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INDIVIDUAL SELF IDENTIFICATION BASED ON SOCIETAL REINFORCEMENTS: A CASE STUDY CONCERNING THE SOCIALIZATION PRACTICES OF MALES AND FEMALES

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Abstrtact: The following research report is the continuation of a previous study that I have completed into the socialization of males and females and how parental reinforcements lend themselves to expected stereotypical behaviors that are associated with a particular sex. In this report, I also considered how society will reinforce the behaviors that are learned at home. I explained these behaviors using the Social Learning theory and incorporating the works of earlier Social-Psychologist and Sociologist to explain how individual behavior is a product of the external environment.

Keywords: socialization, stereotypical behaviors, Social Learning theory, external environment.

Introduction

The debate concerning the socialization practices of men and women is one that is centered around the central question on whether or not our natural tendencies to display certain attributes that are characteristic of our internal disposition are a product of nature, or the product of socialization that occurs during childhood, and is then, continuously reinforced through the course of an individuals life. The question that I am about to address in this research paper will answer this question on whether or not our natural tendencies are a product of societal reinforcements or a product of nature. I will also address the consequences that are associated when both genders decide to live outside of society's defined role for their gender. As stated earlier in my research proposal, I will answer this question using a defined theoretical framework. I will also incorporate a specific perspective to answer this question that will allow for the identification and definition of key concepts in answering the

question about the attributes men and women display that are either a product of nature, or a product of roles that define the attributes that are closely associated with the definition of what our society defines as being a man or a woman. I will begin my research into this matter by focusing on a specific case study involving two toddlers who are in the early stages of development and the reactions that each experience from their parents when their desired expectations result in adversity. I expect to find that the early socialization process that a person experiences in the home eventually lends itself to positions in society that are socially defined by the expected definitions that create a persons identity according to characteristics that are specific to their assigned gender.

Childhood Experiences

The scenario that I am about to describe will focus on two infants who are in the early stages of learning what it means to walk, instead of crawl, and the associated advantages to walking, such as increased mobility. The first child begins the adventure by focusing on a table that will aid in the pursuit of the objective by using the table as a crutch. The infant crawls towards the table and uses that table as a lift. After the infant stands upright with the aid of the table, the infant takes two-to-four steps and falls. The parents of the infant, who hear the cries of the child, run to the infants' aid, and inform the infant that everything is fine, and that it is "ok" to express emotions in the face of an adverse situation. They show their approval for the expression of emotion in various forms, such as hugging, kissing, and informing the infant that everything is fine. Another infant who is learning the advantages of walking instead of crawling is faced with the same situation. This infant will also take that same route in achieving their desired goal by using the table as a crutch. Two-to-four steps later, the infant falls and begins to cry. In this case, however, the reaction by the parents is a little different. Instead of hugging, kissing, and informing the child that it is "ok" to express their emotions in the face of an adverse situation, they inform the infant in a stern voice that they "had better not cry and to get

up and try again." What is the difference in the parental reactions toward the discomfort that the infants experienced? The difference is that one infant is a male child and the other is a female child. The female child, of course, was allowed to express her emotions, while the male child was instructed to "get up and try again." The next question that needs to be addressed in this situation is what would cause the different reactions by the parents? The reactions by the parents were based on their perception on the characteristics that are associated with a male and female in our society. The male child is expected to grow into a domineering figure, while the female is supposed to be emotional and nurturing. The parents actually provide an atmosphere for the child that nurtures the sex role stereotypes. As seen in the case of how both parents reacted to the attempts by the child to pursue walking, the parents expressed to one child that it is "ok" to cry, while to the other, they expressed dissatisfaction with the emotional expression.

Rhoda Unger, who is a noted Social-Psychologist, wrote a book entitled *Male and Female*, where she describes how parents reinforce the definitions that are characteristic of male and female behavior by drawing from the social learning theory and the Freudian theory concerning what is termed as "sex-characteristic personality patterns." She states that, from a Freudian theory concerning the interaction between the parents and child, children learn their behavior patterns concerning the sexes by interacting with the parent of the opposite sex who will provide a framework for the behavior that is appropriate for their sex. In learning the aspect of gender, she states that it is the parents who provide models for reinforcement of a particular behavior that the child will being to associate with their assigned gender or sex.

As in the case of the children learning to walk, the construction of the appropriate gender begins to mold the child's behavior based on the interaction with the parents, who the child will eventually associate the behaviors that are characteristic to their assigned gender. I have incorporated the below diagram to give some insight into how childhood socialization practices influence the child's behavior

concerning their gender.

This diagram was reproduced from a book entitled *The Developmental Social-Psychology of Gender* that was written by Hanns M. Trautner. As noted in the diagram below, the situation that I have described lends itself perfectly into how parents reinforce gender stereotypes in a manner that will dictate the predicted outcome in their children.
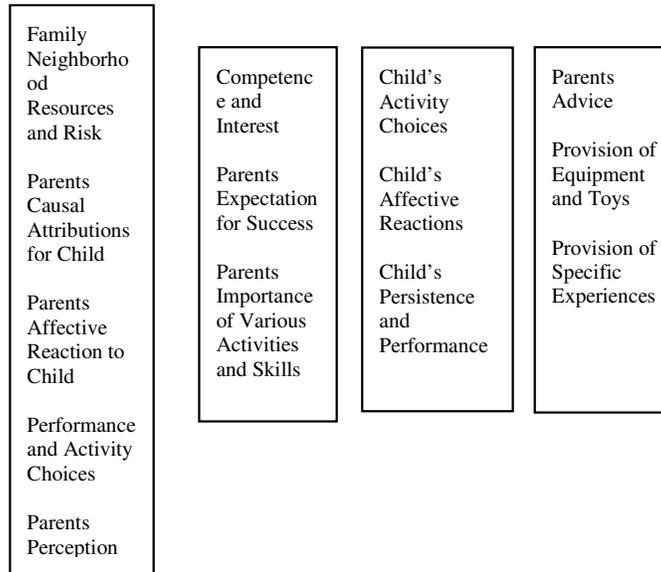
As explained in the diagram below, children begin to form their self-identity around external influences. One of these influences is their interaction with their parents who base their beliefs about their child's assigned gender in society around stereotypical definitions and general beliefs about how the child should behave in accordance with their assigned gender. In the next diagram, the interplay of parents effectual reaction toward the child in certain situations will also determine the likely outcome of how that child will behave in accordance with their assigned gender.

As noted in section 2 of the diagram, the effectual relationship that the parents have with the child will also determine the outcome. When the parent refused to acknowledge the male child's discomfort in the face of adversity, for example, they were, in effect, acknowledging the gender of the child by expressing their disapproval with the child's expression of discomfort.

The parents, of course, based their decision on their own beliefs about their child's gender. In section 3 of the diagram, the relationship between parental involvement in assigning certain toys and attributes also has a reinforcing effect on the child's structured behavior.

The preceding scenario that I have described concerning the infants reinforced a male attribute in that all males should be forceful and the least expressive in the face of adversity. The final section concerning the child's memories of specific events that reinforce the belief in gender is outlined by the choice of activities that the child has chosen to pursue.

The activities, of course, are based on parental reinforcement at home that dictated that the male child pursue athletics and aggressive roles, while the female child pursue nurturing and supportive roles.

