

THEORETICAL HYPOTHESIS AND METHODOLOGICAL OPTIONS IN RESEARCH OF REMINANCES DUE TO COMMUNIST IDEOLOGY IN ROMANIA

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Abstract: *We are of the opinion that historiographical science has long reached the limit of its explicative capacity in terms of Romanian communism, and recent history becomes with every research carried out an increasing field of research for socio-human sciences. These, with the extensive methodological arsenal available to them, are entitled to claim this object of study in an attempt to highlight regularities that can not be investigated with the instruments of the historian.*

In this paper we will enumerate the main steps of this kind undertaken so far to study the reminiscences due to communist ideology in Romania. We will try to integrate and correlate these concerns, to identify the strengths and weaknesses of each theoretical and methodological model in part. From the sphere of social psychology, we will take on the theory of social representations and the dramaturgic model, which we will apply for the decryption of the way in which the everyday life took place during the totalitarian regime. We will analyze the concept of "social representation", highlighting the main research directions in this field, applying to Romanian communism. Conquests in the field of sociology of culture provide us with extensive information about the Romanian cultural profile as well as about the influence of the communist period in shaping the value of this profile.

Key words: Romanian Communism; the psychology of communism; social representations; social dramaturgy; psycho-cultural profile.

1. Introduction: On Orwell's footsteps

Understanding politics from the perspective of individual psychism and "inter-mental"¹ interaction is far from a direction of recent research in social psychology. Paradoxically or not, the most conspicuous way to elucidate the psychological mechanisms that ensure the survival of totalitarian political systems belongs to the columnist and essayist George Orwell, who, in works such as the *Animal Farm* (1945) and "One Nine hundred and forty-four" (1949) illustrates the main methods and techniques of propaganda and manipulation used in the totalitarian state, as well as "the way in which social pressures

¹ Term endorsed by Gabriel Tarde, sociologist and psychologist, founder of social psychology, in the essay "On inter-mental psychology" (1901).

frequently lead to the alignment of individual judgments with those of the group" (Popoviciu, 2003: 45), taking as a source of inspiration and unity to analyze the Soviet society of those times. However, the concerns of psychosocial scientists about the psychological dimension of politics were not in any way aroused by the American essayist's dystopia. In fact, political novels with a psychological flair since the middle of the previous century have been exemplifying, in a very accessible manner to the general public, the theories elaborated long before in the sphere of psychosocial disciplines. A notable contribution in this respect belongs even to the "social father" of social psychology, Gustave le Bon, who "described much before George Orwell and more profoundly than that, the destruction of the personality in a totalitarian political system" (Chelcea, 2001: 64).

2. The psychological dimension of the communist project

In the center of communism's psychology there is already the consecrated concept of a "new man", which is likely to be defined from the perspective of an "ideal self" based on ideological criteria. By extrapolating, the tendency of uniformity of attitudes, of homogenization at the level of mentalities, is not a characteristic that delimits the extreme left regimes in relation to right-wing totalitarianism. The ideal self, the result of ideological exclusivity, is the desideratum of any totalitarian regime. What specializes the communist regime is the structuring of the ideal self based on ideological projections such as full social and economic equality, the cultivation of class consciousness, the cult of labor motivated by social progress, the despising of the "class enemy", the liberation from any religious sentiment, obedience and faith full of the Party's infallibility, etc. (Otovescu, 2009: 394). All the above mentioned coordinates, designed to configure the identity of the so-called ideal self, have not been reduced in communist Romania at the stage of simple assertions with an abstract, ideal value. They have been inoculated into collective consciousness both through institutional redesign and - perhaps first of all - by reconfiguring the structure of statuses and roles of society, going from ideal to operational through complex social engineering mechanisms. New statuses in the social hierarchy are established: Of these, a well-known exegete of the phenomenon, Lavinia Betea analyzes extensively four statuses associated with the establishment of the "dictatorship of the proletariat", a high social prestige: "the stahanovist worker, the soldier, the activist the party, the cechist (in Romania, the security worker)" (2001, p. 64). On the opposite side, the depreciation of political elites in the former "bourgeois-inheritance" regime of the academic elites of some socio-professional catselfries (priests, nonmarxious philosophers, psychologists, sociologists and humanists in general) was a constant of how the new man had to relate to social reality through the prism of what - paradoxically or not - even Marx called ideological glasses.

