

## BUILDING DEMOCRACY: TRANSITION AND CONSOLIDATION PATTERNS IN POST-COMMUNIST ROMANIA

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**ABSTRACT.** The study intends to analyse patterns of transition and consolidation connected to Romanian scenario, in order to identify the vulnerabilities and dysfunctionalities derived from local trajectory towards democratization. The research is grounded on two major assumptions. First work hypothesis claims the existence of a strong particularism within Romanian rite of separation, entailing also significant differences in sphere of consolidation prospects, while second hypothesis sustains the conservation of societal modernization gaps, influencing the ascent to democratization. Exploratory endeavour utilize a comparative frame, decrypting the transitional mechanism through filter of four regime change theories: functional approach, transnational view, genetic theory and interactive paradigm.

**Key words:** *post-communism, transition, democratic consolidation, reversibility, modernization*

### I. Semantic of democracy in changing societies. Consolidation prospects in a divided transitional landscape.

Fall of communist systems at the beginning of the 90 opened the way for an extended and elaborated phenomenon of societal reconstruction. Regime changes occurred in Eastern and Central Europe triggered a complex process of transition, emergence of new democratic actors being often engraved by difficult transformative operations. Although, modification of political paradigm tends to be considered as a defining mark of communist break-down, regime changes were doubled by essential economic, cultural and structural transmutations<sup>2</sup>. Resurrection of national agendas and recrudescence of traditionalist idiosyncrasies influenced the reconstruction of

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<sup>2</sup> Geoffrey Pridham, „Comparative reflections on democratisation in East-Central Europe: a model of post-communist transformation?“, eds. Geoffrey Pridham, Attila Ágh, *Prospects for Democratic Consolidation in East-Central Europe*, (Manchester: Manchester University Press), 2001, p. 1.

social pacts, many of the post-communist societies confronting with divergent and contradictory evolutions. If debut of transitional stage was marked by a general appetite for democratisation, further trajectories experienced by former communist actors generated important questions regarding the consolidation quest. Concurrently, difficulties encountered by post-communist societies in assuming the institutional and attitudinal frames of new political order revealed the presence of some hidden border inside post-Cold War cartography.

Apparition of two separated layers within post-communist landscape nourished distinct expectations concerning potential achievement of consolidation aim, Central Europe benefiting by a relevant advance in its pre-transition ascent<sup>3</sup>. Liberalisation waves promoted subsequent to Gorbachev doctrine in the '80<sup>4</sup>, fostered a discrete adaptation of political and institutional environment, separating Central Europe by enclaved forms of communism, hosted at the Eastern border. Nevertheless, totalitarian systemic legacy constituted a key factor in establishment of transitional patterns, yet post-communist pathways will be influenced also by other contiguous aspects.

Polarisation supervened between hard-line communist regimes, as Czechoslovakia or Romania, and reformed communism, such as Poland, was enhanced by the peculiar configurations of national topic and political-cultural modernization scale<sup>5</sup>. Dynamics of regime change interfered too with transformation cadres, influencing the adaptability and stability of new created democratic structures. Rites of passage encountered by former communist ensembles highlight important dissimilarities, a crucial feature concerning the transformation anatomy. Amid pacted transition<sup>6</sup> and violent changes of political order were coexisting a multitude of shades, post-communist topography disclosing interesting limits. Fragmentation arose inside post-communist realm determined growing concerns regarding the chances for complete democratisation and general consolidation of the region, endanger of reversibility remaining a central point on the transitional

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<sup>3</sup> Idem, p. 2.

<sup>4</sup> Gorbachev doctrine represented a reformatory experiment, aiming to balance the communist chronic economic and social crisis. Moderating the industrialization schedule and allowing a discrete decentralization, Gorbachev dogma also included a decrease of ideological pressure, permitting to new civic actors to emerge. Julian Cooper, "The Prospects for Socialist Economy", eds. Walter Joyce, Hillel Ticktin, Stephen White, *Gorbachev and Gorbachevism*, (East Sussex: Psychology Press), 1989, p. 64.

<sup>5</sup> Ibidem, p. 2.

<sup>6</sup> Pacted transition concept refers to a gradual transformation of political order, granted by negotiations occurred between new created civic actors and progressionist elements of communist order. Power transfer is realized in a non-violent way, inaugurating a democratic path. Juan J. Linz, Alfred Stepan, *Problems of Democratic Transition and Consolidation: Southern Europe, South America, and Post-Communist Europe*, (Baltimore: JHU Press), 1996, p. 61.

agendas<sup>7</sup>. Discrepancies accumulated during transitional phase determined multiple explanatory exercises, main purpose of these inquiries being related with algorithms of consolidation.

