-mentioned applications installed on our computers in order to obtain the same results? *The major advantage provided by Office is a very elegant and useful transfer of information between the component programs*. It is possible and very easy to insert or link data created with one of the programs into projects created with the other components of the package. This mechanism has two important consequences: it decreases the time ***requested for complex office projects***, and increases the ***correctness of data,*** eliminating the errors due to manual data re-entering.

The use of data in common with other programs eliminates the risk of working with not updated information in a commercial offer or a presentation.

This article presents multiple ways of exchanging information between Word and Access. In its final part it shows you how to create envelopes in Word using data from an address database in Access.

Using the Clipboard to copy tables from Access to Word

The most frequently used method of bringing tables created within an Access database into a Word document is *via* the Clipboard and the very popular Copy/Paste commands.

What is the Clipboard? The Clipboard is a memory zone that allows the user to temporary store information, in order to transfer it from a Windows application (source) into another Windows application (destination). It is an instrument specific to all Windows environments and can be used in almost all Windows applications.

The most important operations that can be performed with the Clipboard are:

- copy information into the Clipboard (Copy);
- move information into the Clipboard (Cut);
- copy information from the Clipboard into an application file (Paste or Paste Special);

- copy the image of the entire screen into the Clipboard (PrintScreen key);
- copy the image of the active window into the Clipboard (Alt+PrintScreen).

A piece of information previously transferred into the Clipboard remains there until another transfer of information to the Clipboard is performed.

The content of the Clipboard can be displayed and modified using the *Clipboard Viewer* application (from Accessories).

In order to copy the content of a table from an Access database into a Word document, the user has, at first, to open the database and then, within the database, to open the requested table in datasheet view.

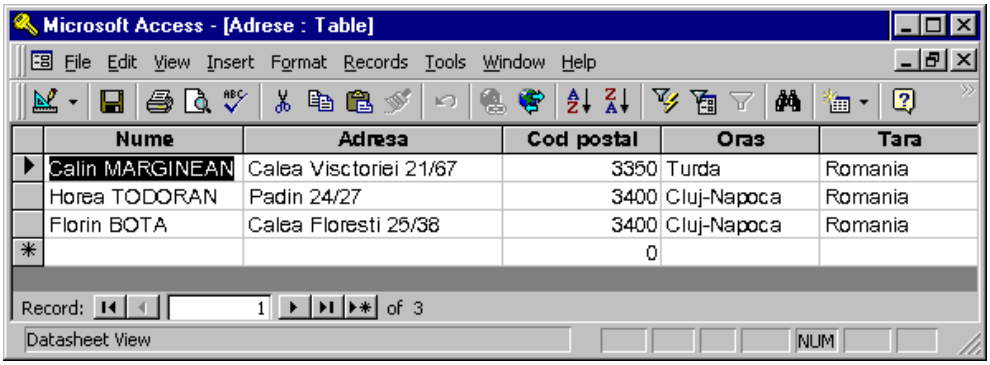

Figure 1: The table *Adrese* in datasheet view

Let us consider that we created a table with the addresses of three customers of a firm. For each customer we store the name (Nume), the address (Adresa), the zip code (Cod postal), the city (Oras) and the country (Tara).

The next step is to select the rows and columns of the table we want to copy into the Word document. Here are the selection rules we use:

- to select the entire table, click the button in the left-up corner of the table or use the Select All command from the File menu;
- to select one cell, click the left edge of the cell, where the cursor turns to plus;
- to select adjacent cells, click the left edge of the first cell and drag the mouse to extend the selection;
- to select an entire row, click the *record selector* – the button in the left side of the row;
- to select adjacent rows, click the record selector of the first row you want to select and drag the mouse up or down to extend the selection; or click the record selector of the first row you want to select, then click the record selector of the last row in the selection with the Shift key pressed;

- to select an entire column, click the *field selector* - the box that contains the name of the column;
- to select adjacent columns, use the same rules as for adjacent rows, but the field selector instead of the record selector;

After the selection has been completed, we will copy it into the Clipboard, using either the Copy command from the Edit menu, or the Ctrl+C key combination, or even the Copy button on the Toolbar.

The next step is to switch to the Word document we want to copy the table in, and to prompt the cursor at the position where the table will be inserted. At this stage, we just have to paste the table from the Clipboard, and the whole process is done. To paste data into a Word document, use either the Paste command from the File menu, the Ctrl+V key combination or the Paste button on the Toolbar.

Pay attention! When you copy tables from Access to Word using the Clipboard some formatting can be lost and you will be required to fix it!

Transfer Access objects into Word using RTF file

A more elegant and efficient method of transferring Access objects (datasheets, forms and reports) to Word is *via* Rich Text Format (RTF) files. Why is this method more efficient than the Copy/Paste method? Because, unlike the Clipboard, a RTF file preserves formatting, such as fonts, column width and height and styles.

How can we transfer an Access object to Word using a RTF file? First of all, we have to open the database that contains the object and then select it by clicking its name. Once the object has been selected, we choose the Save As/Export command from the File menu and we save the object in an external RTF file. This file can be then open in Word.