The efficiency of the process, which, without fear of exaggerating, can be defined from the perspective of the theory of re-socialization, was ensured first and foremost by the psychological (and then socially-juridical) control mechanisms. The internalisation and assumption of the system of values-attitudes that would hide the structure of the "ideal self" was the central objective of party ideologists, good acquaintances of social psychology, of propaganda and manipulation tools, partly taken over from Soviet practices. If, in the case of children, the formation of the "ideal self" represented a relatively simple task, considering that the school took over much of the family's functions (and even we had to deal with school control over the family) and they were in full training of the self and of the personality, things were quite different in the case of adults, where the means of re-education could not be summed up as simple courses of "socialist ethics", at propagandist festivals and statistical data, which were meant to portray the achievements of socialism.

If the internal aspects of the self (emotional and cognitive) can not be controlled and corrected by political-juridical mechanisms, the contextual component, which refers to the objectification of the first two in specific behavioral acts, is susceptible to being observed, measured and related to ideological requirements. In the hypothesis of a discrepancy between the individual behaviors (the real self) and the ideological desirable behaviors (the ideal self), the negative sanction, meant to connect the individual's behavior to the requirements of the ideology, appears. The potential of the sanction gives rise to a permanent state of conflict between cognition and behavior, between what is "good" or "wrong" at the level of the individual system of values-attitudes and what is expected at the social level, namely what is promoted through political discourse, through laws and regulations, the media, the school, etc. The reduction of the dissonance between the "ideal ideological self" and the "real socialized self" will be accomplished in a first phase by what is defined in the literature as "public conformism as a dominant answer in a totalitarian system" (Popoviciu, 2001: 229), and in order to remove the conflicting tension, the individual gradually to connect the "real self" to the prescriptions of the "ideal self" in all defining elements of social attitudes, solving the dissonance and internalizing ideology as a life strategy.

In order to achieve conformism, the central objective of the dejist phase, a dual terror was established at the level of the Romanian society: on the one hand we are talking about a real terror, concretized in the Stalinist processes, the suppression of the political prisoners, the infiltration of the former Securitate informants in all the structures social, purification of dissidents from key positions, etc., and, on the other hand, about potential, virtual terror, generating a genuine collective paranoia. Fear of not listening, fear of not revealing the true beliefs; the obsession, well propagandistically maintained, of the omniscience and omnipresence of the Party were not all social controls, but means of

psychological control. The adaptive mechanisms were few, and the "flattering of the superiors, blocking the initiative, the routine" (*Ibidem*) came to reiterate the full obedience of the individual.

3. Communist representations and remnants: research directions

We have outlined, in previous paragraphs, the psychological mechanisms underlying totalitarian systems in general, which have characterized Romanian totalitarianism in particular. This exposure would be incomplete without reference to a paradigm of analysis specific to modern social psychology: the paradigm of social representations. The term itself is not new. It was consecrated by French sociologist Emile Durkheim, who analyzes social representations as compared to individual ones, and which sets forth a constant that is now recognized by most old and new sociological systems: "Suffice it to say that individual or collective representations can not be studied scientifically only on the condition that they were studied objectively" (2001, p.23). The impossibility of fulfilling this methodological norm, as well as the ambiguity of the concept, difficult to operationalize, led neo-positivist thinkers to reject in a first phase the scientific nature of this approach. It was rehabilitated and updated by the Romanian-French psycho-sociologist Serge Moscovici, who, following several empirical researches, came to define science and ideology as sources of social representations: "Common sense - emphasizes S. Moscovici (1997) no longer runs from bottom to top but from top to bottom" (Betea, 2001:55). According to him, the transition from theory to representation takes two phases: the objectification, which aims at moving from theory to image and image to the "social edification of reality" (*Ibidem*), namely anchoring, which involves the insertion of theory into the hierarchy of values and among day-to-day social operations". (*Ibidem*).

Taking over the paradigm of social representations established by Moscovici, which finds its applicability also in areas such as political ecology or constructivist sociology, the Romanian psychologist Adrian Neculau realized at the beginning of the nineties extensive analyzes of the psychology of the representations on Romanian communism. The attempt of the Romanian Communists to create new social representations is correlated by Adrian Neculau with the attempt to reconstruct the individual and collective identity. Among the practices used in the process of forming new social representations, Adrian Neculau mentions "the principle of labeling the old classes and social catselfries as negative groups" (2004, p.17), plus the restructuring of the stratification, and thereby social order according to new criteria (*Ibidem*).