The central question was if non-adaptive cases of communism, adjourned on their road liberalisation, will surmount the structural gap which separated them from western branch, succeeding in establishment of a consolidated democratic climate. Initial prospects referring to East European democratization dynamic were reticent, reluctance of nationalist affinities and cryptic survival of totalitarian political culture moderating the initial optimistic diagnosis. Still, Eastern perspectives for democratic consolidation proved to be positive, in defiance to activation of some influential transitional pathologies such as reinforcement of compulsory leadership, decline of institutional scaffolding, vicious electoral mechanisms<sup>8</sup>. Although consolidation clause tends to imply an extended collection of structural, cultural and environmental conditions, present analysis will utilize a synthetically definition, including three main levels: behavioural, attitudinal and constitutional<sup>9</sup>. Thus, from a behavioural point of view, a democratic regime is engaged in a consolidation phase when no important social, economic, political or institutional actors mobilize resources in attempts to annihilate the democratic order<sup>10</sup>. Absence of organized groups of pressure, acting against democratic establishment, guarantee the stability of political regime, this criterion excluding however the activity of democratic opposition<sup>11</sup>.

Attitudinal requirements refers to sedimentation of political culture, which foster collective attachment to democratic values, while constitutionally aspects imply the edification of a complete an unitary institutional frame, ensuring resolution of

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<sup>7</sup> Consolidation of democratic equations depends by capacity of new created political order to acquire legitimacy and to solve social tensions, inherently determined by transitional economic and cultural modifications. Samuel P. Huntington, *The Third Wave*, (Oklahoma: University of Oklahoma Press), 2012, p. 254.

<sup>8</sup> Economic depression and clash of previous societal equilibriums nourished major systemic cleavages. Effects against democratic development were crucial. In absence of a functional set of norms and regulations, consolidation of democracy is endangered by spectrum of reversibility. Frank Bonker, Klaus Muller, Andreas Pickel, „Cross-Disciplinary Approaches to Postcommunist Transformation. Agenda and Context”, eds. Frank Bonker, Klaus Muller, Andreas Pickel, *Postcommunist Transformation and the Social Sciences: Cross-Disciplinary Approaches*, (Lanham: Rowman & Littlefield), 2003, p. 25.

<sup>9</sup> Juan J. Linz, Alfred Stepan, *Problems of Democratic Transition and Consolidation: Southern Europe, South America, and Post-Communist Europe*, p. 6.

<sup>10</sup> Idem, p. 6.

<sup>11</sup> Existence of a system of public contestation represents a guarantee of democracy's functionality. Between public contestation and degree of democratization arose a strong dependence, no consolidation of democratic rule being possible in presence of a power monopole. Robert Alan Dahl, *Polyarchy: Participation and Opposition*, (Yale: Yale University Press), 1973, p. 6.

conflicts under rule of the law<sup>12</sup>. Theoretical definitions of democracy encompass notable difficulties in explaining the diversity of concrete regimes. Yet stipulations invoked above could provide a useful tool in decrypting the typology and configuration experienced during post-communist transformation. In the same time, concentrated definition of consolidation are accompanied by other subjacent constrains, as presence of articulated forms of political competition and state responsiveness to the preference of its citizens, seen as equals<sup>13</sup>. Attempts to define and predict transitional trajectories originated a variety of theories of change, but a group of four axes can be considered as classical elucidative frames: functionalist approach, transnational perspective, genetic theory and interactive explanation<sup>14</sup>. Further endeavour aims to summarize the core arguments of these four axes, in order to isolate an expository picture for evolutions paths shared by different post-communist societies.

## **II. Exploring patterns of democratic transgression: functional approach, transnational view, genetic theory and interactive dimension.**

Functionalist theories of change tend to accentuate the importance of cultural, economic and social presuppositions of democratisation, recollecting many founding arguments from modernization tradition. Emphasizing the crucial role of economic development and social mobilisation, functionalist approach militates for a central vocation of modernisation is increasing chances for democratic evolution. Nonetheless, structural requirements of modernity such as urbanization, secularization and industrialization<sup>15</sup>, played a significant role in favouring installation of democracy, still other derivate components of modernization can trigger contrary reactions. Increasing political participation, accompanied by a rising activism of peripheral spaces, determined contradictory echoes for modernization-democratization two term process. Liberalisation of political life contributes to establishment of democracy's functional scaffolding, but still encompasses associated vulnerabilities. In many cases of modernizing countries, free electoral mechanism tend to confirm the conservation of power by former authoritarian elites, disruptive and reactionary forces ailing to seize the state<sup>16</sup>.

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<sup>12</sup> Ibidem, p. 6.

<sup>13</sup> Robert Alan Dahl, *Polyarchy: Participation and Opposition*, p.1.

<sup>14</sup> Geoffrey Pridham, „Comparative reflections on democratization in East-Central Europe: a model of post-communist transformation?“, p. 7.

<sup>15</sup> Daniel Lerner, *The Passing of Traditional Society: Modernizing the Middle East*, (New York: Free Press), 1958, p. 63.