Section 1	Section 2	Section 3	Section 4
Family Neighborhood Resources and Risk	Competence and Interest	Child's Activity Choices	Parents Advice
Parents Causal Attributions for Child	Parents Expectation for Success	Child's Affective Reactions	Provision of Equipment and Toys
Parents Affective Reaction to Child	Parents Importance of Various Activities and Skills	Child's Persistence and Performance	Provision of Specific Experiences
Performance and Activity Choices			
Parents Perception			

Although the parents begin to mold the child's behavior according to their particular gender, there are other factors that have to be considered when discussing the association between behavior and the interaction with the parents. The other factor, of course, is how society provides structural reinforcements that shape societies ideal image of what is appropriate characteristics for males and females.

Gender Socialization through Educational Reinforcement and Peer Group Association

Societal reinforcements provide a cultural basis for the construction gender in our society. The theory that has been used to discuss structural factors that give rise to gender expectation that our society considers true is best represented by explaining the Social Construction theory. The Social

Construction theory postulates that, through history and social processes, cultural institutions are created that supports the custom of a society that reinforces certain characteristics that are assigned to individuals that become cultural truisms. In our society, when children leave the home, they are continuously bombarded with references that will identify their particular sex with certain traits. The reinforcement is presented in the school environment as well as in the social groups that individuals interact. In this scenario, I am going to discuss how gender reinforcement continues in our school system by focusing on particular situations that both children experience in kindergarten and continues through high-school. The first situation begins in kindergarten during recess in which the children are instructed to go to the play pin and remove the toys. The little boy reaches for a toy that is not appropriate for his gender, such as a Barbie doll. When the teacher notices his intentions, she instructs him to leave the toy alone and gives him an "action figure." She then proceeds to give the Barbie doll to the little girl. This process of defining toys that are appropriate for the individual gender is continuously repeated throughout the course of their elementary education and on into the middle-school years. Except in middle-school, the situation is a little different. Instead of toys being used to define what is appropriate for their gender, sports become the socializing agent. The little boy, who is now an adolescent, is geared toward sports that are appropriate for his sex. A sport, such as football, where the reward for aggressiveness is reinforced by his coaches and his peers is just one example. The little girl, who is now an adolescent female, is geared toward supporting the sports that the young male is actively involved. The definitions of being male and female are even apparent in the high-school years. Once again, the young male is encouraged by his coaches, peers, and even his father, to pursue sports that are characteristic for his gender. The young girl is geared toward taking home-economics and continues cheerleading. At the end of their high-school careers, the two individuals will pursue college. For the sake of this research report, both will attend the same school with the male majoring in engineering and the female in psychology. I have chosen these two majors

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with the explicit purpose of how both majors are over represented by one gender. In our society, males are expected to excel in the math and science, while females are expected to excel in majors that address issues affecting individuals.

In a book written by Baumeister entitled *The Cultural Animal*, he discusses the issue that I have previously addressed in how society will learn the behaviors that are characteristic to its culture and pass those characteristic from one generation to the next. Throughout this research report, I have discussed how learned patterns of cultural behavior are transmitted from one generation to the next. The cultural transmission of behavior, of course, begins in the home and is then reinforced by societal pressures. But what happens when both genders decide to live out-side of the societal norms for their assigned gender? I will address this situation in a college atmosphere, in which both sexes pursue roles that are not in accordance with their assigned gender. This will prove to be difficult situation for both genders. The male will become the cheerleader and the female will play an aggressive sport, such as rugby. The reaction by society and their peer groups is one that does not support their deviation from the expected norms. The young man is labeled by his peers as that of a "sissy," "wimp," and there is even discussion among his peers that question his sexuality. The female, she too, is labeled by her peers. The talk among her social group is one that questions her sexuality because she has been seen in the weight-room. She is labeled as a "tomboy," "she-man," and the proverbial "dyke." What caused the initial shift in society's attitudes towards the individuals when they decided to deviate from societies expectations for their gender? This question will be answered throughout the course of this research report. I will begin by incorporating social-psychological research to describe the reaction by their peers.

Social Definition of Meaning

In order to begin addressing the central question about why their peer groups did not nurture their new role that they have decided to take, I will discuss the writings of Zerubavel

and how social meaning is attached to symbols.

I will being discussing this situation by addressing how social meaning is attached to symbols in our society that are used to signify certain attributes. Zerubavel makes reference to this fact when he states that "using symbols presupposes a mental association of two elements, one of which ("the signifier") is regarded as representing, or "standing for," the other ("signified"). The mental association between symbols is how people will interpret specific events and facts about people, places, and items in our society. In the case of the association between two events that I have described concerning the mannerisms of the two people in question, our society often interprets someone who is assertive and domineering (signifier) with characteristics that are associated with being a male (signified). The attributes that signify a female in our society are often characterized as someone who is submissive and nurturing. So in both cases, the attributes that are used to symbolize a certain gender are also the same attributes that society attaches to meaning to represent a particular gender.

There are also other issues concerning the social definition of meaning. One issue is the semiotic relationship that symbols have with other symbols and how individuals within our society mentally construct meaning based on the relationship that symbols have with other symbols. I will use the situation in the kindergarten classroom as an example of how the teacher mentally associated the young child with a toy that was used to support the ideal image of a young male child. When the male child was reaching for the toy that was associated with distinctive features that are characteristic of a female, the teacher removed the toy from the male child's possession and placed him with one that is indicative of his gender.

The toy, of course, was one that was muscular and was given to the male child to symbolize one trait that is characteristic of a male. The Barbie doll, of course, was given to the young female child as a representation that she was supposed to display the characteristics of a young and attractive female. In both cases, the toys offered the children

an artificially constructed representation of the male and female physic. But what happens when individuals decided to live out-side of society's normal expectations for their particular gender?

Does the deviant behavior mold self-identity in relation to the stigmatization that often follows when an individual decides to pursue an alternate course of social development? The answer to the following questions can best be addressed by exploring how social identity can be shaped by the social environment.

Social Identity and Stigmatization

The shaping of social identity can best be explained by the various roles that our society has constructed for each gender. Using the Social Role theory as a guide, people are often placed in certain position within society that reinforces our expectations of the gender. The roles that males perform in the course of their occupation are often roles that require the ability to manage massive amounts of information. The social roles that males are structured into also require them to display tendencies that reinforce our beliefs about the aggressive nature of males. Roles in the sports realm provide just one of many examples. As in the case of the young child who was geared toward aggressive sports, he was rewarded for displaying behaviors that were constructed by society in a manner that would support society's view that males are naturally aggressive. Jenkins, in his book on Social Identity, would say that this tendency for males to display aggressive behavior is just one example of how the image of the self is framed through the interaction with others in which the individual is trying to gain acceptance. The young man, for instance, continuously exercised what is termed as "impression management" as a means to form his identity in the course of interacting with others. His aggressive tendency, in other words, was a product of managing and forming his identity around the defined definitions on what is considered appropriate for his gender. As I stated earlier, what happens when people live outside of the expected roles that they are

given in society? They are often labeled and stigmatized. As in the case of the young male who decided to pursue an alternate course of development, he was labeled as that of a "sissy," "wimp," and his sexuality was even a subject of debate. The stigmatizing effects of being labeled as such place an individual in a position to either accept the label or deal with the consequences that are associated with the deviant behavior. Erving Goffman would state that, society's reaction to this form of deviance is characteristic of how society will attack the character of the individual as having a weak will, domineering or unnatural passions (Stigma 1961). Young girls are not immune from the stigmatization that occurs when a label is applied to an individual. In the case of the young woman who decided to pursue other interest, she was labeled as being a "tomboy," "she-man," and a "dyke" for her apparent deviation for what is expect of her particular sex. The stigmatizing effect of the label that was applied to her was an attack on her individual character as having an "unnatural passion."   In both cases, the male did not live up to societal expectations of assertive and aggressive tendencies and the female did not represent the ideal image of a female because she engaged in activities that were considered uncharacteristic for her gender. Also as in both cases, a label was applied that had the effect of stigmatizing both sexes for their apparent deviation from the expected norm.