The Romanian psychologist illustrates, how pragmatically, the relationship between social representations and identity redefinition: "Notice that the old option is depreciated, comparing, observe that new cultural values and normative models are not difficult to adopt, want to assimilate and integrate

and opt." (*Ibidem*). Thus, in order to satisfy the necessities of belonging and affiliation, the individual voluntarily renounces, in a quasi-contractualist reasoning, the manifestation of his own specificity of identity, to assume and to internalize a socially desirable identity and to connect in this way to the "correct" representation of reality, as it is designed by the positive, reference group.

In the case of Romanian communism, the transition from the expression-expression of the so-called "scientific communism" to the representation-instrument of action (Betea, 2001:145) was achieved through the education system; party activists, educated so as to disseminate the socialist-communist vision of the world; through cultural animators, propaganda sections, falsification of history, ideology of artistic act, etc. In all these ways, a "false consciousness", a collective representation of the reality in relation to which the interpersonal interactions were to take place and which would guide the institutional reporting of individuals to the social, economic and political reality, was inoculated. A question of research from which many sociological surveys claim is concerned is the factual or latent timeliness of the retentions of those representations, in the context of their invalidation of the new institutional order imposed by the adaptation of the Romanian society to the normative, value and attitudinal prescriptions of the liberal democracy of Western type. From this point of view, the extensive studies in which the issue of transition was discussed did not sufficiently take into account important psychosocial variables, summing up the diachronic analysis of political, economic, legal and administrative structures, to the inventory of political preferences and options from past and present. The transition is, above all, a transition of representative fields, a complex but scientifically measurable phenomenon, overlapping of distinct fields, which - operating in the Moscovici paradigm - have their primary expression in antagonistic ideologies.

In fact, divergent social representations of the same reality represent an important source of the conflicts and tensions in the Romanian society, which tend to manifest themselves on intergenerational level. The case of parents, which, adopting an authoritarian parenting style, conflicts with the far too liberal aspirations of children, is a very evoked example of these conflicts. They are not limited to interpersonal and intergenerational relationships but find forms of manifestation including institutional and organizational. The inflexibility and ritualism of teaching institutions towards students' aspirations, for example, engenders a permanent state of social tension, having the effect of jeopardizing the teaching-learning activity and the ability of the school to perform its functions optimally for its social utility. "Sitting with Parents," in which the teacher, as the legitimate representative of the State, exercises almost discretionary authority, is another element that seems to resemble the remaining social representations. The conflict, which begins with the rebuke of parents for the mistakes of the children, is not consumed in the "sitting" room (it is noted the

excessive formalism and the hierarchical organization to which the concept sends). Conflict status is perpetuated at home, along with the negative sanction applied to the child for behavior considered inadequate in the school space (a sanction which, in a few cases, takes on an aggressive form). Although this approach may be effective in the short term (the behavior that generates the penalty will be avoided), it is also inefficient if we take into account the perverse effects that it engenders in the medium and long term, contrary to any principle of psychopedagogy contemporary.

Also in institutional terms, we note a hyperburocratization of all organizational structures, correlated with the sacrifice and absolutisation of the rules, even when their observance impedes the achievement of the objectives. The exhaustive forms, the absolutely unnecessary copies of documents or the recording of superfluous data (for example, the parents' profession) represent remarkable representations of the organizational culture: in communism, overregulation and the collection of seemingly unnecessary data were related to the very way in which social control.

We have illustrated, through the previous examples, the way socialist-communist representations have moved from an ideological stage, aware of a deploying, operational, conscious (declarative) stage and assumed as something natural, inherent in social order and inter-individual and institutional relations. These practices are self-inflicted by multiplying despite the fact that the regime imposed on them has collapsed for three decades. However, affirmations such as "Parents are authoritarian.", "Children are oriented towards the principles of liberalism.", "Teachers adopt obsolete teaching methods.", or "Officials are ritualists." lie at the limit of common sense and scientific knowledge. If they are statistically demonstrated by successive sociological surveys, they can, at the most, bring out some psychosocial and socio-cultural regularities, which in turn can be put forward as an empirical argument for a higher-ranked theory - that of the remaining representations. Nonetheless, it requires much caution and epistemic maturity to look at social, professional or ethnic categories as homogeneous, monolithic structures, under the fatalist influence of the ideology, which have a "collective mentality" and operate, like the human psyche, with "cognitions" or "mentalities". The second half of the previous century has disqualified, perhaps definitively, the ethnopsychological approach, so widely circulated especially in the ante-and interwar Romanian scientific community. The works of "Psychology of the Romanians" published by Constantin Rădulescu-Motru, Traian Herseni and Dumitru Drăghicescu represent the culmination of these concerns.

