

TENDENTIAL MODERNITY: A Type of Modernity without a Dominant Form

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Abstract

This study analyzes modernity within the context of the Romanian society, emphasizing its particularities embodied in what I call tendential modernity. This type of modernity is examined in connection with others: classical, reflexive, liquid, late and multiple modernities. I analyze modernity as a tendential state in the societies where it is not present at all the levels, because it is not consistent and it manifests itself unequally in different fields. In societies lacking a developed economy, tendential modernity is based on institutional and political constructions. It is opposite to a type of modernity sustained by economic development. I use the concept of tendential modernity in order to underline the lack of any clear dominant modernity feature within a society with low economic and material grounds.

Keywords: modernity, modernization, reflexive modernity, multiple modernity, tendential modernity, dominant form of modernity.

Introduction

In contrast with the thesis stating either that Romania is modern or that its modernity is not a real one, I will try to provide evidence highlighting the existence of a certain type of modernity, specific to the Romanian society and perhaps to other societies in Southern Europe. In these countries, which have known a different historical trend, the social organization has imposed specific views on the management: "The dominant Anglo-Saxon and Protestant models of management may not be fully adequate to characterize management and organization in the Latin Catholic countries of the south, nor those post-colonial societies that they inscribed in Latin America (Caldas and Wood, cited in Cunha *et al* 2008, 6). For example, Portugal has highways similar with the German ones. However, within the society there is a significant discrepancy between wealthy and poor people, similar to a South-American pattern. There is no doubt that there are several types of modernity throughout Europe: the modernity of the Western and Northern countries, the modernity of the South-European countries and the modernity of the former communist countries: "On certain aspects it is more effective to make comparisons between socio-cultural macro-regions of the Union [...], between the northern and southern areas, eastern, central-eastern and western areas. These groups significantly differ among each other from the perspective of material resources and from the point of individual modernity and spirits.

Romania, for example, resembles a lot with Bulgaria, Lithuania and Latvia, from the perspective of the low economic development” (Sandu 2009, 4).

If after EU member countries from Eastern Europe, such as Romania and Bulgaria, are still considered as the periphery of Europe (Gros 2009), then one might conclude that these countries are not as modern as the Western and Central European countries. This does not mean that they do not display any trace of modernity. In this specific European space, one may talk about tendential modernity, because here the modernity evolves slowly, discontinuously and inconsistently.

This study analyzes the modernity of the Romanian society by highlighting its particularities as embodied by what I call tendential modernity. First of all, I approach the concept of modernity and then I analyze different types of modernity. Finally, I approach the tendential modernity in order to underline the lack of any clear dominant modernity feature within a society with low economic and material resources, as the Romanian society is.

In the first section I analyze several meanings of the concept of modernity from a sociological perspective on the modern development. In the second section, I study several types of modernity: classical, reflexive, liquid, late and multiple maternities. In the next section I analyze modernity as a tendential state of affairs in the societies where this modernity is not certitude on all the levels because it is not consistent and it manifests itself unequally in different fields. In the following section, I analyze the causes and the premises of the tendential modernity. In societies lacking a developed economy, tendential modernity is based on institutional and political constructions, in contrast with a type of modernity sustained by powerful economic development. In the last chapter, I talk about the role of the state in producing modernity within the societies where the economic and material basis is insufficiently developed.

1. The concept of modernity

One may trace the original concept of modernity to the western space and call it classical modernity. There are usually two major concepts to deal with when it comes to modernity. The first one is a Eurocentric, provincial and regional concept. Defined as an exclusively European concept, modernity represents a way of emancipation through reason. The second concept refers to a modernity analyzed as a world process, placing Europe in the center of the world history. Here European modernity is not a self-referential independent system, but a part of the global system, more precisely, the center of this system (Dussel 2000, 469).

Within the theoretical framework of modernization, the society is described as a coherent social system in which all its components interact with each other. Modernity is defined as a social organization of western origin, characterized by individualism, democracy, capitalism, secularism, balance, stability and civil

rights. The historical evolution of modernity is understood as a transition from the traditional society to the modern one, focused on industrialization, rule of law, urbanization, welfare and wealth, science through education and instruction (Alexander 1994, 168-169). Actually, this description expresses the functionalist view on modern society. One may say that those societies with a solid structured modernity have a universalistic vocation because they intend to spread and impose their own values all around the world.

A corpus of concepts related to modernization theory has been developed over time: tradition, diffusion, adoption, adaptation, development, underdevelopment, independence, dependency, center-periphery, unequal exchange, industrialization, westernization, reforms, durable development, and structural reform.

The modernization process in Romania has constantly been characterized by a deficit of modern development and synchronization, which generated specific effects during the pre-modern period, like economic dependency, discrepancy, lack of balance between rural and urban areas, poverty (see also Love 1996). The analysis of this deficit is done by using western theoretical concepts and rely on works that deal with this issue for the Romanian history even if the question as such was posed long time ago by some authors in explicit forms. Although there are Romanian contributions to the study of modern development, i.e., theories like "forms without substance" (Maiorescu 1978; Eminescu 1980), "new-serfdom" (Gherea 1910), "the synchronism" (Lovinescu 1924), they are not included in the pool of fundamental concepts of modernity.

I admit that there is a theory of underdevelopment, belonging to Romanian Mihail Manoilescu, recognized by the international scientific community. One of its main points is the thesis on protectionism as a way to develop the economy of agrarian societies (Manoilescu 1929). Manoilescu's corporatist ideas on economics were very popular and applied in Latin America (Love 1990, 62), especially in Brazil: „his ideas were a kind of Bible for most of the Brazilian industry" (Fausto 1999, 18). His points the development gap between industrialized and agrarian societies were shaped in response to evolutionary theories about modernization.

The theory of modernization refers to the process of development during the industrial revolution period from the end of the eighteen century in Western Europe and Northern America. The space where the western pattern of modernization was successful is Northern America.

Modernization is the process of social transformation within a mainly agricultural society. As a result of this process, the trade and the industry become dominant, but they are built up with capital from countries with a consolidated modernity. The traditional society is structurally static and the modern one is dynamic and complex. A traditional society is vertically organized through a hierarchical social

division in a top-down pyramidal system and the modern society is structured mainly horizontally through a diversity of social networks.