<sup>16</sup> Samuel P. Huntington, *Political Order in Changing Societies*, (London: Yale University Press), 1968, p. 7.

Modernization movement contributed directly to creation of presuppositions for many regimes change, entailing also some relevant malfunctions. In this context, modernization occurred in Central Europe after 1970 can be labelled as an essential step in shaping future transitional paths. Afterward initial uniform development of communist archipelago, crystalized in the '50 under soviet tutelage, communist space engaged on multiple trajectories. At the end of Second World War, most of East European societies were confronting with backwardness, lacking fundamental claims of modernity<sup>17</sup>. Insertion of communist rule determined a fragmentary modernization, by promotion of urbanization, secularization, industrialisation and increasing literacy. Nevertheless, the crucial aspects of political participation and civic activism were absent, but this intermediary step towards modernity played a significant role for further societal evolutions<sup>18</sup>. At the end of the '70, Central Europe assisted to a secondary modernisation phase, induced by liberalisation wave of *Perestroika* and *Glasnost*<sup>19</sup>. Recovering the criteria of civic activism and allowing the creation of actors as Polish Solidarność, Central Europe's communist regimes were assuming a double transformative process. In this case modernization acted as triggering vector for later democratic scenarios.

Though, modernization dynamic proved to fail in confirming its monopole in explaining regime changes. Romanian case serves in this context as an exemplary contra-example. Severance of local communist from general evolutions of Socialist Bloc occurred in the '60, even if true colours of Ceaușescu's patrimonialist dictatorship were revealed in late '80. Inversion of modernity realized by local communism incriminates the regression of previous societal evolutions. After the '60, Romanian communism revolved around a traditionalist paradigm, reinforcing economic segregations and aggravating social cleavages. Exacerbation of industrialization project and assertion of strong limitation in space of civic expression diminished anterior gains in direction of modernity, after 1970 social climate and attitudinal dimension suffering by an accelerated degradation. By hybridization of nation-building project with elements specific to a dynastic totalitarianism, Ceaușescu regime

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<sup>17</sup> Richard Rose, *Understanding Post-Communist Transformation: A Bottom Up Approach*, (New York: Routledge), 2009, p. 20.

<sup>18</sup> Geoffrey Pridham, „Comparative reflections on democratisation in East-Central Europe: a model of post-communist transformation?“, p. 7.

<sup>19</sup> The essence of *Perestroika* and *Glasnost* (Restructuration and Openness) was to determine a slow “democratization” of communist world, threaten by an imminent economic and social collapse. Still, primary consequences of Gorbachev's doctrine were disappointing, Soviet Russia confronting with social tensions, growing unemployment and common goods shortages. Stephen White, “Reforming the Electoral System”, eds. Walter Joyce, Hillel Tickin, Stephen White, *Gorbachev and Gorbachevism*, p. 25.

adjoined the evolution towards liberalisation. Indigenization and monolithization of communism-nationalism binomial formula stimulated also a volatilisation of modernity<sup>20</sup>.

Contrary to this assurance measures operated by local communist in front of Gorbacheov's heresy, fall of Romanian totalitarianism apparently respected the general pattern of third wave's revolutions. Important questions arose in this specific context. If in the case of anti-modern local communism, regression of social climate and corruption of political culture still conducted to a break-down of oppressive regime, which are the consequences propagated upon consolidation clause? Presence of anti-modern societal structure induced different outcomes for revolutionary mechanism? It is obvious that Romanian transformation rite tend to individualize in landscape of transitional experiments, yet its long term implication still remain cast in shadow. Functionalist theories offer an interesting insight concerning the correlations appeared among economic development, modernization and promotion of democracy, while they still encounter important limits in explaining the border cases, such as Romanian vernacular communism.

Transnational theories concerning regime changes share some common grounds with functionalist approach, but tend to favour a broader internal and external perspective. These orientations stress essential influence of external factors, within processes of systemic change. Thus, occurrence of simultaneous transitional phenomena was explained as a result of diffusion and contamination tendencies. Waves of democratisation were stimulated by a hypothesis of proximity, snowball effects being obtain trough informational and cultural lens<sup>21</sup>. Under those arguments, communist collapse can be subsumed to a domino reaction, determinant vectors of systemic change having a double insertion, internal and external. Still, despite attractiveness of an integrative theory, transnational approach experiences some serious difficulties in elucidation of particular cases. Central Europe was reconfirming the contours of reformed species of communism, the hypothesis of contamination being potentiated by a contiguity criterion. Permeabilization of western border and continuous cultural exchange with hinterland of democracy assured progressionist communism an advantageous transitional path. In this manner, behaviourally and attitudinal factors for further consolidation were already present in a landscape where *nomenklatura* accepted the negotiation with new emerged civic sphere. Deconstruction of communism began thus in the middle of the '80 and ended in

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<sup>20</sup> Katherine Verdery, *National Ideology Under Socialism: Identity and Cultural Politics in Ceausescu's Romania*, (Berkeley: University of California Press), 1991, p. 315.