Conclusion

At the beginning of this research report into the structural reinforcements of gender stereotyping, the question was posed as to explain societies shift in attitude once two individuals decided to pursue courses of action that were not characteristic for their assigned gender. The reaction by society, especially their peer groups, was not supporting. As a consequence to their deviation for the expect norm, both sexes were labeled with names that had the stigmatizing effects of trying to apply a label that would get both sexes to conform to the expectations for their gender. To explain this effect, I incorporated parental reinforcement and how parents proved a

framework for the child to behave in certain ways that will reinforce the expected norms for that particular sex. I also applied social-psychological theories, such as the Social Role theory, to support my conclusion that the shift in societal attitudes was a product of an attempt to reinforce the definitions of male and female according to their expected roles in society. In my case study, I found what I expected to find in that society will impose penalties for individuals who do not support the typical definition of male and female. These individuals, of course, have a label applied to them in an attempt to get them to conform to the expectation for their gender.

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REGISTRELE CREAȚIEI PUBLICITARE

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Abstract: The paper is analyzing the meaning and the principles of advertising creation. There are nine registers of advertising creation that seems to be decisive for the success of the message in the eye of the consumer.

Keywords: advertising, comsumers, creativity, humor, persuation.

Creația publicitară are două funcții cruciale: permite publicității să fie remarcată și prin urmare, memorizată; construiește preferințele față de marcă, generând un răspuns din partea publicului și crearea unei adeziuni. O idee bună nu costă mai mult decât una rea, ci ea poate permite firmei să câștige mulți bani. Creativitatea este destinată să demoleze zidul indiferenței, permițându-ne să judecăm diferit produsele binecunoscute, piețele banalizate, codurile publicitare prestabilite sau mărcile care ne sunt familiare. Ea adaugă un "supliment" de suflet (o valoare adăugată imaginară), suscitând emoții, diferențiind mărci și construind legături cu publicul. În acest spirit, este elocventă o afirmație aparținând lui J.F.Kennedy și care mi-a suscitat interesul, corelând-o cu importanța pe care trebuie să o acordăm creativității în publicitate:" Există două genuri de oameni: cei care văd lumea așa cum este ea și care spun de ce? și cei care văd lumea așa cum ar putea să fie și se întreabă:de ce nu?"

Creativitatea nu este gratuită. Nu există o metodă riguroasă prin care să identificăm noile idei, mai ales pe cele bune. Există așa numitele tehnici de creativitate(brainstorming, sinectica, matricea descoperirilor), însă apreciez că au un interes relativ redus pentru conceptorii de publicitate. Totuși, specialiști de marcă din sfera publicității apreciază existența unor principii ale creativității publicitare: dobândirea unei culturi publicitare- toate persoanele implicate, de la departamentul comercial la cel care crează mesajul publicitar trebuie să-și constuiască o cultură creativă.Răsfoirea frecventă

a cataloagelor cu reclame, cunoaşterea şi evaluarea afişelor de ieri sau de azi, a fi curios, reprezintă exigenţe pentru cel care doreşte să reuşească în această meserie; o alegere corespunzătoare a echipei de creaţie; crearea unui climat de încredere- ambianţa în care va lucra specialistul în creaţia publicitară este de o importanţă capitală, fiind "terenul" pe care se vor construi viitoarele campanii publicitare; a fi pregătit de a lucra din greu; abordarea directă şi simplă a procesului de creaţie; utilizarea studiilor din domeniu ca o completare a capacităţii creative; a şti, în caz de eşec, să regândeşti chiar strategia de comunicare; asocierea anunţătorului la actul de creaţie.

Aceiaşi autori apreciază existenţa a nouă registre mai frecvente ale creaţiei publicitare, şi anume: umorul; emoţia; abordările persuasive (de tipul convingerii); mesajul vizual; decalajul creativ; abordările care folosesc elemente "negative"; abordarea proximităţii (empatia); folosirea celebrităţilor; divertismentul (este tot mai utilizată în ultima perioadă denumirea anglo-saxonă de "entertainment").

Umorul

Dacă facem o analiză mai atentă, constatăm că, de fapt, publicitatea este un anumit tip de "infiltrare".Ea "pătrunde" în casele oamenilor în fiecare seară şi le impune mesaje pe care, poate, aceştia nu le-au solicitat spre vizionare.În acest context, umorul poate fi considerat ca o formă de politeţe. De când abordăm subiectul seducţiei, fie că ea este una umană sau publicitară, umorul este unul dintre resorturile privilegiate. Dacă este bine conceput, are eficacitate în măsura în care generează o reacţie la nivelul consumatorului, iar relaţia astfel construită cu marca este, deseori, foarte pozitivă.Umorul poate fi utilizat pentru a atrage atenţia prin folosirea unor jocuri simple de cuvinte. El poate crea o punte de simpatie şi uneori să înlocuiască fondul discursului pentru o marcă sau un produs care nu au foarte multe lucruri noi de anunţat. Însă, umorul nu este foarte uşor de utilizat în creaţia publicitară, el fiind codat din punct de vedere cultural.Fiecare categorie de vârstă, grup social, categorie socio-profesională are propriul umor.Prin

urmare, a aborda un umor tipizat, ca de exmplu cel al tinerilor presupune excluderea concomitentă a celor ce nu se regăsesc în această categorie. Un exemplu în acest sens este cel oferit de o campanie publicitară pentru o maşină de spălat marca Brandt.În acest mesaj sunt prezentaţi doi bărbaţi care intră în apartamentul unuia dintre ei. De îndată ce sosesc, soţia primului începe să se dezbrace frenetic. Cei doi nu înţeleg ceea ce se petrece, şi rămân stingheriţi într-o situaţie similară cu ridicolul. Unul dintre ei întreabă: "Dar ce are soţia ta?", iar celălalt răspunde "Un Brandt"!

Emoţia

Mediile publicitare sunt diferite şi sub aspectul capacităţii de a declanşa emoţii. Presa şi afişajul nu procedează foarte des la activarea emoţiilor, în timp ce televiziunea sau cinematograful sunt, prin excelenţă, medii emoţionale. Publicitatea exploatează de obicei emoţiile pozitive, evitându-le cu grijă pe cele mai puţin consensuale cum ar fi mânia, tristeţea, frica sau gelozia.Din ce în ce mai mult, mărcile importante depăşesc funcţionalitatea produselor lor pentru a cultiva o relaţie de ordin emoţional cu consumatorii lor.Putem, pe bună dreptate considera că mărcile se adresează din ce în ce mai mult individului din spatele consumatorului. Printre instrumentele de marketing de care dispune o marcă, publicitatea este un levier privilegiat în construcţia unei relaţii emoţionale. După cum afirma Bill Bernbach, "ceea ce contează nu este de câte ori este publicat un anunţ, ci emoţia pe care o crează".