The studies on modernity underline the idea of efficiency, profitability and productivity that exist within all the structures of the consolidated modern societies. A society is modern if it obtains profit through well determined means. The development of the productive capacity of a society determines the diversification of activities in all of its sectors, as well as to an unprecedented rhythm of social evolution. The engine of social and economic development becomes the capitalist production, based on free entrepreneurship, scientific and technological innovation. The new type of production, the capitalist one, generates new institutions, conceptions and conducts, which are grounded on social rationality.

Through methods of organization and control, the industrial production led to the increase of discrepancy in terms of economic and social development between the industrial and non-industrial countries. Thus, the world is divided into modern and non-modern countries, the first being considered superior to the second group in terms of productivity (Bell 1973; Giddens 1990; Beck 1992; Eisenstadt 2000). This superiority, derived from the economic force, associated with the global vision on life and society, made this type of modernity a model of social development, meant to be followed by every country. This model was spread using all possible means. The influence of modernizing societies on the non-modernized ones would have determined social changes in a single direction according to the pattern developed by the modernizing society.

A World Values Survey study on 65 societies, representing 75% of the world's population, during 1981-1984, 1990-1993 and 1995-1997, brought to light a massive cultural change but also the persistency of the specific cultural tradition in the process of modernization. Economic development is associated with a change in the system of values, from absolute norms and values to values such as reason, tolerance, trust and participation. The great cultural inheritance of Protestantism, Romano-Catholicism, Orthodoxism, Confucianism or Communism left marks on values that lasted in spite of modernization. (Inglehart and Baker 2000, 19). Inglehart and Baker bring several modifications to the modernization theory. The first modification is that modernization does not follow a linear evolution. Second, secularization, the sign of Western modernity, does not have the same effect in other societies. Religious beliefs continue to exist, including in advanced industrial societies. The third is the relevance of cultural changes in modernization.

An emphasis on cultural values may preserve and perpetuate the imprint of ancient spiritual legacies and historical initial conditions. The multiple experiences of the modern societies proved that modernization is probabilistic, not deterministic. The economic development tends to alter a society in a predictable direction, but the process is not unavoidable. In the second half of the twentieth

century, some of the non-western societies, such as those from Eastern Asia, had great results in terms of economic development, overcoming the western pattern. The example of these Asian societies is an evidence of the relative non-dependence of cultural traditions on economic development. This pattern may be explained by the fact they have a different type of culture, very deeply rooted in the collective sub-consciousness, which is tolerant and compatible with values that promote economic development and, implicitly, European type of modernization. In European countries, the model of modernity applies to societies with a common ground of traditions; that is why one may speak about a “model”, a scheme which must be validated by what is happening in the entire European area.

2. Types of modernity

The sociological doctrines on modernity develop ideas from the classical model of sociological evolutionism represented by H. Spencer, K. Marx, É. Durkheim, and M. Weber. It is not by chance that these paradigms do not tackle modernity that exists in other European areas, like central and eastern ones, because they emerged within a western-centered vision on the evolution of modern society.

Giddens states clearly that the analysis of modernity refers to the institutional transformations, to the national states and the systematic capitalist production, originated in Western Europe: “In terms of institutional clustering, two distinct organizational complexes are of particular significance in the development of modernity: the nation states and systemic capitalist production. Both have their roots on specific characteristics of European history and have few parallels in prior periods or in other cultural settings. If, in close conjunction with one another, they have since swept across the world, this is above all because of the power they have generated. No other, more traditional social forms have been able to contest this power in respect of maintaining complete autonomy outside the trends of global development. Is the modernity distinctively a Western project in terms of the ways of life fostered by these two great transformative agencies? To this query, the blunt answer must be yes” (Giddens 1990, 174).

In the following I stress upon a few types of modernity in order to observe which of their features may be relevant within the concept of tendential modernity.

2.1 The reflexive modernity

This type of modernity was studied by A. Giddens (1990, 1991) and by U. Beck (1992). In the second half of the twentieth century, one witnessed a transition from the first modernity to the second modernity. The first modernity was a national one. By contrast, the second modernity was a transnational and cosmopolitan one. The reflexive modernity refers to the modernization of the modern society: “When modernization reaches a certain stage it radicalizes itself. It begins to transform, for a second time, not only the key institutions but also the very principles of society. But, this time the principles and institutions being transformed are those of

modern society” (Beck *et al* 2003, 1). Reflexivity is a concept associated to rationality and to a vision that places action on a trend oriented towards change. The dominant trend of the western modernity is the transition from the modern society to the reflexive modernity one. It is about a new historical change, not from premodernity to modernity, but from modernity to another type of modernity (Giddens 1990; Beck 1992)

In the nineteenth century and at the beginning of the twentieth century, modernization was conceived as a western process that had to be unconditionally followed by every society, abandoning its own cultural traditions and assimilating the western values. From the end of the twentieth century, the European societies entered in a new stage of modernity, with a focus on reflexivity, meant to modernize the modernity. In fact, the modernization of modernity applies strictly to the western type of society.

Beck’s main thesis is that we live in a less rigorous modern society, in which modernity itself is being changed. Modernity became problematic exactly within the space that it had emerged from, in Western Europe: “Just as modernization dissolved the structure of feudal society in the nineteenth century and produced the industrial society, modernization today is dissolving industrial society and another modernity is coming into being” (Beck 1992, 10). The second modernity or the reflexive modernity represents the rebirth of modernity within a society incapable of controlling its incertitude. This is why politics, science, and religion are risk components within the society, and not the solution to removing the dangers, as they pretend to do.

2.2 The liquid modernity

This type of modernity is characterized by the uncertainty in the present society where the solidity of the inter-human links is threatened. Liquid modernity is a chaotic continuation of modernity. Two main features are specific to liquid modernity: (1) the fast decline of early modern illusion that there is a state of perfection that may be reached in a better society; and (2) de-regularization and privatization of the modernized duties and obligations. What was considered a human reason, based the kind of work, was fragmented and left into the responsibility of the individuals and of the individually managed resources. The idea of progress through legislative action was not abandoned, but the focus is on the self-assertiveness of the individual (Bauman 2000, 31). Liquid modernity means the liberation of the individual initiatives from the family constraints, from the household duties and from the dense network of moral obligations.