<sup>21</sup> Geoffrey Pridham, „Comparative reflections on democratisation in East-Central Europe: a model of post-communist transformation?”, p. 7.

pacted versions of the '90. Claiming the crucial role of informational dimension, transnational explanatory model also fostered the subversive force of underground media networks<sup>22</sup>, as one provided by Polish syndicalist movement.

However, transnational perspective was threatened by circularity. Central Europe evolved in a solidary pattern and the contamination theory is sustained by apparition of strong similarities, accumulated after adoption of Gorbachev doctrine. Nonetheless, for some peculiar scenarios this contamination explanation failed in assuring a realistic expository finality. Once again, Romanian particularism generates important questions regarding the transnational causality. Romanian revolution burst in an eccentrically point, propagating fast to all societal and spatial dimensions. In this case, what started as a small conflict among reformed parishioners and communist authorities from Timișoara, transformed in a social movement with violent expressions, conducting to unexpected dissolution of Ceaușescu's dictatorship<sup>23</sup>. Influence of external factors could be considered almost inconclusively for Romanian case. Dramatic food shortages and diffusive terror asserted by dynastic communism in the late '80 contributed to creation of a silent tension. Implosion of local communism produced gradually during years of extreme oppression, Timișoara episode acting as triggering vector for a much extended social pressure. Still, some questions remain. Would Romanian personalist dictatorship clash in a peaceful communist scene, engaged on the mirage of perpetuated *perestroika*? Even if it is difficult to give a definitive answer, there are certain arguments in favor of such scenario. Disjunction occurred in the '70 and aggravated during the '80, isolated local version of communism from cultural and political atmosphere of Socialist Bloc.

Hermetism manifested by Romanian sultanism<sup>24</sup> could be also translated as a self-reliance of Romanian pathway to liberalization and democratization. Still, it remains necessary to underline the subtle differences intervened between liberalization and democratization. More than an anti-communist revolt, Romanian revolution can be considered as an anti-dictatorship movement. Such interesting distinction is confirmed by tolerance and cultural lustration which accompanied former communist elites during first days of transition. Collective malfunctions

<sup>22</sup> Samuel P. Huntington, *The Third Wave*, p. 102.

<sup>23</sup> Grigore Pop-Eleches, "Romania Twenty Years after 1989. The Bizzare Echoes of a Contested Revolution", eds. Michael Bernhard, Jan Kubik, *Twenty Years After Communism: The Politics of Memory and Commemoration*, (Oxford: Oxford University Press), 2014, p. 87.

<sup>24</sup> The very essence of sultanistic drift of communism can be considered the unrestrained personal ruler ship. Trough fusion appeared amid public sphere and private ownership of the ruler, ideological background tends to fade way, being replaced with a patrimonialist cadre. Juan J. Linz, Alfred Stepan, *Problems of Democratic Transition and Consolidation: Southern Europe, South America, and Post-Communist Europe*, p. 54.

regarding representations of previous totalitarian regime opened the road for a late transitional pact. Negotiations initiated by reformist wings of former communist *nomenklatura* and masses were lacking the essential mediator factor of a secondary civic sphere. Defining exceptionalism imposed by local sultanism assured a separation of Romanian experience from the evolutionary logic of communist world, making the transnational explication almost inoperable. Certainly, general context of anti-communist movement played a subsidiary role within transformation of Romania's political order, but this specific influence was perceptible subsequent to communist collapse.

Another layer of explicative traditions concerning regime changes and transitional phenomena involves genetic theory. This direction militates for central relevance of elite's choices during processes of political transformation, transitional pacts being considered as founding frames for further democratic evolutions<sup>25</sup>. Moving attention from structural demands to dynamic aspects of transition, genetic approach enhances the part of elites in reconstructing the social consensus. Nevertheless, transactions hypothesis reveal its explanatory potential in relations with exemplary cases of pacted transition. New crafted civic elites, stratified during liberalization interlude of the '80, become slowly expression of new social vectors, assuring a process of mobilization<sup>26</sup>. Change of political order became thus the materialization of a silent deconstruction process, supervened inside communist power equations. Anyway, transactions models still pay a significant tribute to a specific configuration of transformative exercise. In this context, genetic paradigm is dependent by development of a tacit transition during the '80.

Elites made responsible for operationalization of transitional path did not appear during regime's material crisis, their origin being located in a much broader historical horizon. Over again, Romanian subject rejects these potential explanations of its transitional mechanism. Local genuine elites were decimated during communist purges of the '50 and '60 and creation of a progressionist layer within communist secondary echelons was impossible, due to increasing patrimonialist and personalist features of Ceaușescu regime<sup>27</sup>. Concurrently, the aggregation of secondary culture was not possible during late Stalinist decades of the '70 and '80, Romanian civic conscience

<sup>25</sup> Geoffrey Pridham, „Comparative reflections on democratisation in East-Central Europe: a model of post-communist transformation?” p. 8.