Crearea emoţiilor se poate realiza, de cele mai multe ori, prin idei novatoare simple. De exemplu, furnizorul de servicii de acces la Internet Wanadoo a utilizat registrul emoţiilor într-una din campaniile sale publicitare, punând în scenă un copil care încearcă să spună "bună ziua" trecătorilor care trec pe stradă. Acest film simbolizează toată spontaneitatea şi încrederea copilăriei. A face referire la acest paradis pierdut poate produce emoţii puternice telespectatorului. Anumite mărci au făcut din emoţie un registru privilegiat. De exemplu, McDonald's îşi poziţionează în Franţa restaurantele ca pe nişte

locuri de întâlnire unde frontiera dintre generații dispare, un loc al schimburilor unde totul se poate spune, se pot pune întrebările cele mai intime sau se pot face declarații de dragoste.

Abordările persuasive

Aceste abordări sunt utilizate pentru produse cu o implicare slabă și un puternic mediu concurențial, cum sunt, spre exemplu, detergenții. Ele urmăresc să ne convingă de superioritatea unui produs și se bazează pe repetiția unui mesaj argumentat de probe solide. Iată câteva dintre mecanismele lor: "demonstrația": observăm produsul cum se "comportă" în condiții reale (de exemplu, detergentul în mașina de spălat); mărturia (*testimonial*): în acest caz, mecanica convingerii se realizează sub modul "Dacă este bun pentru ei, e bun și pentru mine"; demonstrația comparativă (*side by side*): este vorba despre o veche tehnică de publicitate specifică detergenților, când comparăm jumătatea stângă a ecranului în care se găsește un produs "X" cu partea dreaptă a acestuia în care se găsește produsul care face obiectul publicității. Rezultatele sunt elocvente: în stânga, sarcinile nu sunt realizate în totalitate, în timp ce în dreapta , succesul este deplin; testul torturii: produsul își "dă examenul" în condiții foarte dificile; dramatizarea problemei: pentru a compensa banalitatea produsului, exagerăm diverse situații pentru a-l implica pe consumator;

Abordările vizuale

În acest caz, dimensiunea vizuală devine determinantă. Evoluțiile recente ale unui număr însemnat de campanii ne arată că putem comunica foarte bine un mesaj de fond printr-o simplă imagine. Într-un univers în care consumatorul este bombardat cu mesaje, unii consideră că anumite campanii prea sofisticate sau prea intelectuale riscă să nu rețină atenția publicului.Ei se vor orienta spre abordări în care să predomine vizualul, acest lucru simplificând esențialul. Aici, publicitatea se raportează la design. Totul comunică: vizualul, muzica, prezența produsului, iar strategia de publicitate nu se oprește

doar la cuvinte sau la conceptele de comunicare. Imaginile, și mai ales calitatea acestora încetează de a mai fi simple ilustrații destinate a acompania un mesaj scris, ele dobândind un caracter strategic deoarece transmit semnale unui individ considerat ca un "captator" de emoții și senzații.

Decalajul creativ

Regulile activităților publicitare solicitau, pentru o lungă perioadă de timp, valorizarea produselor și a utilizatorilor acestora. Publicitatea trebuia să comunice un beneficiu funcțional și psihologic, un motiv de a cumpăra, un element de superioritate. Produsul trbuia să devină un "erou", cu care nu te puteai juca sau pe care nu îl puteai devaloriza.

Aceste registre publicitare sunt utilizate și astăzi de unele agenții de publicitate.Trebuie, însă, să remarcăm că lucrurile evoluează, și aceasta datorită a cel puțin două motive: consumatorii se schimbă, fiind mult mai maturi, având din ce în ce mai mult obiceiul de a decodifica mesajele; produsele sunt tot mai asemănătoare. Decalajul creativ este legat de alegerea unui mesaj vizual puternic, care surprinde și atrage atenția; este dimensiunea neașteptată a jocului care crează o surpriză.

Abordarea prin utilizarea de elemente "negative"

Marea parte a campaniilor publicitare bun accentul pe aspectele pozitive, binefăcătoare ale produselor care determină încrederea în ele.

Pentru a se demarca, anumite campanii adoptă o abordare diferită, care pune accent pe elemente de ordin negativ: imperfecțiunile produselor atunci când publicitatea pune, de obicei, accentul pe calități; pesimismul, atunci când publicitatea se bazează, de obicei, pe optimism; imagini sau cuvinte foarte dezagreabile, pe care ,de obicei, încercăm să le evităm. În aceste tipuri de campanii, se arată pe toată durata expunerii mesajului publicitar faptul că produsul sau serviciul "nu este" sau "nu face".

De abia la finalul filmului vom descoperi adevărata promisiune publicitară.Obiectivul principal este de a crea surpriză.

Abordarea proximității

Această abordare urmărește să prezinte produsul în condiții cât mai apropiate de utilizarea sa obișnuită.Alegem un "casting" foarte apropiat de "viața reală" și căutăm proiecția prin punerea în scenă a unor scene din viață, a unor situații tipice universului cotidian. Obiectivul acestui tip de abordare este de a oferi o oglindă a realității cotidiene a siglei. Consumatorii se vor simți preocupați, vor înțelege că ei sunt adevărații destinatari ai publicității, regăsindu-se în diverse scene cotidiene.Obișnuința de a frecventa media și de a observa publicitatea îi face pe consumatori mai puțin naivi, ei nelăsându-se atât de ușor impresionați de mesaje cu top modele cu forme longiline. Acest univers este din ce în ce mai îndepărtat de realitatea lor, departe de propriile preocupări. Putem face, atunci alegerea de a arăta realitatea așa cum este ea.

Utilzarea celebrităților

Utilizarea "starurilor" în conceperea mesajului publicitar are două funcții: a emerge: filmul publicitar se diferențiază imediat de restul filmelor trsdiționale. Vedeta atrage și reține atenția; suscită proiecția publicului: în loc de a prezenta o situație cotidiană, punem în scenă un univers inaccesibil, dar de invidiat. Pericolul care apare în utilizarea vedetelor în publicitate este cel al "vampirizării" mesajului, în sensul că vom reține starul și vom uita marca. Nu trebuie să utilizăm celebritățile doar pentru plăcere și fără a dezvolta o legătură reală cu marca și cu produsul.De exemplu, după supremația Franței la campionatul mondial de fotbal din 1998, mărcile s-au "agățat" intens de jucătorii echipei naționale de fotbal a Franței, iar unele campanii nu au fost pertinente. Există însă și exemple pozitive. De exemplu, apariția Claudiei Schiffer este una dintre cheile succesului pentru modelul Citroen Xsara.Ea a consolidat strategia acestui model, care

dorea să comunice valori legate de stil şi eleganţă. Un alt exemplu ar fi publicitatea Pepsi Gladiator cu Britney Spears, Beyonce, Pink şi Enrique Iglesias, film care crează evenimentul şi atrage imediat atenţia.

Cum putem aprecia o idee creativă?

Mesajele publicitare sunt judecate în mod continuu, în toate stadiile lor de realizare. Aprecierea creaţiei publicitare rămâne o acţiune dificilă care nu exclude posibilitatea unor erori chiar din partea celor mai buni specialişti. Creaţia are partea sa de iraţional, care face previziunea rezultatelor foarte dificilă. Pentru aprecierea ideilor creative ne putem ghida după anumite principii:

• Trebuie să învăţăm să surmontăm judecăţi de genul "îmi place/nu îmi place". A judeca un anunţ publicitar poate semăna a fi ceva atât de subiectiv ca şi în cazul aprecierii unei opere de artă. "Îmi place/nu îmi place" poate fi suficient atunci când ne exprimăm gusturile faţă de un tablou, şi în nici un caz atunci când interesele de ordin economic sunt enorme.În spatele succesului sau eşecului unei campanii publicitare se află firme sau salariaţi care îşi pot păstra sau pierde slujbele. Ar fi mai bine, atunci, să cântărim foarte bine resorturile creaţiei. Cel mai dificil este a învăţa de a evada din propriile tale judecăţi, din registrul nostru personal.