2.3 Multiple modernities

The evolution and the dispersion of modernity throughout the world have proved, in time, to be the limits of the single/unique pattern of modern development. Habermas proposes a pattern of modern development process beyond the spatial and temporal dimension (Habermas 1987).

The idea of alternative modernity or modernities comes in response to the thesis on modernity as being something uniform (Delanty 2003). Other authors propose “multiple modernities” (Eisenstadt 2000; Kaya 2004; Lee 2008). One of the most important implications of the “multiple modernities” concept is that modernization and westernization are not identical. Even though they are not considered the only authentic modernities, the western models of modernity enjoy historical priority and continue to be a strong reference point for all the societies (Eisenstadt 2000, 3). Despite that, the pluralism of modernity was generally accepted. Consequently, besides the classical European modernity, we may speak of East European Modernity, Latin-American modernity, Asian modernity, Islamic modernity, African modernity etc.

It is usually said that the non-western countries are in a late phase of modernity. When speaking of late modernity, one actually refers to a modernity later produced in the West European space, but a modernity that follows the same trend like the western classical one.

For instance, in the case of Latin America, we may speak about three phases of modernity. The first phase is liberal; it developed in Europe and North America and, more restrictively, in Latin America due to the power preeminence of the landowners. The second phase was organized, through corporatism, by the state. The third phase, the current one, characterized by a larger complexity and pluralism of the social life seems to be typical for the contemporary Latin America (Domingues 2009, 126).

At the same time, there are scientific debates regarding the necessity to re-think the concept of modernity into a concept of global modernity (Dirlik 2003, 276). Global modernity emerged as an alternative to the Eurocentric modernity, in the context of surpassing Eurocentrism and underlining the variety of cultural experiences and inheritances.

3. Tendential modernity

The modern development of the Romanian society was and is still studied in the light of sociological organicism, which considers it as a transition process from the pre-modern to the modern society. If the emergence of the classical modernity is the consequence of radical changes derived from industrialization and rationalization, the emergence of the national state, the differentiation between public and private sphere (Marx, Weber, Habermas, Giddens), then it is clear that Romanian modernity had a different evolution than the classical one.

In contrast with all the above mentioned types of modernity, the Romanian society has known a particular modernity that can be labeled as “tendential modernity”.¹ It refers to the actions and ideas about modernization within the Romanian society, actions and ideas that remain partial and not finalized. Thus, modernity remains mostly an aspiration, a goal to be reached, but never fully accomplished. Tendential modernity is a provoked modernity, the result of modernity in rearguard, not in avant-garde. The thesis on tendential modernity relies mostly on a separation between ideas or projects and actions or policies. In this case, the ideas are circulated within the public space, but the actions derived from those ideas are not finalized. Tendential modernity is conceptually understood as a distance between the intended modernization and the achieved one due to a difference in speed between the economic (development) side of modernity and the cultural, political, intellectual side of it.

At this point we needed to clarify the term “tendential”. The concept “tendential modernity” suffers from a certain ambiguity due to the attribute “tendential”. The term “tendential” is included in *Dictionnaire Larousse Français* and in *Oxford English Dictionary*, and it is also used by specialists in several fields. The concept of tendency was used also in sociological studies when explaining the social crisis through secular tendencies (Wallerstein 1974) or tendential evolution (Vlăsceanu 2007).

The tendency represents an evolution of the modernization process, determined by internal and external factors and contexts of the society. These factors and contexts usually act in a contradictory manner and the intensity of their influence may be different. From the temporal point of view, the tendential evolution is not certain and univocal, but probabilistic. Being a tendential state of a society, modernity is not certain at all levels of the social organism because it is inconsistent and it manifests itself unequally in different fields. If the classical theory of modernization considers modernity as an unavoidable process derived from the organic, pre-determined evolution of the society, in our vision, modernity presents itself as a tendential transformation, as a result of the interactions between internal and external contexts of a society.

¹This chapter partly reproduces a previous study of mine, “Tendential Modernity”, which is in press. I used the concept of tendential modernity to explain the theory of forms without substance (Schifirnet, 2007: 205). The forms without substances are systems of laws and modern institutions mechanically imported by the Romanian elites from the Western societies in order to accelerate the process of modernization of the society, without being adapted to the historical, social and cultural particularities of the internal background. Due to this institutional mimesis, these forms or modern institutions do not prove their functionality on all the levels of the Romanian society. In other studies I have used the term ‘modernity tendentious’ (Schifirnet, 2007b, 2008, 2009a, 2009b). In this study I adopted the term ‘tendential modernity’ because I consider it more appropriate in explaining the process of modernization in societies with a weak economy.

I want to stress the fact that “tendency” and “tendential” are not synonymous, even though they may be understood as major orientation towards a certain option among other possible options. We must separate “tendency” from “tendential”. Tendency expresses the trend, the direction of an action, which, if not unavoidable, is definitely steady; while tendential expresses the un-fulfillment, the fragmentation and the incompleteness of tendency.

The concept of tendential modernity refers to the fact that modernity is inconsistent and slow. Due to the lack or insufficient internal modernizing resources (ideological, economic, administrative, financial etc.), tendential modernity is a type of asymptotic modernization, which never succeeds in reaching the requirements of modernity, no matter how close it seems to western modernity.

Basically, all modernities are tendential. We take into consideration the expression of tendential modernity and not the hidden meaning of modernity. Tendential modernity is universal, including the case of the states which have a well structured and functional type of modernity. Even here there is a tendency of surpassing the status-quo, of reaching a new level in relation to the establishment. The concept of tendential modernity covers a dynamic reality, it may be cut up only for the purpose of investigation and analysis, but actually it is a continuum where someone can hardly identify where it starts and where it ends.

