

HUMANISTIC-SOCIAL SCIENCES - A POSSIBLE SOLUTION TO THE IDENTITY CRISIS OF THE CONTEMPORARY SOCIAL SPACE

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Abstract: *The fact that Globalization has caused different identity crises cannot be challenged either by social scientists or by individuals lacking the slightest expertise in the field. But, unlike those who believe that the process of global homogenization could be the solution of these crises, we advocate, in the Gustian style of Militans Sociology, for the exploration of alternative solutions, depending on the collective mentalities of the various communities: European, Asian, African etc. So, we advance the hypothesis that these crises can have solutions provided that social sciences put them into the epistemological equation, with the specific analysis methods, techniques and tools and formulate real-time intervention solutions. Thus, besides the social sciences that have been limited so far to define the problems and make them a radiography the involvement of all social sciences is expected by formulating solutions, depending on community projects and on the specifics of collective mentalities existing in the local, zonal and national profile. Social sciences can provide qualified counselling for decision-makers, helping them to stop deciding based on impressionist opinions.*

Key words: *globalization; identity crises; social sciences; collective mentalities; decisional actor; alternative solutions.*

From a mythological perspective, invoked and awaited with miraculous solutions, the 21st century began with impressionist managerial hypotheses and contradictory paradigms generalizing an axiological crisis at the level of the global social space. This social identity crisis is reflected at micro level in an acute identity crisis of the individual who, unhappy with traditional institutions, seeks normative protection in organizational structures and alternative models: "in order to conquer a certain identity in the masses that chain him and suppress him ... the contemporary man tries the need to group himself, to escape from his collective ambience and from the pressures that direct him towards mediocrity. In order to allow his most legitimate aspirations to update, the man of electronic times seeks salvation in adherence to groups." The identity crisis, in fact, amplifies the need for social assistance. A relatively recent feature of the attempts to promote new identity resources of associative life is the grouping of non-governmental organizations in true alternative networks to ensure the social cohesion of the global social space.

Originally emerged as a result of civil society involvement in solving social problems that government organizations could not solve in real time, NGOs have proven their ability to employ important human resources in the activity of

redistribution of existing material resources in a certain moment at the level of global society. Starting from these issues, recent studies (Sagebil; Munteanu, 2007) contain the thesis that NGOs are the most effective levers of expansion of the contemporary social space. Increasing specialization amplifies the need for communication both in the professional environment and in the global social space, the "colonization" of which with new technologies leads to the permanent creation of alternative conceptual schemes centred on the promotion of flexible and reliable organizational structures. In practice, these are found in competing empirical hypotheses that praxiologically particularize the contemporary man's condition in the expanding social space by the institutional validation of new ontological relationships.

In the field of modern professional bodies, information is currently the newest and most competitive tool in the work of conceiving and designing an efficient social action. Integrated social design, avoiding both the rejection of perennial, multi-secular values created in the human sphere, as well as the technophobic attitude towards the accumulated multi-secular values in science and technology, enables the articulation of the whole social system on the rationality of the human.

The construction of "Future Possible" (de Jouvenel, 1968) for the purpose of innovating the socialization instances, simultaneously with the promotion of new instances, specific to the technological civilization, confers on the technological rationality a status of praxiological complementarity in the sense of permanent humanization of behaviour patterns promoted by the increased weight of the technique throughout the social space. In this context, information as a modern tool that makes the symbolic mediation between nature and society possible contributes in a good way to revealing the way "people get to know their historicity" projecting themselves anthropologically beyond the duration of the conjunctural responses to the demands of the environment, more and more protean and multiply conditioned.

On these coordinates, theorized for a long time as an anthropological solution of transition from prehistory to the true history of the human condition (Park, 1970), urbanization is itself a source of dysfunction and amplifies the need of social assistance, methodologically coherent and pragmatically articulated.