The most recent versions of Access provide a more elegant tool to accomplish all the above-described actions on the spot. Once the object has been selected, it is sufficient to click the Publish it with MS Word option (Tools – Office Links menu); the program creates the RTF file using the name of the object and opens it into a new MS Word document.

What kind of Access objects can we publish with Word? Table and form datasheets, datasheets resulting from the run of a query and reports.

When we want to publish with Word only parts of an Access object (for instance, only some of the rows of a table), instead of selecting the object as a whole, we have to open it in datasheet view and select only the parts we want to publish (use de selection rules described at the Copy/Paste method). Then, we run the publishing command.

Using text files to bring Word tables to Access

The Copy/Paste method used to bring tables from Access to Word cannot be performed in the opposite way, from Word to Access. In order to bring tables from a document to a database we will use intermediary text files.

The first step is to select the entire table in the Word document (use the Select Table command from the Table menu) and convert it to text (Convert Table to Text command from the Table menu). As text separator we shall use commas or tabs. The text will be then saved (Save As command from the File menu) as *MS-DOS Text with Line Breaks (*.txt)*.

After the text file has been created, we shall switch to Access, open the database we want to bring the table in, and select the Tables page to display all the tables that already exist in the database. We use then the Get External Data command from the File menu in order to import the text file created with Word and follow the steps required by the Import Text Wizard.

It is very important to specify, at the second step of the Wizard, that the first row contains the name of the columns in the table. Otherwise, the first row will be considered as a normal data row and the columns will be assigned with names like Field1, Field2 ...

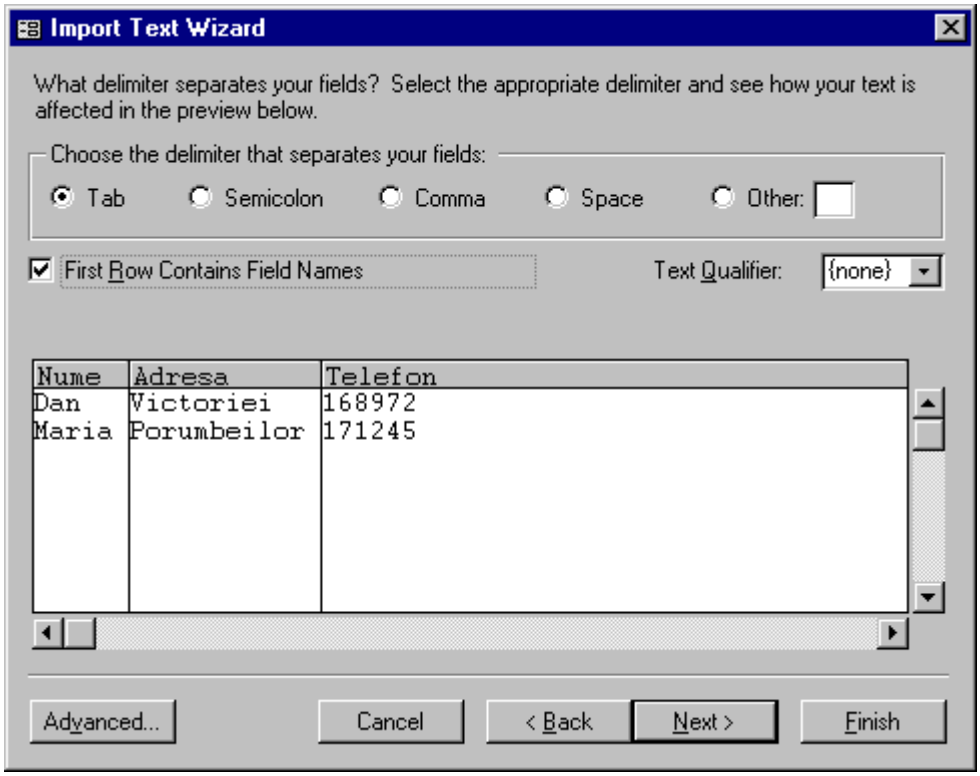

Figure 2: The Import Text Wizard (2nd step)

Merging Access data with Word Mail Merge feature

In order to explain the usefulness of the Word Mail Merge feature and why is it important to know how to merge Access data with Word Mail Merge, let us consider the following possible real-world situation:

"I work as a secretary for a large company that has many business partners all over the world. The Administrative Board develops regularly new business proposals for our partners. My chief asks me to prepare envelopes for sending the proposals to our partners. What do I have to do in order to accomplish the task in an efficient and elegant manner? Of course, the correctness of data is vital!"

Once I have bought the nice envelopes from the stationary, I get to the more technical part of my task: printing the partners' addresses on the envelopes. I am about to plug in the electrical typewriter, when I realize that I might need to use these addresses in the future. So, I decide to use the computer, which is able to store and retrieve the data anytime I might need it.

After this important decision has been taken, I remember what my boss always tells me when talking about our company: that it is ceaselessly searching for new business partners and immediately renouncing at inefficient co-operations. So, it is very important for me to be able to easily update the list of addresses for future use.