In contrast with the societies where modernity is well structured because of the solid and efficient economic ground, in a society where modernity is undergoing a consolidation process, it is mostly tendential. It seems that this tendential modernity is never settled, that its modernizations are always mere tendencies because, here, the length of these kinds of phenomena is much greater.

In non-western rural societies, modernity is only tendential and projective and it reflects the direction of the modernization that is going to be accomplished. Tendential modernity is characterized by ambiguity, contrasts, contradictions, paradoxes, and features that are also specific to other societies like India (Pick and Dayaram 2006).

It is true that tendential modernity is contemporary with reflexive modernity, the latter being convergent in some aspects with the modernity from the developed Europe and divergent and particular in other aspects (Vlăsceanu 2007, 99), which in fact represents the difference. For instance, Romanian modernity is mainly tendential because it has too many particularities and too few convergences with the contemporary western modernity. The Romanian society does not face just the transition from a modernity to another (industrial to post-industrial), but it also has to make a simultaneous transition from pre-modern to modern and from industrial to post-industrial.

Modernization produces or it should produce the disintegration of traditional societies, a process accomplished/finalized in the western societies. Other societies did not experience the same radicalism and profoundness. There, modernity was a solvent of the old traditions and, only in a small degree, an act of building modernity. The example of globalization as a process of interdependency of all nations is relevant to our thesis. This interdependency shows the presence of modernity all over the world, not modernity as a unique pattern, but modernity as a diversity of modernities.

The internal modernization processes have been oriented at the beginning of each transition stage from the old regimes to the new ones towards a creation of a political, judicial, democratic and modern organism through a profound change of the old institutions except that the concrete actions of modernization have been accomplished, because of different reasons, by adopting laws and by imitating western institutions in the absence of a knowledge and critical evaluation project of the specific particularities of the society

The key issue is that Western Europe did not start the modernization process as a political project with a mission stating that “we want to modernize ourselves”. Their economic, social, historical, and cultural evolutions led to modernization. In the non-western societies, the type of western modernity cannot be reproduced and, thus, the political project becomes unavoidable.

Tendential modernity derives from the influence of modernity only over certain social categories, identified in modern attitudes and behaviors, but with insignificant influence over the rest of the society. As many scientific studies about modernization testify (Balandier 1985, 137), not all components within a society evolve towards modernization in the same rhythm. Some social groups easily accept the change, while others refuse it. As a consequence, tendential modernity generates changes only at some levels of the society. These changes are supported and promoted by groups concerned only with their own social and economic condition, interested in social change with a real profit only for themselves. Tendential modernity slowly and hardly advances through the intricate network of socio-institutional structures of the traditional and patriarchal Romanian society. It is a mosaic of modernity, not structured as a clear, dominant form, inexistent as a project of modernization.

4. Causes and premises of tendential modernity

Although for almost 200 years Romanians have known modernity, especially with regard to the creation of the political and judicial institutions, modernity has not reached the profound Romanian society, in all of the social life components. Within the Romanian space, modernity appears as a *tendency*. At the beginning, modernity was imported because it used to answer several needs of certain groups. Its lack of

organicism derives from the resistance of the old social structures and institutional forms to the new emerging changes.

Tendential modernity exists due to the fact that Romanian modernity was not grounded on a civil society with a real force of action. The modernization of western countries was a long historical process of institutional building and activity within the public sphere, this process being enacted by the main actors of the society. Here, the majority – the middle class – pushed the modern development with all its effects towards all sectors of the society. If in Western Europe the economic revolution during the late European Middle Age led to the emergence of the civil society (Habermas 1989), the key element in supporting the social and individual liberties, in the Romanian public space this fundamental factor of evolving modernity was missing. There was no educated public able to rationally debate ideas about the development of society, to exert criticism towards the ruling power in the public opinion sphere: salons, coffee-shops, concert halls, theatres and art exhibitions. The public sphere is the intermediate space of negotiation and dialog between the civil society and authorities, as a place of collective debate and reflection.

It was usually said that the norms and the networks of civil solidarity, organization and civic participation are a precondition of socio-economic modernization. The example of Italy is significant in this respect. In northern Italy, formal and informal organizations which supported the involvement of individuals in the community supported a functional institutional system. In southern Italy this type of civic organizations is missing, which explains the inefficiency of the political institutions (Putnam 1993).

Romanians have evolved in a different cultural space, having economic and social rules other than Northern and Western Europe. Nonetheless, Romania's modernization is a particular case of modernization among the peripheral societies in the European space. While in Western Europe there were centers where the modern ideas were encouraged, allowing them to be developed in their plenitude, in Eastern Europe the dependency on the imperial space, reluctant to accepting alternatives of power and influence, was an obvious reality.

The debates and the deliberations from the Romanian public space had and still have as a reference the Western civilization and culture. The projects, the strategies and the solutions that should support the process of modernization are always compared to European principles and norms, which is appropriate only if they were the object of a critical and rational debate at the level of the civil society. However, most of the times, it presents itself as an alter ego to a civil society representing other cultures. The lack of a consistent civil society in Romania derives mostly from the exacerbation of individualism instead of solidarity action

in rebuilding the public space, where all the components of the society should coexist.

The Romanian culture reflects the pre-modern social and economic realities. Paradoxically, it is modern through the expression of pre-modern aspects of a society undergoing modernization. Romanian culture is not in a position to include many aspects about the capitalist culture and the culture of entrepreneurship, because the Romanian economy does not function as a capitalist economy. Romanian modern culture neglects the capitalist values.

The specific way of constructing Romanian capitalism is another cause of tendential modernity. The fundamental issue refers to the ways of building the capitalist system of production in a society with a different type of culture and mentality than the Western European, where the new means of production were created.

During the modernization process, the Romanian society has known the phenomenon of "forms without substance", determined by the transplantation of capitalist institutions within a traditional, patriarchal, rural, internal context (Schifirnet 2007). Most of the Romanian sociological doctrines supported the modernization of Romania in direct and necessary relation with the capitalist development (Larionescu 2004), but this development has not been built on a powerful middle class.