<sup>26</sup> Social mobilisation arose in changing environment of communist world also determined a process of destabilisation of previous political order. Determinism appeared amid social mobilisation and political instability play a significant role in social transformations. New social vectors became active and put under scrutiny former power monopol. Samuel P. Huntington, *Political Order in Changing Societies*, p. 47.

<sup>27</sup> Dennis Deletant, *Romania Under Communist Rule*, (London: Center for Romanian Studies), 1999, p. 59.



remaining in a stage of potentiality. Deficit of elites encountered by transitional Romania reflected in typology of its post-communist leadership formulas. Romanian appetite for a leader oriented political system confirmed the necessity of a surrogate solution. The missing link of Romanian revolution remains nevertheless the elites.

Absence of an intermediary transition and volatilization of historical elites pressed Romanian society to confront in its early transition days more with a difficult succession rite than with a genuine change. In this specific context, social collisions arose in the summer of 1990 can be labeled as a tardive attempts of denouncing the vicious power seizure<sup>28</sup>. Adjournment of transitional transaction and creation of a closed pact, arranged between former communist elites and new germs of civic sphere, expelled the genetic explication concerning Romanian regime change. Lacking intermediary steps towards modernization and liberalization, Romania also will confront with a deficit of civic vehicles, their late establishment nourishing relevant social tensions. As a social fabric, elites were present just in a latency form, their aggregation in coherent structures being adjourned until late stages of transitional process. Without a real samizdat culture and missing efficient underground informational chains, transitional society nourished a culture of suspicion concerning political enrolment of civic and intellectual elites.

Last branch of the explicative chain refers to interactive view. Sharing similar grounds with genetic perspective, interactive approach tries to push a step further the explanatory potential of transactionism, introducing a new element within anterior theoretical frame. Highlighting the relevance of "confining conditions"<sup>29</sup> of revolutionary events, interactive theory aims to identify a determinant model for apparition of regime changes. Trying to find a balance between environmental aspects and particular decisions promoted by elites, interactive filter succeed in expanding its expository vocation. Still, it remains trapped into limitations of classical casuistry. Particular aspects existing at the birth of a new political community do not always guarantee further development of transitional path. Even if for non-violent transitional experiences, the presence of a specific liberalization and economic restructuration acted as adjuvant factors for subsequent social consensus, the Romanian case makes again a discordant note. Confining frames of Romanian revolution were connected with an extended mass mobilization. Outcomes of this primary collective burst were however doubtful, in context of a slow gliding of revolutionary agenda from an anti-dictatorship movement to a corrupted expression of pactism.

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<sup>28</sup> Juan J. Linz, Alfred Stepan, *Problems of Democratic Transition and Consolidation: Southern Europe, South America, and Post-Communist Europe*, p. 346.

<sup>29</sup> Otto Kirchheimer, "Confining Conditions and Revolutionary Breakthroughs", *American Political Science Review*, Volume 59, Issue 04, December 1965, p. 964.

Among initial urban revolt and further deformation of revolutionary pattern are subsisting high differences. The revolution movement was supposed to inject “political participation”<sup>30</sup> within entire social dimension, but this claim remains unsatisfied. Lack of civic and political involvement of peripheries remains related with symptomatology of fragmentary modernity, marginal spaces being trapped in a traditionalist equation. The revolutionary move was encountered with enthusiasm, but during subsequent evolutions, countrified margins of Romanian society validated a distorted political version. In this context, the interactive theory is limited in its elucidative quality, between initial picture of Romanian revolutionary movement and subsequent developments appearing critical disparities. Those aspects were not entirely motivated by elite’s contextual actions.

Short theoretical inquiry operated above stressed the particularism of Romanian scenario, divulging also the presence of some interesting differences comparing to classical post-communist models. By contradicting the modernization thesis and minimalizing the relevance of transnational hypothesis, Romanian regime change becomes the expression of a hybrid evolution. Lacking an authentic transactionist pact and facing multiple reconfigurations of its primary revolutionary agenda, Romania’s paths toward democratic consolidation remains thus engraved by important vulnerabilities. Last section of study intend to analyses consequences propagated by specificity of Romanian context, trying also to develop a diagnosis about consolidation-reversibility prospects.

### **III. Rites of separations: Romanian journey towards consolidation.**

Rotten mostly in a contradictory modernity, Romania’s deficit of evolution will trigger subsequent transitional pathologies, nourishing also adjacent burdens in its ascent to consolidation. In this context, relevant correlations appeared amid degree of social fragmentation, under-development and successful propagation of dysfunctional political models remain relevant<sup>31</sup>. Maybe one of the most eloquent samples of local democracy’s uncertain limits refers to its attachment for a leader oriented political culture. Although many of emerging democracies tend to manifest an obvious appetency for dominant leadership<sup>32</sup>, Romanian example exacerbated this feature, as will be highlighted by transition’s maleficent drifts.