• A judeca înseamnă a te angaja. A te angaja într-un proiect de publicitate presupune a avea o convingere intimă şi acceptarea riscului. Aceasta presupune că atât agenţiile publicitare, cât şi anunţătorii pot fi supuşi greşelii.Creaţia cu adevărat inovantă are caracter destabilizator: nu ne asumăm riscuri dacă preluăm modele deja existente.

• Judecata se formează. Experienţa există şi în materie de publicitate.Prin urmare, trebuie vizionate sau audiate foarte multe publicităţi, trebuie să ne confruntăm mereu propriile judecăţi cu ale altora. Trebuie să medităm profund asupra succeselor şi eşecutilor sale.

• Este mai bine a renunţa decât a "fătui". A judeca nu înseamnă să refaci. Prea des, poate, anunţătorul novice nu se cantonează în rolul său de judecător şi de decident, fiind tentat

să modifice una sau alta dintre părţile mesajului, de a adăuga o ofertă specială sau un bon de comandă de decupat. Atunci când un mesaj este judecat rău , e mai bine ca să reluăm totul de la capăt decât să procedăm la ameliorări care ar putea conduce la un rezultat şi mai decepţionant.

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A NEW MODERNITY? POLITICAL CULTURE OF POST-COMMUNISM TRANSITION IN ROMANIAN AREA

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Abstract: This research tries to bring a contribution to the study of Romanian political culture featuring post-communist period from the view of modernity. For a society who estimates her democratic exercise in the limit of one and a half decade, the study of political culture represents a fascinating intellectual travel, not lacking in difficulty. My approach tries to get over the manner of regarding and often even the subjectivism of most studies, with several sociological exceptions, attached to Romanian post-communist society. It must be said that the post-communist transition presents many difficulties for analysis. The most important is the umpredictibility. In the 80's, the crash of the communist regimes seemed extremely improbable in the Central and Eastern of Europe. The entire world was embraced by the Cold War's way of thinking and Romania was a "standing still" country in the communist project. The events at the end of 1989 have surprised everybody but the difficulty of leaving behind the communist legacy and the necessity of post-communist transition appeared clearly. On the other hand, it is difficult to make a forecast about which directions the Romanian society will follow. Moreover, the use of the term transition must be made with many reserves. Even the transition has been declared officially like being ended, the data of the poles shows that a large part of Romanians think that we go into a wrong direction, although they declared in the advantage of integration in European structures. Political participation is reduced and the trust in the right-state institutions too. Just the Church and the Army, keepers of tradition and community values, enjoy the most trust of the people. We have laws and democratic institutions and we experimented on the change of power between political parties, but I don't think we can really speak about a simply "transition to democracy". That's why I understand through post-communism transition the political regime which follows after a communist one and which experimented the decommunisation of all levels of society. We can speak about the transition to a new type of modernity which includes integration in Euro-Atlantic structures and which is completely different from all that Romanian society knew up to now.

I will suggest in the following an analytical approach sustained by a double challenge. The first is linked with the actual state of facts. Similar to our entry in the orbit of modernity was the constant preoccupation of Romanian picked to speculate on the national identity or the paths which Romanian society should follow in the effort to being modern itself. In essence, I consider that the two ways of discourse, the identity hermeneutics and the models of development, represent the most important reactions on the larger issue of modernization. The second challenge is about my intellectual preoccupation: the origins of modernity and the secularity, specificity of the identity discourse and the post-communist condition. As a Romanian citizen I am directly interested in understanding the options of my present people, the manner in which Romanian society is attached to projects of modernity and the transformation of the latest years are reflected at the level of political culture. I also consider that enriching my methodological and comparative horizon into an international academic environmental can be improved by the characteristics of this research.

Keywords: political culture, post-communist society, national identity, modernity, national cultures.

Research assumptions

I. Metamorphosis of modernity

The hypothesis I start from is that modernization of Romanian society, regarded as the process which the modernity come true, can be looked at more like a sum of outside and inside factors. That it can understand at proxime genus of western modernity, with specific differences as well, but it not ending yet. From my point of view I understand through modernity a product of a double secularity. I use here the term secularity in a double sense: in a short sense, it is similar with dissolution of sacred into profane, in a large sense, it means the broken of the world order attribute, "disbewitched world".

The first secularity, showed by overcoming cosmogonies and the birth of philosophy, proposed a principle can be explain the whole world. The second secularity, initiated by the scientific spirit, in the sense of knowledge

mediate by reason, proclaimed an infinite universe without Gods. The birth of science, in her modern sense, possible due to the occulting of the Rennaiscentist imaginary, is similar with the recover of utopian dimension and appearance of ideologies. The utopianism will lead to political extremely, the protestant ethic will change the social relations and the contractualism will stay at the base of the entire political philosophy. These are some possible trajectories of modernity that I named as "multiple modernities".

The political philosophy whose forerunners were Morus, Machiavelli, Hobbes, Rousseau, Locke or Kant has been in the front of a major dilemma: to resolve the conflict between the individual autonomy and the legitimacy of a society. In other words, a society is legitimate when it's founded on autonomy of individuals themselves. Because the individual interests are different, even antagonists, they agree on giving up a part of their freedom to be equal in the front of a legitimate power: a person or a community, a leader or a government.

The social contract became, in this way, the founding act of a new society. The novelty proposed by the political modernity consists in promoting the principle of individual freedom which social contract guarantees. In one way, getting over the modernity has had as consequence in the present society the excess of individualism, "the great break", in the terms of Fukuyama, between an individual and the society. On the other hand, the emphasis of globalization made as one of the main promises of modernity, individual freedom, to be reduced in the name of welfare security. The Romanian post-communism society, marked by the spectrum of communism and powerful conservatory tendencies, seemed not to be in the area described before.

II. The political culture of modernity in Romanian area

The modernization of Romanian society is deeply produced in the first half of the XIX century in a moment when national cultures and institutions have already been

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consolidated in the West. Marked by the contacts with western cultural centers the Romanian paths try to analyze with the instruments of modernity a reality that was itself too much modern. The tension between tradition and modernity, between defenders of autohtonism and those timing with European values leads to two extreme alternatives. The first, which sees in modernity an attack to its own self-image works up the national values which oppose to all other scale values. The second is marked by the desire to burn the phases and recover our lost europenity. The process of modernization initiated by the paths of the XIX century had a double sense: political and cultural. During only one generation, the Romanian society knew the experience of the Union, adopted the first Constitution and Parliamentary system, founded the first Universities gave to literature the first national poet worldwide valuable. If, initially, the modernization was possible because of "the French influence on the public spirit", later, the ideas of German romanticism marked the critical spirit of "forms without substance".

Modernization has different particularities in Transylvania, which has been for a long period of time an autonomous county belonging the Habsbourgic Empire. Even the multicultural Banat, even the multiethnic Dobrogea, even the traditional Bucovina didn't have the intellectual destiny of Transylvania. This proves the role of modernization factor through the appearance, in the second half of XVIII century of a bright school of intellectuals who proclaims for the first time the common destiny of all Romanian counties. One century later, the memorandistic movement militated for the union with the Principalities. The specificity of Transylvania, which belongs to an oriental state and an occidental spirituality, is proclaimed today by many intellectuals, ass a reaction to the tendencies of a centralized state. But, whole decades under the communist government eraised mainly any economic, social or cultural differences between the historical counties. The historician Sorin Mitu, declares in this sense: "Against all regional stereotypies, today's Transylvania looks exactly like the rest of Romania" (*Transylvanian illusions and realities,* in *Transylvanian issue,* edited by G. Andreescu and G. Molnar).