In Romania, capitalism was born at the crossroads of the aspirations of certain groups to adapt themselves to the modern spirit and the expansionist tendencies of the Western capitalism. Capitalism as social system was adopted out of geopolitical and strategic reasons, modernization being the fundamental way of separation from Turkish and Russian influence. However, capitalist transformations took place in the context of lacking a capitalist economic tradition and a powerful middle class, able to dominate the public space. After an interruption of almost half of a century, starting with 1989, the Romanian society came back to the capitalist model of production. The new Romanian capitalism is invented, for it has not emerged as a result of a social and economic development throughout a historical period, but as a copycat of the European judicial norms and regulations.

The transition from the collective property to the private property was made by applying laws, therefore, strictly by rational means, out of political reasons and, only in a small degree, based on social laws and economic means. The twenty-first century Romanian capitalism is characterized by a deeper artificiality than the nineteenth century one, which was produced by landowners who have passed from a type of private property to another. In the post-communist period, capitalism was imposed through legally regulated privatizations, and, thus, the property ended up in the hands of some persons or local groups with no

competencies in the new social position. What is specific to Romanian capitalism is the lack of capital (Pasti 2006, 318). In Romania there is a type of under-construction capitalism with two kinds of capitalists: those who made businesses through their own forces and competencies and those who benefited from their social positions before 1989 (Stoica 2004) and succeeded to impose their monopoly over the wealth of the state, even though they were not ready to occupy the new social and economic status.

Tendential modernity exists in those societies that avoid or postpone the responsibility of the risks generated by capitalism. The specific values of the capitalist system - private property, competition, and free initiative - coexist with strong, dominant beliefs among ordinary people, regarding the necessity of state intervention in the economy as well as with a high level of aversion towards risks (The Gallup Organization, Romania, 2006). Romanian enterprises imitate Western management type, except the idea of promoting the assumed risk.

The same research made by The Gallup Organization Romania shows big discrepancies between different categories of respondents. Most of the respondents belonging to the elites consider that in Romania there is an incipient form of capitalism. In much larger proportions than other social groups, the politicians support the values of capitalism. However, a significant part of the sample is not devoted to the present ideologies promoted by the political parties in Romania. This is the key argument of top-down capitalist modernity, a clear expression of the tendential modernity, shown by the research data. In the opinion of a great part of the respondents, there is a hostile attitude towards the wealthy people. The poor people are poor because the wealthy people keep them in poverty is the opinion of 60% of the sample (65%, in case of the respondents from cities with more than 100.000 inhabitants). Only 29% of the questioned people think that the poor people are poor because they do not try hard enough to make a progress, the percent being higher in case of people with higher education - 49%. 57% believe that one can become wealthy only if he or she is lucky and 35% believe that one may become wealthy only if he or she works hardly and has special qualities, the percentage being higher in case of the respondents with higher education - 52%. 66% of the respondents believe that the state ownership over the strategic sectors from economy is a good idea, a higher percentage being registered in case of the people with higher education - 74% - and in the case of the people with an income bigger than 400 lei (approximately \$120) - 74%. 57% believe that private property is as important as liberty, with a higher percentage in case of persons with higher education - 77% and in case of the respondents from Bucharest - 67% (The Gallup Organization Romania, 2006).

Another cause of tendential modernity is the democratic "deficit", materialized in the inertness of majority of the Romanian population, which has not yet given up the state of assisted people. The state succeeded only in laying the foundations of a

formal democracy. Tendential modernity is a modernity which formally contains the direction towards modernization, but the action of the modernizing factors is always interrupted or even stopped by older circumstances, with more stability and influence over the real society.

The differences between the Romanian and the western capitalism are linked to the fact that, after 1989, Romanians have not experienced a unanimous fair go in their endeavors. The business men, especially, are talking about a moral crisis of the Romanian society because the values and the laws in Romania are not respected as they are in the capitalist societies. The moral crises is generated by the dislocation of Romania, from its own organic trend of evolution after the Second World War, by changing the type of property, that led to mutations in the general attitude towards work (Geana 2000).

The public policies, as well as the legislation, focus on regulations that take into consideration economic and political strategies and neglect the strategies for the society. They have started from the premise that the society develops only if politics and economy are regulated, without taking into account that both sectors can evolve autonomously from the society. In this case, the society is only a mass of consumers maneuvered in supporting certain economic and political interests. It was always a priority to adopt macroeconomic policies without constructing a solid institutional framework to manage and implement these policies.

In societies displaying tendential modernity, there is always an overburden on the justice system. This is possible because the justice system is seen as a miracle solution of salvation, neglecting the fact that any institution from any society acts in a social and historical context. Justice is a mirror of the society and as such it is continuously adapting to the social norms. Through its actions, the Justice generates tendential modernity and, at the same time, it is a consequence of the same tendential modernity.

The particularities of tendential modernization are also given by the permanent tendency to evaluate any internal activity by comparison to an external model. This represents a proof of disability and superficiality. In the past twenty years, the necessary changes within the society are made under the pressure of the European Union. Even though Romanians are EU members, they perceive European institutions as constraint factors that administer an external reality, outside Romanian space. In correlation with these explanations, there is also the excess of imitation. Many changes in formal structures and regulation subsequently took place, following closely the European institutions' critics. Tendential modernity appears in the context of overtaking, without any critical spirit, models of decision-making from other societies. An example in this respect is represented by the government strategy in 1990 about the laid off miners, who were advised to get into businesses, though they did not have any other qualifications for the newly granted position. Doing business is a capitalist activity and the miners were

supposed to transform themselves over night in capitalists in a society unprepared for initiating and managing businesses. Many changes in formal structures and regulation subsequently took place, following closely the international media's emphasis and European institutions' critics and recommendations.

Romanian elites had to choose between several models of modern development, but they were oriented towards the Western model of modernization. Ruling groups have always expressed the idea that Romania should reach the development level of western countries. The expression "to catch up" is part of the ethnic psychology of Romanians, which is unconditionally associated with modernization. The backward country is always like a runner trapped in an infernal race where modernity is like a way of overcoming others, and even yourself, in an invisible competition.

The attitude towards the inheritance of the past explains the tendential modernity. The old ethos, the norms and the ideals of the past époques have a tremendous influence over modernity. Thus, the role played by the inheritance of the past is accentuated, when stating that the pre-communist experiences influenced the evolution of the political regime from each communist country (Kitschelt 1995).