A recent and very courageous attempt to recover and redefine ethnopsychology and to conform to contemporary methodological, epistemological and praxiological norms, by inaugurating and in the Romanian space the so-called "intercultural psychology" belongs to the Cluj psychologist

Daniel David, who, in the paper "Psychology of the Romanian people. The Psychological Profile of Romanians in a Cognitive-Experimental Monograph" brings together the latest empirical studies in psychology and sociology to reconstruct, on the basis of laborious secondary analyzes, the profile of Romanians after five decades in which social reality was viewed by "glasses" party ideology. The dominant characteristic of the Romanians, as shown by the empirical researches analyzed in this work, is the interpersonal distrust - a characteristic that blocks the manifestation and valorisation of the national creative potential, having, in this respect, a profound dysfunctional effect (David, 2015:324). The finding is not at all surprising: the psychological terror and the paranoid suspicion, which we have previously mentioned, attained in communism paroxysmal and pathological dimensions.

Concluding, social representations can be considered as organized collective concepts about social reality, objectified in patterns of reporting to the other and to structures, to political power, economic organization, family relations, neighborhood, etc. The influence of politics on representations, surprisingly surprised by Moscovici, is felt today, almost three decades after the fall of communism, finding its forms of operationalization, rationalization and manifestation in the most diverse daily practices. For the contextualized understanding of social representations, as iconic projections of institutional order, it is necessary to correlate them with the dynamics of value orientations and socio-cultural models, which will be extensively addressed in a subsequent subchapter.

4. Elements for a Dramaturgical Approach to Everyday Life in Communism

The dramaturgical paradigm of analysis of daily reality was inaugurated by American sociologist Erving Goffman in the middle of the previous century and is based on a conceptual and methodological junction between previous interpretative approaches (Max Weber's theory of social action, theories of symbolic interactionism), the psychoanalytic approach Freudian (the reason for which he finds application in psychotherapy and psychoanalysis) and the phenomenological concept established by Alfred Schütz. In essence, we are talking about an interdisciplinary approach which, despite its playful and non-empirical form, satisfactorily explains a series of psychic and social phenomena and can also be successfully applied to understanding the micro-social dimension of politics. Social space is represented as a theater, on the scene of which several actors interpret diverse roles (Goffman, 2007). The central concept in the Goffmanian discourse is "representation" but understood in a structurally different sense than in collective mental theories, the individual creating and sharing impressions and images through the roles performed in the most diverse social contexts in different settings, for audiences and constantly reporting to the related expectations of the other actors.

A dramaturgical approach to Romanian communism should start from the clear definition of the categories of actors that were active on the "scene" of Romanian society in the early nineteenth decade. The "director" was the Communist Party, the "actors" were the citizens, and the "scenario" was conceived by the director. If we were to frame the communist scenario into a cinematic catselfry, without this dramaturgical model in derision, it could be successfully enrolled in the sphere of science fiction: a metanarration that projects the certainty of evolution towards an ideal world, despite evidence of the real, but which lamentably fails in terror and cynicism. In turn, actors can be framed in several types, depending on the importance of roles, the ethical value (positive or negative) attributed to them by the director: the catselfry of "enemies of the people", the "working class", the "activists" the catselfry of "teachers", "engineers", "doctors", etc. What new communism brings about is the redefinition of the roles associated with already existing statuses: the proletarian passed, at least at the scenarios, from the bottom of the social structure at the top of the institutional hierarchy; the teacher's role was to disseminate the communist "scenario" of young students, preparing them for the roles they would play in their social life at maturity, the "priest" became a socially useful actor, or at least tolerable, only for as long as contributed, through the information provided and the ideological sermons, to building socialism etc.