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<sup>30</sup> Stephen D. Roper, *Romania: The Unfinished Revolution*, (Amsterdam: Hardwood Academic Publishers), 2000, p. 10.

<sup>31</sup> Seymour Martin Lipset, *Revolution and Counterrevolution: Change and Persistence in Social Structures*, (New Jersey: Transaction Publishers), 1960, p. 292.

<sup>32</sup> John M. Carey, “Institutional Design and Party Systems”, ed. Larry Diamond, *Consolidating the Third Wave Democracies*, vol. I., (Baltimore: JHU Press), 1997, p. 78.

Structural consequences of communist anti-modernity are trackable subsequent to functionalist examination. Detachment of local version of totalitarianism from general dynamic of Socialist Bloc in the '60 generated essential effects against further structural and cultural evolutions. Distinctions between modern and anti-modern societies are regarding a set of key features, including rule of the law, openness, economic functionality and predictability<sup>33</sup>. In its late stages Romanian communism failed in satisfying the evaluator grid proposed above, its potential anti-modernity being confirmed also by its structural configurations. Development of sultanistic shift determined an interesting fusion mechanism, the borders separating public and private becoming undetermined. As a consequence, leader's ability to seize the institutional scaffolding generated a massive regress of modernization. Rule of law was thus suspended and replaced with a feudatory system, which acted also as an anti-bureaucratic movement. Cannibalization of communist elites during the '80 and apparition of tribalist chains of power, constructed on kinship, created the basis for a closed societal model. Declining the exigence of rule of law and openness, Romania's late communism also failed in assuring the crucial clauses of economic functionality and predictability. In defiance to its luxuriant mythology of economic prosperity, local communism collated with crucial systemic miscarriages. Therefore planned economy corrective fluxes were assuring with great difficulty the survival of an ensemble marked by chronical common goods shortages and striking inefficiency. Conserving an anachronistic industrialization agenda, Ceaușescu regime intended to obtain an historical independency, but as an irony, succeeded in establishment of a spectacular regression. Dysfunctionalities divulged in aftermath of Romanian dictatorship confirmed the corruption of modernity. Clash of peripheral industrial branches under galopant recession of state's interventionism and cultural decoupling of countrified marginal space determined effects upon further consolidation endeavor. Concurrently, partial achievements of communist lacunar modernity generated hidden cost for local emerging democracy. Also, between institutional demands of modernity and its structural definition appeared interesting correlations.

Intensive urbanization movement did not succeeded in creation of a genuine modern cultural *oikumena*. Many of Romania's villages, re-baptized cities, remained exponents of a traditional economic and representational culture. Lack of interest of Romanian communism for true picture of rural space translated in a double marginal posture<sup>34</sup>. If until 1965, peripheral layers of Romanian society were maintain a

<sup>33</sup> Richard Rose, *Understanding Post-Communist Transformation: A Bottom Up Approach*, p. 21.

<sup>34</sup> Katherine Verdery, *The Vanishing Hectare: Property and Value in Postsocialist Transylvania*, (New York: Cornell University Press), 2003, p. 227.

parochialist foundation, while urban centers were slowly gliding to new forms of political consciousness, dark decade of the '80 reinforced the connection between village and city. Lacking fundamental survival supplies, urban population began to practice a fragmentary migration. This temporary reunification generated a subsidiary re-traditionalization of urban clusters, with relevant effects towards consolidation prospects. Another important feature, demonstrating local communism contradictory modernity, implies the secularization circumstances. Doctrinaire orientation supervened within ideological substance of Romanian communism in the '70 generated an inversion of the secularization process<sup>35</sup>. Recovering many of traditionalist archetypes, local communism created a hybrid construct, reuniting in *mélange* frames of interwar ethno-nationalism with new personalist traits.

Effects exerted by these structural and institutional corruption upon consolidation prospects were acute. Attitudinal clause of consolidation requires a general engagement in favor of democratic values, the emergence of democratic design remaining connected to this collective adherence. Still, it is relevant to underline that solidification of democratic affinities precedes and often determines regime changes. That prospective step was missing in Romanian transformative mechanism, due to peculiar encapsulation, re-traditionalization and isolation of local communism. If for Central Europe, democratic culture had a silent genesis during the '80, for Romanian case, seizure of nationalist agenda and reconversion of religious archetypes assured a generous validation of system, even in the maleficent stages of sultanism. Out phasing of attitudinal dimensions triggered also a subsequent behavioral deficit. Striking majority of peaceful regime changes operated in former Communist archipelago was exploiting existing political institutions. Also, they frequently utilized the persistence of a set of generally accepted values<sup>36</sup>. Romanian particularism expelled the aggregation of a democratic horizon anticipatory to communist collapse. In this context collective engagement in direction of genuine systemic change remained unclear for several transitional stages. Subsistence of latent contestation groups, acting against democratic equation can be considered also as an expression of a deformed evolutionary path. Reticence manifested against democratic outcomes, such as restraint of state's ownership or free market competition confirmed cryptic attachment for paternalist communist tradition.