Romanians had to endure the consequences of their own historical inheritance due to a sequence of transitions: the Ottoman Empire and the Phanariote's inheritance, the inheritance of the 1848 Revolution, the inheritance of the two principalities - Moldova and Walachia - after the creation of the Romanian state in 1859, the 1918 Union, and the inheritance of the two World Wars and the communist regime. One can observe also, as a historical inheritance, the fragility of the political life and of the parliamentary regime, the low civism of a large part of the population, the internal and external constraints for which the society and its leaders must find solutions.

4.1 Features of the tendential modernity

It is already well known that a society cannot move to modernity without the presence of modernizing elites. Romanian elites displayed a belief that the state should be the fundamental factor in building the nation. Due to the rapid succession of transitions, Romanian elites have had to permanently create alternatives to the old ideologies and political regimes. Instead of building by taking over viable directions from the precedent regimes, they criticized and demolished everything that had been before, thus unnecessarily wasting a lot of energy. They have not been able to coagulate the "dominant of modernization". This is why the Romanian society is made up of too many centers, without a strategic concept where all the modernization projects could start from and come back to.

Even though the elites have a high level of competencies, their social and intellectual performances do not have a significant effect on the profound levels of the Romanian society. Most of the population continues to live on different standards than the modern and pro-modern norms of the elites. These modern and pro-modern norms claimed by the elites are only at declarative level because, in reality, even the biggest part of the elites act in accordance with non-modern principles. A significant part of the Romanians come back, today, to antebellum ways of life. They have also reached a lower living standard of life than during the communist period. The economic and institutional modernization, visible in the behavior and mentality of some representatives of the elites, are not reflected in the profound structures of the society, mainly rural. Here there are signs of poverty, of status relations, of survival behavior while capitalist attributes, such as performance, risk and competition, are missing altogether. The lack of communication and the real solidarity between all segments of the society, between elites and populations, are a proof of tendential modernity. When I talk about elites, I refer to all kind of elites: political, scientific, cultural, financial, economic etc. In a society with tendential modernity, the elites tend to strongly conform to the decisions established outside the national framework. In fact we witness today a concentration of spatial organization of the elites in special structures. The technocratic, financial elites ask for specific spatial features with regard to the material support of their interests and practices: "In short: elites are cosmopolitan, people are local. The space of power and wealth is projected throughout the world, while people's life and experience is rooted in places, in their culture, in their history" (Castells 2010, 446). Although inclined towards the exterior, Romanian elites are not fully cosmopolite; they balance between cosmopolitanism and localism. A part of the elites belong to the cosmopolite networks, but they do not have enough force to influence decisively the evolution of Romanian society and that is why, the action of the masses seems to be more powerful than the pressure coming from the elites.

In societies with tendential modernity, the axiological system is still dominated by the transition from the traditional values to the modern ones. The researches show that the low level of economic development modulates both types of values. The postmodern values are post-materialistic and give priority to the protection of environment and to the cultural problems (Inglehart 2000, 222). Or, in Romanian society, these are the exact things that are missing. The post communist period is characterized by an aggression on the environment with intensity without precedent in the history of the country. Regarding the cultural values, they do not have priority in the public space. To all these, we may add that there is an axiological confusion caused by the inconsistency of the modern structures.

The fundamental factor with direct influence on our modernity is represented by the perpetuation, in time, of the rural civilization, reluctant to the modern values, but also to the modernizing modalities, opposed to the communitarian spirit of the state. Tendential modernity is associated with the dominant issue of the modern

Romanian époque - the agrarian problem (Stahl 1980). As I already said, for two hundred years, clear decisions about the agriculture and the state were postponed. Romania has known modern transformations, some of them substantial, but they touched the rural community only in a very small degree. This may be explained by the fact that the "expropriation of peasants and their transformation in agricultural proletarians" was not accepted (Georgescu 1992, 143). The modernization was made only for the benefit of a minority while the rest of the population, mostly rural, had to support the exorbitant maintenance costs of the institutions which did not contribute to the modernization for the benefit of the state. The peasants, who are the basis of the society, were excluded from the projects of modernization. They continued to work and live in a pre-modern, patriarchal world, being very far from the position of consumer or producer of the capitalist products. In exchange, the peasants were offering their labor force that generated the necessary income to support the groups that benefited from the modern development.

Specific to tendential modernity is also the discrepancy in the development of the historical areas of Romania. Even within the same area there are differences in living standards - between urban and rural, between small cities and large cities. Romanian state tried to eliminate these discrepancies of economic development, especially at the industrial level. After the accelerated industrialization, primarily focused on energetic development, but technologically backward during the communist period, Romania had to adopt rapidly the des-industrialization program, leaving space for the commercial units. The rural area is associated with "a risk of durable underdevelopment, well established" (Bădescu 2004, 112).

Tendential modernity expresses the difference and tension between two models of civilization: the European one, towards which Romanian society tends, and the peasant one, which has been sublimated for centuries in the collective subconsciousness. If the mechanical solidarity is the functioning mechanism of the traditional society and the organic solidarity for the modern society in tendential modernity, than the two types of modernity live together and have an equal relevance in rural and urban areas, with specific intensity.

In the contemporary Romanian society, the essential cause of the deficit of modernity resides in the repudiation of the large agricultural property, forcibly created through the collectivization of the agriculture and the return to the individual property, which, paradoxically, generates tensions and deformations, backwardness and poverty. Presently, the state experiences a certain degree of modernization due to the Romanian migrants working abroad. They build houses with a contrasting architecture in report with the rural traditional style and enhanced with the latest technologies, green grass, modern bathrooms, electronic devices, including computers with wireless connections. These houses are

temporarily used so one cannot say their inhabitants bring real elements of modernity. One could describe this as a sleeping modernity.