A special status was the "ruling class", the top of which was always the supreme leader. He does not miss an opportunity to cast out and strengthen his grandeur and authority through the theatrical performances performed by other actors on various festive occasions. The monumentalist festivist, the portraits of the leaders and the artistic creations dedicated to the latter, depicted a real "emblematic equipment" (Bădescu, Dungaciu, Baltasiu, 1994:459), having both an expressive and a monster function, updating the role of each catselfry of actors in the "theater play". A performance in another performance, one might say. Aligning the "actors" behaviors to the new role requirements was not difficult. The director speculated a feature inherent in the human being: to evolve on a social "scene" not anarchic, arbitrary, but correlated with the expectations of the other "actors", based on the principle of inter-class similarity: "Man does not seek the forms that individualize and concretize him naturalistic, but those who catselfrize it." (*Ibidem*). One could counter-argue the anti-communist dissidents, who have fully assumed the risks of manifesting individuality and "leaving" the play, when it contradicts their images and impressions, with the way they thought it was just to play roles on the social scene. Of course, we do not have to do with mechanical adoption and a non-critical reception of the new scenario. Goffman has never postulated the existence of a single scenario - the one "directed" by the political factor - but a plurality of alternative scenarios, paralleled at certain points and partly superimposed in others, resulting from the very multidimensional nature of the social. Anticommunist dissidents, for

example, represented, according to the main scenario, the "black sheep" of society, which blocked the country's evolution towards communism. The latter, in turn, played the roles "dictated" by a secondary scenario, in which the purpose pursued by their performance was a justifiable, liberation of the country from the communist yoke.

Two other concepts in Goffmanian psychology are "front stage" and "back stage", referring to the more or less pronounced discrepancy between "actor" behaviors when others expect him to fulfill certain role requirements, and the behaviors that it adopts when the role requirements cease (the "facade" and "changing the framework" are two other concepts that complement the explanatory table) (*Ibidem*). The disparity between the two dimensions in the communist daily favored the involvement of three phenomena of social pathology: social hypocrisy, social schizophrenia and institutional corruption. Hypocrisy was an attribute even cultivated by the Communist authorities: the pompous speeches of the Communist leaders on the agricultural production and the welfare of the Romanians were strongly contrasting with the everyday reality, where procuring basic food was often a real adventure. Moreover, this everyday reality had to be masked by the "actor" through a public attitude of satisfaction and gratitude. Any form of protest or manifestation of dissatisfaction places it outside the official "scenario". Hence the second issue: social schizophrenia. The way of manifestation in the public space at the level of the secondary groups was diametrically opposed to the attitudes of the actors in the private, at the level of the primary group, where the "director" was not always present. Institutionalized corruption results from the duality of organizational structures, where the formal dimension (the "stage") was totally broken by informal reality ("backstage"): "Neglecting or diminishing individual issues has led to the parallel operation of informal structures, completed in circumventing the norm or even the law. The effects of such state were reflected in the formation of informal groups that sought to solve aspects of professional and social activity" (Schifirneț, 2004: 44).

These problems still find remarkable forms of manifestation in the contemporary Romanian society. They have not only an individual dimension, but they are reproduced axially from the individual plan in the social catselfry of the individual, and therefore in the plan of the functioning of the institutions.

We can not conclude this analysis without referring to another central concept in Goffmanian psycho-sociology: "stigma", understood by the American sociologist as any physical or non-physical feature that prevents the individual from accepting a group (Goffman, 2007). The concept is defined in a more general sense than in the theories of deviance. Goffman also talks about the possibility of transforming the stigma into a "symbolic victory" (Gavreliuc, 2007:167). Psychologist Alin Gavreliuc adapts the mechanisms of this conversion to the Romanian reality, thus creating a provocative explanatory model of

Romanians' attitudes "stigmatized" at the international level due to the "social retardation" caused by the five decades of communism:

a) individualizing the stigma through a speech like: "How can Westerners understand our problems? They have not known communism for half a century." (*Ibidem*)

b) reraising the stigma by saying openly our belief "that in every evil is also a good, according to which our past suffering has strengthened us, preparing us for a great future" (*Ibidem*)

c) the hyperbolization of small achievements, and the diminution of the importance of great failures by practicing judgments such as: "Good Communism has been done, everybody has a house, a job, and a party member was just a mere formality, that did not mean anything." (*Ibidem*)

The psychosocial approach to daily life offers probably the most valuable results about what's left of the "new man". The limitations of this approach are the emphasis on interpersonal relationships, ignoring the relevance of macrosocial structures that can affect the daily reality, regardless of the intentions of the members of a society and the interpersonal relationships that are established between them. For example, the establishment of communism in Romania, as well as the fall of communist dictatorship, can not be explained by social psychology, rather than the dynamics of international relations, political institutions, economic situation, etc.