Behavioral vulnerability maintained inside Romanian transitional and post-transitional society determines some negative prospects regarding accomplishment

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<sup>35</sup> Katherine Verdery, *National Ideology Under Socialism: Identity and Cultural Politics in Ceausescu's Romania*, p. 126.

<sup>36</sup> S.N. Eisenstadt, "The break-down of communist regimes", ed. Stephen Richards Graubard, *Exit from Communism*, (New Jersey: Transaction Publishers), 1993, p. 24.

of consolidation aim. Maturation of local democracy requires more than well-developed institutional scaffolding, the attitudinal and behavioral conditions playing a crucial role. Functionalist theory of change proved its limits in decrypting the sources of Romanian scenario, but offered some relevant clues concerning peculiar traits of local evolution. Central interrogation determined by functionalist exam refers to further evolutions of modernization experience. If Romanian communist break down occurred in an anti-modern societal paradigm, what effects will propagate the presence of an adjourned modernization, accompanying the democratization phenomenon? It will be possible to assist to a resurrection of anti-modernity as a result of political actions performed by pauperized urban peripheries and marginal countrified culture? Increasing social migration and apparition of “multiple modernities”<sup>37</sup> under globalization process reopen the debates around consolidation and raise awareness regarding future prospects of former communist actors.

While functional theory delivers some useful insights about Romania’s distinct transitional dynamic, transnational hypothesis also contributes to establishment of some key conclusions. Despite the fact that transnational determinism could not be used as a satisfying explanation for local extinction of totalitarianism, analysis of its founding thesis proves once again the existence of an interesting particularism. Transnational theory is grounded on two key assumptions: presence of external forces contributing directly to de-construction of totalitarian rule and to promotion of democracy and functionality of internal informational and action flows. Romanian case dismisses both basal requirements, trough filter of its own enclavisation constrain.

Informational dissidence provided by networks as Radio Free Europa played an important role in cultural mobilisation of certain social clusters<sup>38</sup>, but could not serve as a triggering impulse for collective movement. Penetration of this form of cultural resistance was facing the limit of urban civilisation, its effectiveness in the peripheral space being modest. Certainly, Romanian revolution was made possible by spontaneous solidarity of urban masses, but their capacity to realize a general political Up Rising was reduced<sup>39</sup>. Future transitional pathways were shaped by this initial

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<sup>37</sup> Multiple modernization paths engraved evolutions of post-communist actors, many of these varieties of modernity denouncing the initial compatibility with democratization project. Shmuel Noah Eisenstadt, *Comparative Civilizations and Multiple Modernities*, (Leiden: BRILL), 2003, p. 502.

<sup>38</sup> Juan J. Linz, Alfred Stepan, *Problems of Democratic Transition and Consolidation: Southern Europe, South America, and Post-Communist Europe*, p. 358.

<sup>39</sup> Romanian never experienced an authentic Green Up Rising, political behavior of rural space remaining defined by a dominant passive approach. Green Up Rising can be defined as a process of peripheral social mobilization, margins of former traditional society becoming active in sphere of political choice and citizenship. End of modernization process corresponds to an annihilation of disparities generated by city-country gap. Samuel P. Huntington, *Political Order in Changing Societies*, p. 73.

participatory deficit, road towards consolidation being constantly adumbrated by reluctance of traditionalism. Consolidation process solicits beyond all the edification of a solidary political culture, discharging social fragmentation and assuring an inclusion clause. Thus, the attitudinal level of consolidation remains a difficult to achieve standard, especially within a marginal culture constantly threaten by its affinities towards compulsory leadership or providentialism. Incomplete modernity transmitted by sultanism affected inclusively the realization of behavioural quest.

Even if explicit discourses against democratic enrolment were avoided, Romanian leaders manifesting instead a lure of “westernization”, underground movement against democracy were experienced in several stages. Starting from non-democratic discourses of interim regime in 1990 and continuing with social tensions created by specific professional clusters until late stages of transition, in 1999<sup>40</sup>, persistence of obvious behavioural pathologies raised important questions. Although, exotic images of almost medieval revolt of miners were broadcast all over world, popularising local democracy’s failure in managing its complicated historical heritage.

In the end, transnational topic has its share of importance in promoting and sustaining the realization of constitutional cadres of democracy. As consequence of its borderline position within post-cold war cartography, Romanian transitional society benefited by a determinant international impulse towards democratisation, reflected mostly in the institutional echoes. Still, if state architecture apparently endorsed the democratic tradition, important disparities supervened inside political culture maintained the spectrum of a *praetorian deviance*<sup>41</sup>.