The city is the current synthesis of the anthropological projection of the technical phenomenon, demonstrating that in its construction, "the laws of reinforced concrete can reveal its civilizational effects only in compatibility with the laws of society and with the value of human relations". The city's projection operationalises the functional projection of human relations concretely determined by the dimensions of contemporary urbanism. The sociological research directions of human issues note that the depth of labour division imprints to social relations a new specificity: they are segmented and marked by utility. People get into the relationship almost exclusively because of the mutual need to meet the needs of their specific occupations, they meet as role-carriers, intensifying the "theatrical behaviour", and the big city favours even the extreme schematization of roles

(Redfield, 1947), but as institutions are crystallizations of social relations (Druker, 1978), it is considered that it would be ideal for urban institutions and structures to be an emergence of community aspirations, conjugating in this way with the efficiency of civic participation. The various development trends of the city confirm the idea that we have entered a real "urban era" in which the urbanization process proves to be irreversible at the planetary level, requiring sociological research to help determine the possible levels of possible urbanization (Gorham William, 1976).

In this context, the significant mutations in rural areas can only be practical arguments for the contribution of a "new ruralness" to the structural reshaping of the social space through a functional projection of concrete human relationships, to the odds of contemporary civism. We therefore consider an innovative reconstruction of the social space, purged by the alienating behaviours emissions.

The technological civilization has in this respect the aim of discovering axiologically the people who seek for themselves in the complexity of their times, a process in which the technique is not - and even less so in the future - an end in itself. It will remain an increasingly refined and efficient means of rediscovering the interior, enriched with the gnoseological and praxiological messages of technology, becoming a true attitude to Existence. Growth crises, both inside the technology and in the institutional structures that they influence directly or in a mediated way, demonstrate the episodic character of the current level of development, unfairly interpreted as a superlative threshold of social phenomenality.

Globalization, propagandistically promoted as an "irreversible sense of human society," is in itself a comfortable utopia, because for the moment it internationally prioritizes the problems rather than the solutions of those who promote it. An example is Romania's post -1989 situation: we have been promised that the transfer of sovereignty is a condition for the transfer of prosperity, but the result is another, namely, we have received a massive transfer of problems from the Western model; unemployment, drug consumption and trafficking, prostitution, poverty, organized crime, and so on.

For this reason, the voices of those traditionally willing to show reluctance to the Americanization (to which globalization is sometimes mistaken for in the collective mindset), as well as the voices of the new contestants increasingly threatened with the loss of identity or of the prestigious continental or world rating.

The increased reserve in relation to globalization, perceived more and more as a galloping Americanization, is also fuelled by the disbelief that representatives of a nation "without history" can lead exclusively the process of innovation of world history structures ignoring the multi-secular history of many peoples on all continents.

In addition, the proposal to use the "American patent" to federalize Europe is totally unrealistic: The United States is an emergence of the synergies of emigrants from almost all countries of the world, not of peoples; there singular individuals have

dissolved their identity in a process of many generations, not compact communities, as is the case with Europe.

Instead, Europe is a continent with national states, many of which were empires with multi-secular identity profiles that cannot be "melted" in any American-like *melting pot*.

What can Romania do with a social system that has recently emerged from a bankrupt managerial experiment on a historical scale and is looking for improved models?

With specific reference to social work, after 1989 Romania was basically "invaded" by contradictory paradigms: the Latin model (Italy, France, Spain, Portugal), the Anglo-Saxon model (England, USA) and the German model, but without taking into account the specifics of our collective mind. Thus, the collective Latin mentality is especially paternalistic, oriented towards the exclusive authority of actors in the range of authority of leadership, while the collective Anglo-Saxon and German mind is more centred on the individual and emphasizes diversity and the decentralization of institutional authority through the cultivation of local and zonal synergies. The uncritical assumption of the different influences (called by us "institutional Bovarism"- Buzărnescu, 1998) determined a normative entropy that reached a critical point and renders impossible the unitary management of the complexity of the social problems faced by our country. For this reason, for the coherence of the practice, a special *Treaty* should be drawn up, that would articulate a synchronous conceptual system not only with the European exigencies but primarily with the nature of the problems that will be put into the managerial equation by social actors with executive powers.

Researches have revealed that the social space manifests a true tropism towards entropy, especially during periods of restructuring, when the zero-degree priority is to promote new integrative demands. In this context, the need for qualified assistance of the actors involved directly in managing the meaning and amplitude of the ongoing transformations is felt more than ever.