5. The Romanians' cultural profile² in (post) communism

We have drawn attention when analyzing the psychosocial theory of the remaining representations and their influence on social action that the veracity and even the scientificity of this approach could not be validated without resorting to the recent theoretical conquests on the field of sociology of culture. Understanding the contemporary values of the Romanians, defined in general terms as "abstract ideas about what is desirable, right and well to follow the majority of the members of a society" (Mihăilescu, 2003:50), can provide us both precious information about their common past, as well as important clues about the future evolution of the national cultural profile. To accomplish this goal, we will work with two distinct theoretical models: the model of cultural attributes of Dutch sociologist Geert Hofstede and the "topographic" model of American sociologist Ronald Inglehart.

² The term "cultural profile" should be understood in terms of cultural constants statistically recorded at the level of a society, and not as cultural attributes reproducing at the level of each individual in that society by virtue of membership.

	Power Distance Index	Individualism	Masculinity	Uncertainty Avoidance Index	Long-Term Orientation
Australia	36	90	61	51	31
Austria	11	55	79	70	-
Belgium	65	75	54	94	-
Bulgaria*	70	30	40	85	-
Czech Republic*	57	58	57	74	13
Finland	33	63	26	59	-
France	68	71	43	86	-
Germany	35	67	66	65	31
Greece	60	35	57	112	-
Hungary*	46	80	88	82	50
India	77	48	56	40	61
Italy	50	76	70	75	-
Netherlands	38	80	14	53	44
Poland*	68	60	64	93	32
Portugal	63	27	31	104	-
Romania*	90	30	42	90	-
Spain	57	51	42	86	-
Sweden	31	71	5	29	33
Turkey	66	37	45	85	-
UK	35	89	66	35	-
USA	40	91	62	46	-

* values estimated by Hofstede (not derived from empirical data collected for this purpose).

** each index varies from 1 to 120.

T.1. *The position of some societies according to the five cultural dimensions proposed by Hofstede*

Source: B. Voicu în L. Vlăsceanu, coord. (2011, p.266)

Hofstede starts his analysis of six dimensions that configures the cultural profile of a nation, and each of them contains two attributes, defined from the perspective of a continuum between the maximum and the minimum, in an ideal-typical manner: collectivism vs. individualism; femininity vs. masculinity; concentration of power vs. power distribution; avoiding uncertainty vs. engaging uncertainty; long-term orientation versus short-term orientation (Voicu, în Vlăsceanu, 2011:263-267). The cultural profile of the Romanians, from the perspective of this theoretical and methodological model, is a strong collectivist and relatively feminine one, which denotes the Romanians' orientation rather towards harmony and cooperation than towards ambition, competitiveness and appetite for personal affirmation. As far as the division of power is concerned, Romanians more readily accept the social inequity, the legitimate right of those who have the power to lead the many, which correlates with the particularly strong collective variable. There is an orientation in the direction of avoiding constant uncertainty that leads to a deeply conservative mentality. The change is viewed with suspicion, the Romanians preferring to observe normality in the face of the normative conflict and its innovating potential (see Fig. 1).