De-regulated negotiations arose among leaders and masses and conservation of an acute volatility of political options continued during transitional experience, even if “early anti-communist umbrella alliance”<sup>42</sup> succumbed after succession election from 1990. It is clear that preservation of a general equilibrium during Romanian transitional experience was stimulated by existence of a benevolent and sometimes adjuvant international scene, but some questions remain particularly relevant. Supposing that establishment of constitutional and even behaviourally clauses of consolidation was advocated by a favourable international climate, what would be the consequences of an unexpected degradation of external conjecture? Are Romanian consolidation prospects still linked by ideological and cultural colours of its borderlands?

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<sup>40</sup> *Ibidem*, p. 361.

<sup>41</sup> Societies confronting with high levels of political participation and with low degrees of institutionalization are exposed to praetorian distortions, negotiations between social forces and political actors eluding the legal filter. Samuel P. Huntington, *Political Order in Changing Societies*, p. 80.

<sup>42</sup> Herbert Kitschelt, *Post-Communist Party Systems: Competition, Representation, and Inter-Party Cooperation*, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press), 1999, p. 96.

Conclusively, genetic approach and its interactionist extension provide some supplementary hypotheses concerning consolidation quest. Confining conditions of Romanian regime change do not imply a unitary pattern. In this context, extreme social tensions obtain through aberrant late communism policies constituted a surface symptom for a much deeper social pathology. Nonetheless, initial revolutionary agenda did not identify this deceitful distinction between episodic outcomes of dynastic communism and the profound contradictions entailed by system itself. Primary expectations regarding revolutionary movement revolved around a set of liberalisation impulses, often evading the core values of former political order. These tendencies towards reformation against systemic change were enhanced by personalist distortion of local totalitarianism. Elusive borders establish amidst sultanistic aspects of local dictatorship and structural scaffolding of communist ensemble allowed a cryptic modification of primary impulses and confining conditions of revolutionary event. Thus, it can be isolated at least three distinct configurations of Romania's revolutionary burst: an initial stage of urban riot, a phase of intermediary pactisation and a period of civic denunciation. Without detailing every successive level, it becomes clear that every layer implies the presence of substantially different constituent perspective. At initial moment of urban riot evolutions towards democracy were uncertain. Without adjuvant support of international conjecture Romanian society could easily collapse in a formula of reshaped *perestroika*. Changing just the leader and hoping to reform the system, this option of aborted revolution was not far to materialization. Elite's actions in this violent context were inarticulated, oscillating between public abjuration of previous ideological commitments and retreat in a secluded expectance. Immersion in an atmosphere of fear, tension, confusion and conspirationist plot augmented this intuitive retreat. Genetic approach fails to in proving its expository quality regarding Romanian case due to lack of stability of conditions subsequent to regime's change. Intermediary pactisation stage nourished different possible evolutionary pathways, initial acceptance of interim power structures being connected with abeyance of a further civic and social round table<sup>43</sup>. Unfortunately, this historical reconciliation never produced, interim power assuming a quite non-democratic monopole of revolutionary topic. Elite's attitudes along pactisation stage could be labelled as ambivalent, genuine and manifest attachment regarding democracy remaining very often as an implicit claim. In the end, a determinant rite of separation supervened after overwhelming electoral victory obtained by National Salvation Front, coined as a legitimate "emanation" of

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<sup>43</sup> Juan J. Linz, Alfred Stepan, *Problems of Democratic Transition and Consolidation: Southern Europe, South America, and Post-Communist Europe*, p. 361.

revolutionary burst<sup>44</sup>. In this predictable trajectory towards vicious consolidation of former echelons of defunct political order, confining circumstances of regime change supported again a major transformation. Elite's affiliation scavenged between new imposed political regime and objector civic movement, blazed in centre of Bucharest. Outcomes of these sequentially of founding paradigms generated important difficulties in isolating a unique confining cadre for Romanian case. Concurrently elite's actions and attitudes concerning further evolution paths of post-totalitarian society were contradictory and instable.

Even if these peculiarities endorsed by Romanian scenario expelled the genetic explanatory mechanism and consecutively limit the relevance of an interactive approach, they still determine interesting conclusion regarding the consolidation process. Due to its multiplicity of overlapping formative frames Romanian society suffered the pressure of contradictory social vectors. Consolidation process was hindered by conservation of a crucial out phasing among civic sphere and political culture. Behavioural and attitudinal clauses of consolidation were directly affected by void installed between leaders and new created electoral masses, absence of a secondary power sphere fostering the spectrum of an uncertain democracy. Although it is difficult to formulate a final assessment, it remains important to underline that roots of Romanian transformative mechanism are substantial different from ones experienced by other contemporary rites of passage. Also, by dismantling the idea of Romanian revolution seen as a typical expression of third's wave mutations, it became certain that vernacular experience of consolidation will imply distinct challenges and linger under omen of a parallel modernity.

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<sup>44</sup> Idem, p. 361.



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