Then, taking into account the diversity of our business projects and partners, I figure out that my chief might ask me sometimes to send envelopes only to specific partners, selected on different criteria.

I have already decided which application to use in order to organize my list of addresses, so that I can make easy updates and selections: Microsoft Access.

On the other hand, Microsoft Word offers me the easiest instrument to create multiple-pages documents of different types (Form Letters, Mailing Labels, Envelopes and Catalogues) based on a main document (a pattern) and a data source: Mail Merge.

What do I do to merge the data from an Access database (the source) into a Word document?

Step1. I create a new Access database, named *partners.dbf*;

Step2. Within the *partners.dbf* database I create the table named *Addresses*, with the following fields: *Name*, *Street*, *ZIP Code*, *City* and *Country*;

Step3. I open the table *Addresses* in the datasheet view and insert the data;

Once Step1-3 have been completed, the table *Addresses* looks like Figure 3.

Step4. I switch to Word and open a new blank document;

Step5. I run the Mail Merge command from the File menu and create a main document in the *Envelopes* style within the active window;

Step6. As data source for the envelopes I open the *partners.dbf* Access database and choose the table *Addresses*;

Step7. I set the Envelope Options (envelope size, delivery and return address fonts and position and so on);

Step8. I configure the delivery address (using the Insert Merge Field button) as shown in Figure4;

Step9. I merge the data into a new document;

Step10. I save both the main document (*pattern.doc*) and the merged document (*envelopes.doc*).

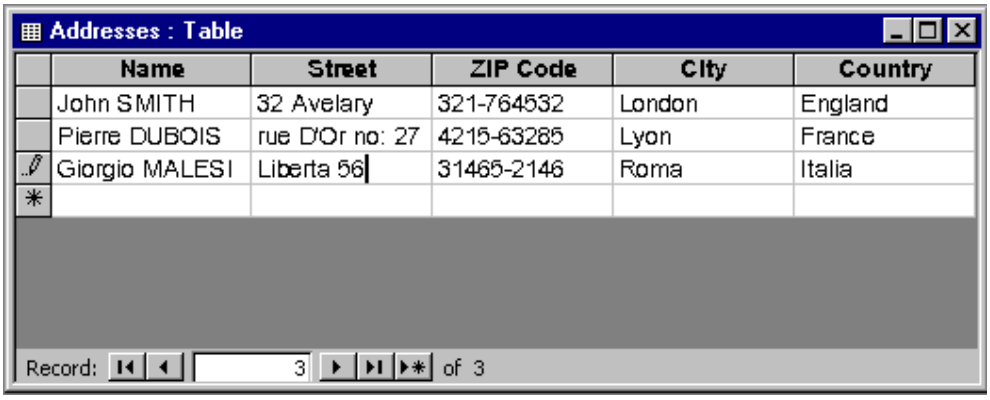

Figure 3: Table *Addresses* in datasheet view

The result of the Steps1-10 is a Word document containing envelopes with the delivery addresses taken from the *partners.dbf* Access database and a main document that can be used for future tasks. I feed the printer with the envelopes and print the document I have just created. My boss will surely be proud of my work!

How can I use the main document (*pattern.doc*) in the future? Next year, if I am assigned to do the same job, but the list of partners has been changed, I will update my database, then open the main document and click the button *Merge into New Document* on the *Merge* toolbar. An updated set of envelopes is created.

Figure 4: Configuring the delivery address

Conclusions

In this concluding part we try to outline the advantages and the disadvantages of each method of data transfer between Word and Access we have already described:

Method	Advantages	Disadvantages
Clipboard (Copy/Paste)	very popular and easy to perform	doesn't preserve formatting
RTF files	preserves formatting	implies many steps and creates intermediary files
TXT files	the only method to transfer data from Word to Access	implies many steps and creates intermediary files
Mail Merge method	data can be manipulated with advanced Access features and easily re-merged to Word	

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IV. ACADEMIC EVENTS IN 1998

(Faculty of European Studies)

With international participation

* International Conference of the Students from the Balcans, Cluj, 1998, May 8 - 10 (co-organiser CEP Romania)

* Seminar for students: ***A New Model Europe? Decisive Factors and Influences***, Cluj, 1998, 31 May – 7 June (co-organiser the Department of Political Sciences of the Westfälische Wilhelms-Universität Münster)

* Workshop: ***Das Banat – Ambivalenzen und Perspektiven einer geteilten Region***, organised by issenschaftswerkstatt der Hans-Böckler-Stiftung Düsseldorf and the Institut für Donauschwäbische Geschichte und Landeskunde Tübingen at the Faculty of European Studies, Cluj, 1998, 29 septembrie – 8 octombrie

Without international participation

* National conference of the students in European studies, Cluj, 1998 April

* National student conference: ***XXIst Century: (Dis)Integrating Communities, Individuals, and Institutions***, Cluj, 1998, March 13 - 15 (co-organiser CEP Romania)