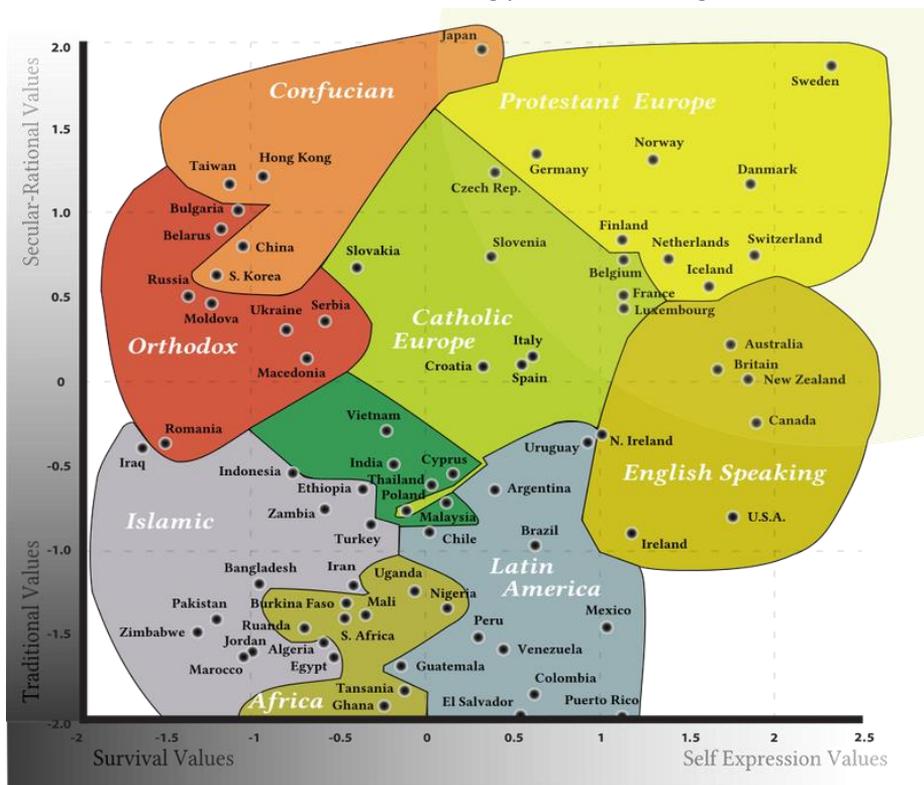


Fig.2. Inglehart–Welzel cultural map of the world
 Source: www.datum.wordpress.com

Similar conclusions came from the much wider research coordinated by Ronald Inglehart and Christian Welzel in the World Values Survey, which was finalized by drawing up a "value map", in which a large proportion of the world's states are represented in relation to two axiological coordinates: survival values versus self-expression values and traditional values vs. rational-secular values (see Fig. 2). Among the value coordinates that outline a traditionally oriented and survival-oriented profile, such as that of Romanians, we remember the increased importance given to the traditional family, religious institutions, parent-child relationships, the rejection of euthanasia, suicide, discouragement of divorce, cult of work, in the face of state authority, the concern to provide the necessary resources for living today (Inglehart, Baker, 2000). Relative social homogeneity and hostility to new forms of alterity are other characteristics of these types of societies. The new is accepted only if it does not destroy the normative regime transmitted by tradition.

However, putting Romanians' traditionalist and collectivist cultural profile exclusively on the basis of a "residual communism" would fail in a reductive and simplifying approach to an extremely complex study object. For example, returning to Hofstede's ranking, we find that countries such as Greece and Portugal, who have known communism for very short periods, are located at the collectivist pole, while Poland and Hungary, countries that were part of the eastern block, tend to focus on individualist principles (see Fig.1). In the case of Romania, the collectivist and conservative profile may originate in Orthodox Christianity, Romania being, from this point of view, one of the countries where religious revitalization has reached impressive proportions in the last decades.

However, the role of communist ideology can not be negated in the perpetuation and redrawing of the already existing value-normative model in new nuances. Moreover, the researches of the last two decades reveal a series of more specific and attitudinal configurations that are unmistakably derived from communism and the uncertainties of transition: very low trust in the democratic institutions of the state; the resigned acceptance of social inequalities; declaring dissatisfaction with some politicians, but still voting for them; confused and contradictory visions of the market economy s.a. (Voicu, Voicu, 2007).

6. Discussion

Although progressive, revolutionary and secularist, Communism had a strong conservative effect, especially in the nationalist stage, taking Romania away from the evolutionary directions that characterized the dynamics of value orientations in Western societies (Rezsóhazy, 2008). The noncontamination of social institutions with no reverberation of the Western cultural revolution was an important desideratum of party ideologists who saw in the claims of liberalism a threat to the ethical and functional organization of socialist society. Can we talk, in this context, about a "social retardation" of Romanian society? An answer

would be at least hasty, as long as there is no unanimous acceptance of progress, and the concept, often spoken in the media, can not be considered a sociological category, considering its affective dimension and subjective value. Then an individualist-progressive society is not a priori better than a collectivist-traditionalist one, unless there is a discrepancy between the ideal culture and the real culture of the latter, objectively in a complex of inferiority and frustration in relation to the first, which is likely to be explained in terms of cultural deprivation (David, 2015). The integration of Romanian society into Euro-Atlantic structures, built predominantly on individualistic and rational-secular bases, has represented and continues to represent one of the greatest challenges of the transition: the complementarity of the collectivist values with the individualistic ones, the increased religiosity with the secularist-humanist ideologies, of preserving the institutional order with the continued propensity for change.

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