Inside a Europe where the model of regions tends to become a substitute for a national state, the problem of autonomy and peacefull life between different communities will be a subject of negotiations. Studying the experience of other Europeans states, the researcher Alina Mungiu proposed a consesualist model, ”seen rather like an alternative to federalism through proportional divisation of functions from the public sector and the government” (*Subjective Transylvania*).

A perspective on modernisation which overloocks the specific models of development of the Romanian society is destined to its misunderstanding. Stefan Zeletin will propose a model of development based on the role of the middle class as a consequence of the Organic Regulation. His model was motivated by the intervention of the state which he call *neoliberalism* could lead to an autarhic society capable to develop itself. Without a proletariat sufficiently developed, the socialist theories, like *neoiobagia* promoted by I. D. Gherea, didn't have too much resonance at that time. The agrarian theories will try to argue that the development of the society couldn't follow the capitalist model based on social and economic inequalities by keeping the little rural proprieties. Even in the variant of *taranist model* sustained by Virgil Madgearu, or in *the corporatist way* proposed by Manoilescu, specific for the agrarian theories is the importance of state as a factor of social equilibrium and economic proportions. One needs to mention that the theories of development are the theories of community based on social harmony not on free initiatives and market laws. The portrait is perfect for the communism regime where a new element, the proletariat, is called to make “the democracy of large popular masses”. After 1989 we have in the Romanian society a lot of modernization. But the spontanious transition and the limitation perspective on modernization have made all these modernization not make a real process of modernization. We have built a *survival society* (after Pasti, Miroiu and Codita, *Romania-state of facts*) and we have taken mechanism of underdevelopment which have deeply accentuated the social polarity.

Two historic-political projects defined and oriented our entry in modernity: *liberal,* sustained by I. C. Bratianu, and

conservative, sustained by I. H. Radulescu. Related at these are the orientations of political culture: in the liberal sense, to a deeper modernization and in the conservative sense, to keep the local traditions. Until the First World War the liberalism and the conservatism coexisted. In the interwar period, forms of conservatism are manifested I ways like: *taranism, trairism, orthodox traditional.* After 1989 the political conservatism takes the forms of the democrat-christianity taranism. But the forms of conservatism are not only at the political level, they are at the society's level itself in the forms that: *the elitist conservative* and *the populist one.* (For an interesting analysis of the forms of post-communism conservatism see Mihaela Miroiu, *The retro society*). Recently, was formed *the third speech:* "the excluded third of the dialogue East-West, idiom of compromises between reality and fiction, between history and utopia" (Sorin Antohi, *Romanians after '90: symbolic geography and social identity*). The formula, very inspired, is defined in relation to two realities, as the identity speech, but it doesn't assume the refuse of alterity just for further originality.

Conclusions

The post-communist condition which characterized the Romanian present society can be appreciated as a consequence of the manner which have been understood and assumed by the political organizations which have governed from 1990 until now the political ideologies of modernity.

What characterizes in most part the Romanian political spectrum, regardless of doctrine orientation is the trend to recover the past. It is visible especially in the case of historical parties, marked by the obsession of recovering, but even in the case of the some social democratic or nationalist parties. The only ones who don't have a past to demand are the national minorities organizations that are interested to protect their interests in the context of European integration. In this context a lot of ideologies and different orientations of political parties grew up into a specific political culture. At the extent in which we can speak about a political culture linked by certain

ideology the situation describing the Romanian context is very interesting.

The liberal political culture sustained the way of fast social and economic reforms based on the private propriety and the role of middle class as a reason of development. The conservative political culture which includes the form of nationalism and christian democracy propose moderate reforms encouraging rural traditions and moral christianity.

The social-democracy political culture sustine the intervention of the state in the economy and society through redistribution of national wealth to all citizens. All this types of political culture had in common the faith that salvation from communism is possible only through the transition to market economy and integration in European structures. As well, the political culture of post-communism transition can be described as a mixture of a parochial one and state dependency with insufficient elements of participation.

The statement which sustained that for Romania doesn't exist an alternative at change to democracy and free market is the only possible option must been reevaluated. The political realities from ex-communist countries lead us to the idea that the transition to democracy is less than a normal process. The ideological confusions, nationalistic tendencies or local political traditions indicate us that the road to democracy is not easy to walk on.

Nothing leads us to belive that the Romanian society, recently freed from a very hard communist regime, can adopt in a natural way the values of western democracy. The definition of transition in terms of origin and finality makes very difficult the understanding of Romanians realities. The lack of a public space culture and the exertion of citizens rights have self-convinced that democracy means only more parties and separation of the state powers.

The difference in political culture between social groups and the inadequate model proposed by politicians with the beliefs, attitudes and political behavior of the citizens can point to us a very special political culture. This culture, semi-dependent and insufficient in terms of participation, can be named as *alternative political culture*. A political culture

sustained by individual participation and strength by tolerance and respect for difference remains a desire of our society.

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METATEORIE ŞI METODOLOGIE
ÎN INVESTIGAREA FENOMENULUI CULTURAL

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Abstract: The metatheoretical and methodological approaches of the cultural phenomenon research keeps on being the object of certain controversialist debates on social themes. The present article tries to emphasize several important trends of the last decade specialty literature. The paper is focused especially on those aspects regarding some theoretical reconsideration and on its reporting to the culture's philosophy and sociology last tendencies.

Keywords: sociology, cultural phenomenon, cultural assets, life style.

Cercetarea fenomenului cultural a antrenat numeroase perspective de analiză care au condus la o diversitate de abordări şi puncte de vedere. Mai mult, această diversitate a generat nu numai interferenţe între disciplinele ştiinţifice preocupate de fenomenul cultural, ci şi numeroase dispute de legitimare a unui model teoretic sau a altuia. Din acest motiv, voi încerca să sintetizez câteva tendinţe mai importante care se manifestă în acest domeniu, accentuând pe cât posibil acele teme care şi-au dovedit validitatea empirică, fără să neglijez însă contribuţiile teoretice sau cele de modelare a diferitelor aspecte ale relaţiei dintre cultură, societate şi personalitatea individului.

Un prim exemplu este cel al cercetătorului francez Bernard Valade (1997), care constată pe de o parte, tendinţa de descentrare a perspectivelor de abordare a fenomenului cultural, iar pe de altă parte, apropierea acestora de alte seg-mente ale teoriei sociale, care a favorizat concurenţa dintre interpretări şi o diversificare a centrelor de interes. El insistă asupra relevanţei pe care au dobândit-o în ultimii ani studiile referitoare la promovarea „obişnuitului cultural", la contro-versele legate de cultura de masă şi divizarea socială a culturii,

precum şi cele referitoare la practicile culturale şi politicile iniţiate în sfera culturii.