The studies about the rural area (Manoleli *et al* 2004) show the specific infrastructure of the village households, based on a patriarchal, rudimentary endowment. For instance, only 11.2% benefit from sewerage system, while in urban area 86% from the population benefit from it. The banking system in Romanian rural areas is underdeveloped and, generally, it does not have adapted conditions for this kind of area. Most of the farmers do not have the necessary possibilities to guarantee a loan of money or they do not have a down payment, which makes them ineligible for the system provided by these banks. There is a low investment in the rural areas.

The low degree of competition in terms of processed farming products transformed Romanian market into an important sale market for the import farming products. At the same time, Romanian export is dominated by agricultural rough products and low processed products, which make it a country with a mainly agricultural profile.

The dimensions of the farming exploitations are small, the commercial orientation of the agricultural production is low, most of the producers do it at the level of their individual household farm, the prices are relatively low, and the tolerance of the chains of intermediate persons who retail their products is limited. All this leads to an increase in price, and the non-restrictive policies regarding the import of cheaper agricultural products than the autochthonous ones have direct consequences on the incomes of the farmers and, implicitly, on the underdevelopment of the Romanian state.

The insufficient development of the rural, non-agricultural economy and the lack of alternatives for the farmers' population have tremendous effects on the evolution of the village towards modernity: the migration of the young people to other areas with the purpose of finding jobs and getting an income; the decreasing tendency of carrying out specific activities for the rural areas, the high level and growth tendency of the rate of economic dependency, the low level of labor force occupation of the rural population, the orientation of the majority of the rural population towards agricultural activities, the small number of people from rural areas involved in non-agricultural activities, the low frequency of the persons from rural areas with who are certain of their monthly income, the high percentage of people who work within their own households, more than a half of the households from the rural areas having no active person or only one person who has a job (Manoleli *et al* 2004). All these aspects support the existence of tendential modernity because in most of the rural area, modernity is still just an aspiration, very hard reach under current circumstances

Romanians are influenced and formed by their own history and social world which continues to perpetuate mentalities and behaviors that are not compatible with the type of culture characteristic to European modernity. The tendential modernity expresses clear enough the duality of individuals' thinking and acting. Tendential modernity takes place as a top-down change, through institutions, by a minority educated in the spirit of modernity, which tries to modernize a hostile or indifferent majority because the modern behavior and values are not intrinsic to any lifestyle of any individual or social group. There are also situations of modernization generated from the basis of the society. For instance, the Romanians' migration to other countries, especially to Europe, is a factor of modernization independent from the state. For the first time in their history, all Romanians are free to travel, which generates a profound revolution in the daily thinking and behavior. One-fifth of Romanian villages could be classified as "transnational villages" (Sandu 2005, 565). Another example of modernization in this sense is represented by the increase of education level during the communist period. This represents a very strong factor of latent modernization, with the contribution of state, but with the massive participation of population.

Modernity exists and it cannot be denied, since the Romanian society experiences, today, the effects of modernization: urbanization, industrialization, alphabetization, the increase in education level, the democratization of the relationships between people, the flexibility of the interaction between social groups. It is not modernity that should be questioned here, but the level of modernization of all social components. The project of modernity is ambiguous, non-unitary and impregnated with compromises (Jucan 2004, 8). I may say that, because of this, Romania has modernity, but it does not have the modern man, except in a small degree within the urban population with higher education.

5. The building of modernity by the State

In the societies on the verge of modernization, the state intervention is not done in the same way as in Western countries during the first stages of modernization, where the state has worked in building the economic capitalist framework: "At first the strength of the Western European states was based purely on their economic development, though the stimulating effects of state building should not be underestimated. [...] But later, politics, the effort to build strong state structures, became the basis of economic growth. Political ambitions and ideals have been limited by what particular economies could bear, but economic limitations have set boundaries for political action, not vice versa" (Chirot 1989, 11).

The modernization of the Romanian society, starting with the nineteenth century and continuing until today, has taken place rapidly and differently from the organic way of development in Western Europe. It is significant that Romanian modern evolution has taken place in the context of the global spreading of the western pattern of modern social change.

As I have mentioned before, Romania's modern evolution was mainly manifested in the political and institutional construction, not in the creation of the economic framework. The particularities of its historical evolution did not allow an economic development of capitalist profile.

Because of different causes, political or economic, Romanian institutions did not reach their full functionality, focused on the tasks from their field of actions. A bureaucratic organism, unprepared to increase the efficiency of the activities from its institutions, supported this state. After 1989, the same thing happened: the new Romanian capitalists appeared as a consequence of the privatization of property and not because of the functioning mechanisms of a capitalist economy.

The explanation resides in fact that at the pressure of internal forces, European powers accepted in 1859 the creation of the modern Romanian state, under the condition of transforming it into a capitalist society, which should have developed through institutions of the bourgeois state. The modern Romanian democratic and capitalist institutions were not created by Romanian bourgeoisie, but by the state. In fact, these institutions were imported from Western Europe, where the bourgeoisie had the economic power – the fundamental element in imposing a bourgeois political regime. Romanian bourgeoisie obtained the political power and did not have a strong economic basis. Because of its artificial character, Romanian bourgeoisie did not become a social force that can produce changes in society. A modern state was created in the absence of a modern Romanian society.

The bourgeois mentality was not fully modern, it had no conscience entrepreneurship, but expressed the behavior of a petty bourgeois class. It proved a great capacity for adaptation, but also versatility, depending on the reactions, attitudes and European bourgeois interests. Versatile in its political and economic behavior, the bourgeoisie has shown a consistent national consciousness in the pursuit of fundamental national goals (Schifirnet 2009d, 477).

The Romanian modern state should have protected the majority class - the peasantry - and provide tools and solutions to problems of agriculture and the development of the Romanian village. Instead, the Romanian state has neglected the majority social class, the peasantry, and no policies have been implemented to increase efficiency and productivity in agriculture. Instead, the state has supported minority social groups interested in creating a modern civilization. The state should have provided training and emancipation strategies for peasants, and thus a rural bourgeoisie would have emerged from among the peasants. This class would have generated a functional capitalism in the context of real social structure of Romanian society. This way, the state could have had a strong support from a legitimate middle class.