Epistemological instances legitimate in providing qualified assistance are: psychology, social assistance, sociology and political science.

- **Psychology** focuses on studying the *individual as a self-producer in terms of his allocentric openings*, respectively it reserves competence to investigate man as the main producer of interpersonal relational context.
- **Sociology** studies *man in community hypostasis, namely in his capacity of social producer*: organizational structures, organizational and institutional cultures, managerial contexts, decision innovations, and so on. Starting from dysfunctions (structural asymmetries of the social space, anomalies, crises, etc.), sociology aims to reach the causes that determine the respective effects / dysfunctions to propose alternative solutions in order to optimize the social space in this case. Due to this fact, a sociological research, therefore, is an action research within the meaning of "militans sociology"

promoted by the great Romanian sociologist Dimitrie Gusti, which cannot be reduced to a simple description of the phenomenon studied; the explanation of causes that determine negative effects confers on research the status of a sociological document through which researchers can contribute to the qualified counselling of social actors within the range of authority of leadership. When the research is limited to a simple registrar recording of social dynamics, we are talking about sociography: **sociography describes reality, while sociology explains it through causes** in terms of formulating a social diagnosis focused on the qualified counselling of the decision; sociology does not substitute for the decision, but gives it realism and predictability in the pragmatic management of social problems. For this reason, sociology has been defined as "an indispensable ally of the efficient management of the structural complexity of technological civilization" (Buzărnescu ,1999).

Sociology therefore confers legitimacy to the real-time intervention to shield the causes that produce visible negative effects in real time: by analogy, similar to the patient who, although living on an "open cord" a certain energy dysfunction he calls disease, but he does not know which are the causes, and therefore calls for a qualified consultation that only a doctor can offer, we have the social problems that every citizen lives directly and perceives them with an acute psychogenic burden, but only through a sociological diagnosis the social problems can be put into the managerial equation to find realistic solutions. Keeping the proportions of analogy, as emotional reactions cannot heal the diseases of the physiological body of the individual, but only the therapy prescribed by the physician, for the social body/ social space the sociological diagnosis is the only lucid, responsible and effective intervention for the optimization of the social communities.

While sociology focuses predominantly on elements of social pathology, the *social work reserves exclusively the area of competence for correcting pathways of individual pathology*: assisting a person in existential difficulty or having special needs.

To this end, the professional body of the social workers consists of specialists with a consistent interdisciplinary formation in whose set of competencies the weight of the knowledge of psychological, sociological and management methodology is considerable. We have here in mind the management within the meaning of the English etymology: *to manage* = to have the ability to relate resolutely to problems; we dissociate ourselves from the engineering definition or from the belief of the creators of this term by which they simply understand the "science of leadership" (Dănăiață, 2001). Being a manager, W. Taylor said in 1903 (Taylor, 1903) implies having the ability to identify problems, their nature, the spreading area, and to produce alternative solutions: the professionalism of the manager consists, therefore, not in being a "boss", but in being innovative in the

sense of formulating solutions to problems generated by the dynamics of an organizational structure; to the limit of the dynamics of a community.

Thus, psychology gives the social worker the ability to "work with a person", to address the client as an individual in the perspective of his social reinsertion, after a prior knowledge of the complexity of the motivations and of the life project of the "case".

Sociology contributes to the supplementation of the social identity of the social worker, especially through the methods, techniques, procedures and tools of empirical research of the conditions, which make each individual in a special situation to be "homologated" as a social case.

Public relations, which became the "social management techniques" since the 1970s, complement the professional identity of the social worker involved not only in the client's particular problem, but also in the innovative relationship with local, zonal or national authorities.

In this context, the epistemic, methodological and praxiological complementarity between social work, sociology and psychology appears to be the starting point of a new type of unity in the diversity of qualified instances of diagnosis and practical intervention, both individually and institutionally.

In conclusion, social sciences, as epistemic images of a dynamic reality, although in constant conceptual and paradigmatic reconstruction, are the only instruments through which one can shield the identity crisis of the global social space, contributing to achieving a dynamic balance of social structures and providing pragmatic landmarks for individual's movement within the community space.

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