Plecând de la aceste evaluări, se poate spune că dezbaterea privind „cultura obişnuitului" se originează în împărţirea domeniului cultural în două mari ansambluri de modele, practici şi reprezentări: formele macrosociale şi cele microsociale. „Primelor, precizează Bernard Valade, le sunt asociate mecanismele sociale şi instituţionale ale «reproducţiei culturale»; lor le este imputată convertirea informaţiei/comunicare în «marfă»; ele impun tuturor conţinuturilor culturale logica particulară a culturii clasei dominante – «cultura cultivată» ce mobilizează în favoarea sa reprezentările fundamentale ale lumii, omului, istoriei, «modul lor de înscriere în practici (sacre, rituale, artistice, cognitive), precum şi în dispozitive de păstrare şi de memorie colectivă». Cele din urmă scapă de sub controlul marilor mijloace; ele se referă la practicile cotidiene, modurile de viaţă, cunoştinţele practice, tot felul de utilizări casnice «nenumărate, eterogene, uneori dificile de perceput», ce sunt relativ independente de cultura fundamentală în care clasa dominantă vede singura cultură" (1997, p. 543).

Ideea pe care autorul o are în vedere vizează depăşirea clivajului între cultura elitistă şi cultura de masă, concomitent cu necesitatea unei „noi alianţe" între cultură şi viaţă, care să reaşeze stilurile de viaţă şi practicile cotidiene în contextul economico-social în care acestea se desfăşoară. Depăşirea acestei opoziţii presupune însă, depăşirea altor opoziţii, cum sunt cele dintre producătorii de bunuri culturale şi reproducătorii acestor bunuri, dintre circulaţia produselor culturale şi receptarea lor sau dintre câmpul de mare producţie culturală (corespunzător gustului general) şi câmpul de producţie restrânsă (asociat unui public avizat).

Formând un ansamblu de proiecţii şi identificări care se adaugă culturii naţionale, umaniste, ştiinţifice sau religioase, cultura de masă se adresează unui ansamblu extrem de diversificat de persoane şi grupuri sociale. Bernard Valade constată că cele mai multe studii asupra culturii pleacă de la sistemul de producţie culturală (care înglobează ziarele şi revistele, cinematograful, radioul, televiziunea şi „noile media"),

continuă cu aspectele legate de difuzarea conținuturilor culturale şi a canalelor de comunicare folosite, încheindu-se cu modul în care mesajul transmis este receptat de publicul individual sau colectiv.

Într-o asemenea perspectivă, putem înțelege atât tendințele de standardizare a produselor culturale şi de distribuție a acestora pe o piață deschisă tuturor indivizilor şi grupurilor sociale, cât şi activitatea profesioniştilor culturii de masă, ale căror creații trebuie să vizeze aşteptările unui public anume. De aici şi dilema sesizată de cercetătorii proceselor de comunicare media: esența comunicării în masă ține de „canalul" folosit sau depinde funcțional de natura publicului? Dacă în privința canalului de comunicare lucrurile par ceva mai clare (Marshal Mc Luhan enunțase în 1962 principiul *the medium is the message,* în sensul că mijlocul de transmitere influențează conținutul mesajului transmis), publicul care receptează mesajele este divizat în funcție de criterii sociale, economice, politice, ideologice, culturale, teritoriale, precum şi de preferințe, particularități de vârstă, gen, opțiuni de timp liber şi lista poate continua.

O altă tendință identificată de Bernard Valade se referă la fenomenul de raționalizare a vieții private, la intelectualizarea activităților profesionale şi la destructurarea unor practici sociale care, împreună, exprimă tot atâtea premise pentru „fragmentarea socială a valorilor şi a comportamentelor, apariția unor noi interese, atacarea a ceea ce este considerat legitim" (1997, p. 545). Printre consecințele acestor stări de lucruri sunt exemplificate aspecte precum: denunțarea concepției ideologice a culturii supuse normelor instituționale; apariția unor forme de culturi populare, locale, tehnice, profesionale, etnice, de vârstă etc.; recunoaşterea autonomiei acestor forme culturale față de cultura elitară; rolul crescând al unor modele culturale raportate la comportamentele, munca, rolurile sau relațiile sociale ale indivizilor şi grupului; distincția dintre creația originală şi producția culturală de serie; legitimarea unor concepții ideologice cu privire la practicile culturale şi stilurile de viață.

Deşi pare banală afirmația potrivit căreia practicile culturale se desfăşoară într-un cadru extrem de divers de activități, trebuie spus totuşi că acestea se asociază unui anumit

stil de viaţă şi unui set de valori cu puternice conotaţii individuale sau de grup. În acest sens, Bernard Valade formulează o concluzie importantă: practicile culturale evidenţiază o omologie între stratificarea socială şi stratificarea culturală, astfel încât „stratificării în clase superioare, clase de mijloc şi clase populare îi corespunde împărţirea între cultura elitistă, cultura de mijloc, cultura de masă, caracterizate prin distincţie, pretenţie şi, respectiv, privare" (1997, p. 548). După părerea sa, aceste „distanţe" tind să fie recuperate prin adoptarea comportamentelor elitei culturale de către clasele de mijloc şi cele populare ca semn de ascensiune socială, iar de către clasele de sus, distanţele sunt menţinute faţă de pretendenţi prin trasarea unor noi criterii şi standarde de recunoaştere şi prestigiu social.

Alte cercetări desfăşurate în ultimele decenii au evidenţiat o tendinţă din ce în ce mai puternică prin care practicile culturale aparţinând unor medii omogene şi distincte au devenit mai permeabile şi mai flexibile. O dovedeşte, între altele, faptul că expresiile – cultură elitară, cultură de masă sau contracultură – dobândesc relevanţă doar prin asociere la dimensiunile dominant/dominat, formativ/distractiv sau conformism cultural/devianţă culturală şi mai puţin prin raportare strictă la logica claselor sociale şi a nivelelor culturii.

În schimb, nu pot fi minimalizate aspectele referitoare la imitarea stilului de viaţă al unui grup situat mai sus pe scara socială şi angajarea în ceea ce Torstein Veblen (1899) numea „consum ostentativ". În limbajul acestuia, clasa „de huzur" sau clasa „fără ocupaţie" achiziţionează diferite bunuri nu pentru a-şi satisface nevoi raţionale, ci pentru a se evidenţia şi a-i impresiona pe cei din jur, acest tip de comportament urmând să fie „imitat" şi de către reprezentanţii celorlalte categorii sociale.

Această abordare a consumului a fost analizată şi de Pierre Bourdieu (1979, 1986, 1999). El afirma că puterea economică reprezintă, mai presus de orice, puterea de a te distanţa de necesităţile economice şi de a ajunge la risipă, la căutarea luxului şi consumului ostentativ. Conform punctului său de vedere, risipa evidentă este o strategie prin care indivizii încearcă să se arate superiori unul faţă de altul prin

transformarea capitalului economic în capital politic, social, cultural sau simbolic. Fără să intru într-un comentariu mai larg, trebuie observat şi un alt aspect al problemei de mai sus: presupunerea că toţi consumatorii nu urmăresc decât să-şi expună bogăţia şi statutul social poate fi interpretată şi ca posibilitate prin care o anumită categorie de persoane cumpără obiecte de lux din preocuparea de a-şi menţine imaginea despre ei înşişi.

Acest al doilea aspect este împărtăşit de Marius Lazăr (1996), atunci când afirmă că miza socială a consumului ostentativ constă în menţinerea statutului social sau prezentarea cât mai favorabilă a propriei imagini. Deosebit de relevant este în acest sens textul următor: „Categoriile sociale sensibile la propriul lor *standing social* şi propria poziţie în diversele sisteme ierarhice, aspiranţii la promovare sau la menţinerea statutului pot frecventa opera, de pildă, pentru spectacolul de pe scenă, dar mai ales pentru cel din sală, unde «afişarea» şi prezentarea propriei imagini primează în raport cu spectacolul". Aşa cum achiziţionarea unui anumit obiect de artă sau cheltuiala ostentativă transformă spectacolul, tot aşa obiectul artistic sau podoaba au menirea să sublinieze prestigiul social al indivizilor, precizează M. Lazăr (1996, p. 319).