Modernity was triggered only by certain social groups. They have acted to build a political and legal organism institutional identical to Western Europe. As I said, the acceleration of modernization has been driven by the need to create a national state. Unlike in Western Europe, where modern ideas were aired by philosophers and other intellectuals and were only institutionalized in a later stage, in Romania there was no philosophical basis for its own modernization. The role of philosophy and other theoretical works of indigenous intellectual were therefore less important in modern institutional construction. None of the modern Romanian history stages, including the Revolution of 1989 took place on a theoretical project. Romania was the first constitutional state from Southeastern Europe. The Romanian state provided the necessary framework for the modernization process, including the institutional one: "the state represented the instrument through which the renewal politics was elaborated and implemented - becoming state politics - in the dimensions required by the creation of the modern bourgeois society" (Platon *et al* 1993, 89).

The modern cultural values were the only values able to function in a society with powerful rural life, because other values specific to the societies with organic modernity, would have not harmonize with the Romanian reality. The cultural values have been a strong argument in the creation of the national state and that it is why the political rights of the citizens have been subordinated to the national problems, the alignment to a nation becoming a substitute of the citizenship.

There are two different frameworks of nation's development in Europe, the western model and the eastern model of building national entities (Smith 1991). In Western Europe, nation means a way of organizing communities: historical territory, legal and political community, the equality of members, common ideology and civic culture, vital elements for the existence of a nation and sustainability of a long term democracy.

The non-western model is thought as an ethnical model because the original community and the local culture is the essential element in defining a nation. While in Western Europe it is accepted that although an individual belongs to a nation, the same individual can choose the nation which he wants to belong to, in non-western space this idea would not be accepted as an option.

In the East European space, the nation is seen as a fictive super family, whose members put a great price on their origins and genealogy. In the ethnical model, the vernacular culture, especially the language and the customs, is similar to the law of the western model. This is how we explain the important role played by the lexicography specialists, by linguists and folklore specialists in the process of enforcing the national ideas. They succeeded to crystallize and strengthen the idea of nation for the majority of the members of the society. As a consequence, old

common links, popular participation, vernacular languages, customs and traditions are the key elements of the ethnical conception about the nation.

The Romanian state gave priority to the national construction and the problems related to the economic and social development were postponed or subordinated to the national issue. Essential was the creation of a national identity in the context of dependency from the great empires. The same situation existed also during the communist period, when the country autonomy from the Soviet Empire was the top priority.

The state used the modern institutions to resolve certain emergencies, like the independence and the unification of all Romanians. The real needs of social modernization were postponed for the future because the action of the state in this sense was always limited. In contrast with the situation in the economically and socially consolidated countries, in countries with emergent modernity the state is often authoritarian.

The low economic development did not, though, impede the Romanian state to support modernization by creating and supporting modern institutions: school, army, justice, parliament, political parties. These institutions laid the foundations for the new Romanian identity. Significant in this respect are the education reforms that took place in 1864, 1898, 1924, which supported the development of the school system. This has proved to be a promoter and sustainer of modernity values.

It is necessary to distinguish between social and political development. The former means urbanization, instruction, industrialization, and means of communication. Political modernization means democracy, peaceful transfer of power through free and fair elections and not through force, durable political institutions, stability, structural differentiation, development models and national integration. Even though it was politically modern, the Romanian society has known many laggings, contradictions and discrepancies due to the fact that the state had limited resources and the Romanian social actors could not have access to the external resources sufficiently. The state controlled and still controls the process of resources' allocation. The Romanian state is lacking the force of its own economy and production, becoming thus the main consumer of the resources. Thus, the Romanian state administrates an underdeveloped agriculture and backward public services. The factories and the industrial companies, which had transformed the life of the small cities or rural areas, disappeared. The big sectors of the economy have been transferred into the property of some foreign organizations. The landscape of some de-industrialized localities is dominated by ruins and they look like a battlefield. I have to recall also the villages, artificially transformed into urban centers lacking minimum urban conditions. This fact served the interests of a few bureaucratic groups.

Conclusions

The concept of tendential modernity provides a way of understanding modernity in societies with low economic and material grounds. In these societies, geopolitical and historical contexts have influenced and continue to influence economical development, with direct effects on the rhythm of modern development. Tendential modernity appears in societies where the social and institutional actors perform in different directions and without organic adherence to a common and constant project that could become a target in order to reach a dominant modernity. Tendential modernity is contemporary with the Western reflexive modernity. Romanian modernity is mainly tendential because it has too many particularities and too few alignments with the contemporary western modernity.

In some transitional societies, like Romania, modernization began with political institutional construction and not with the building of the capitalist economy. Modernity is the framework and the main element that supports a nation. Although for almost 200 years Romanians have known modernity, it has not reached the profound Romanian society, in all of the social life components, but it appears as a *tendency*.

The tendential modernity derives from the acts of modernity, within the framework of a national state and it represents the modernity production degree of the national state. Modernity was imported because it used to answer several needs of certain groups. The modern evolution of the Romanians has become visible mainly in the political institutional construction and not in the edification of the economic frame, because the particularities of historical evolution did not allow a capitalist-like economic development. Indeed, in Romania the modernization was, in the first place, politically achieved by political groups, whose mentality and behaviour were modern but without the necessary economic foundation. The Romanian state has prioritized the national construction and the problems related to the economical and social development have been postponed or subordinated to the national issue.

The state had a decisive role in Romanian modernization because of the need to build the institutional framework in a modern society with a predominantly rural economy. The state used the modern institutions to resolve certain emergencies, like the independence and the unification of all Romanians. The real needs of social modernization were postponed for the future because the action of the state in this sense was always limited. By contrast with the state of the economically and socially consolidated countries, in countries with an emergent modernity, the state is usually authoritarian.

Modernity is a trend resulting from the modernization of the Romanian society, subject to multiple crises, not all due to internal factors. Although it adopted or tended to adopt a particular model of modern development, the Romanian society

had, periodically, to deviate from that model and to adopt strategies appropriate for the development and preservation of their identity in specific geopolitical contexts. The modernization of the Romanian society cannot be denied, but it is a trend which gives more priority to certain social groups. The question is whether other groups refuse or oppose modernity? We say that these groups do not react to the impact of modernity and accept it as such like any other challenge.

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