Autorul nu uită să amintească de fenomenul „kitsch", a cărui esenţă este dată de achiziţionarea cu mijloace ieftine a „surogatelor" distincţiei şi succesului în viaţa socială. Încetă-ţenit ca etichetă pentru tot ce ţine de un gust îndoielnic, kitsch-ul este în acelaşi timp „emblema socială (sau stigmatul dacă te uiţi de sus în jos) a parvenirii şi nesiguranţei în ce priveşte stăpânirea codurilor culturii superioare" (1996, p. 320).

Fără să nege legitimitatea comercializării actului cul-tural, el atrage atenţia asupra împrejurării că, pe lângă valoarea economică a bunurilor culturale „există o recompensă şi un profit de natură simbolică în practicile culturale, care contrazic la prima vedere, logica economicului – sau mai precis o redimensionează...". În limbajul economiei, preţul ridicat al unei opere de artă, de exemplu, semnifică talentul sau prestigiul artistului, ca şi puterea sau poziţia socială a cumpărătorului, caracteristici situate pe o scară a meritelor ce

nu pot fi comercializate. Concluzia la care ajunge Marius Lazăr este rezumată astfel: „În câmpul culturii, obiectele îşi pierd calitatea de bunuri care au o valoare de întrebuinţare economică (menită să satisfacă o utilitate) şi una de schimb. Ele devin bunuri simbolice, a căror «economie» primeşte accentele unei denegări a interesului" (1996, p. 304).

O altă direcţie de cercetare se referă la rolul privilegiat pe care îl au mass-media între agenţii de socializare. În legătură cu această problemă, J. B. Thompson (1995), J. M. Duprez (1998), N. Eliasoph şi P. Lichterman (2003), M. Hechter (2004), Ch. Weedan (2004), C. Bird (2005) şi alţii semnalează existenţa a două curente de opinie care, într-un fel sau altul, divizează perspectivele efectelor mediatice asupra indivizilor şi grupurilor: unul afirmă că mass-media produc uniformizare culturală şi alienare ideologică datorită impunerii unor valori specifice claselor dominante şi imposibilităţii de reacţie a individului la mesajul primit; celălalt susţine că diversitatea valorilor culturale transmise prin mass-media permit fiecărei categorii de public să aleagă mesajele în funcţie de preferinţe şi valori proprii, anulându-se astfel efectul uniformizant al mesajelor vehiculate prin mijloacele de comunicare în masă. Pentru a nuanţa aceste tendinţe polare, Duprez dă exemplul unor studii empirice, care demonstrează că efectele producţiilor audio-vizuale nu exercită o constrângere atât de puternică cum cred criticii afiliaţi primei tendinţe şi nici faptul că publicul ar forma o masă omogenă, fără posibilitatea de a opune rezistenţă, atunci când mesajele care li se propun le contrazic convingerile.

În acelaşi perimetru se înscriu studiile referitoare la relaţia dintre ideologie şi noua industrie a culturii media, cât şi cele care abordează cultura de masă din punctul de vedere al economiei de piaţă. Semnificative, în acest sens, sunt contri-buţiile lui Alvin Gouldner cu privire la conflictul dintre apa-ratul cultural şi industria conştiinţei, precum şi la fenomenele de alienare resimţite de instituţiile culturale faţă de meca-nismele prin care valorile urmează să se instituie în societate. El arată că cei care îşi desfăşoară activitatea în domeniul culturii sunt dominaţi de către un cerc restrâns de cumpărători extrem de puternici. „Cumpărătorii din cadrul industriei conştiinţei, scrie Gouldner, pot stabili preţuri şi crea liste negre

politice, pot exercita o presiune economică şi ideologică permanentă celor ce muncesc în domeniul cultural şi, astfel, pot viola sensul autonomiei acestora din urmă – a integrității artistice şi ştiințifice" (2001, p. 289–290). Concluzia sa este că pătura cea mai largă a populației din societățile industrializate se află „sub influența directă sau imediată a industriei conştiinței, în timp ce aparatul cultural are contact strâns cu acest public larg" (2001, p. 291).

La rândul lor, J.J. Van Cuilenburg, O. Scholten şi G.W. Noomen propun o abordare economică a produselor „culturii media" şi utilizarea unor termeni ca: piață, cerere şi ofertă, preț, producători şi consumatori de cultură. Din punctul lor de vedere, economia de piață recunoaşte existența unor cicluri cu faze distincte şi specifice fiecărui produs cultural.

Fiecare fază a ciclului economic presupune o anumită dimensionare a ofertei, astfel că la începutul ciclului oferta se limitează la un singur sau, la cel mult, câțiva furnizori (oferta restrânsă determină prețul ridicat), pentru ca odată cu creşterea interesului pentru produsul respectiv să apară pe piață mai mulți ofertanți (creşterea ofertei determină scăderea prețului).

Conform autorilor menționați, faza de maximă dezvoltare se caracterizează prin faptul că firmele încearcă să-şi asigure poziția pe piață, recurgând la o segmentare şi diferențiere a ofertei. Oferta va fi adaptată la diferitele segmente ale pieței şi diferențiată după categoriile de consumatori. Întrucât păstrarea poziției pe piață solicită investiții permanente şi cum cererea „nu poate creşte la infinit, intervine fenomenul saturației", declan-şând alte fenomene tipice ciclului economic (1998, p. 270).

Ultimele două tendințe pe care le am în vedere se referă la abordarea pragmatică a culturii şi la ceea ce se numeşte – cultura postmodernă. Interesat de teoretizarea culturii ca „spectacol social", Jeffrey Alexander (2004) dezvoltă o serie de interpretări legate de comunicarea culturală, construirea identităților individuale şi colective, mecanismele psihologice prin care au loc procesele de receptare, identificare, proiecție şi extensie culturală, relațiile ce se instituie între „punerea în scenă a unui spectacol social" şi reprezentările colective, modalitățile de interpretare simbolică şi puterile sociale, efectele acțiunii simbolice asupra diferențierilor sociale şi culturale,

performanţele mass-media în influenţarea opiniilor sau multi-plicarea „sferelor publice" implicate în fenomenul cultural.

Din această listă, un interes aparte prezintă concepţia lui Alexander asupra tipurilor de medieri pe care le realizează puterile din societate între „punerea în scenă" şi public, res-pectiv, condiţiile istorice ale spectacolului social. Şi într-un caz şi în celălalt, autorul are ca sursă de inspiraţie influenta teorie a lui Erving Goffman cu binecunoscutul său arsenal de concepte: dramaturgie, interacţiune socială, cadru social, simboluri şi ritualuri sociale, performanţă, rol social, regiuni frontale, spaţiu personal, prezentarea sinelui sau administrarea impresiei. La fel ca în teatru, evenimentele media sunt spectacole sociale ale căror conţinuturi intră sub incidenţa următoarelor centre de putere: puterea celor care asigură producţia artistică, puterea factorilor care decid în privinţa distribuirii rolurilor şi puterea criticii de specialitate.

Schema din Fig. 1 sugerează că pentru a conecta spec-tacolul la sfera audienţei publice este necesară intervenţia celor care deţin controlul media sub aspect economic, tehnologic şi organizatoric, fără să fie excluse influenţele de natură politică sau ideologică, atât în privinţa „punerii şi scenă", cât şi referitor la distribuirea actorilor sociali ai evenimentului respectiv. Este de reţinut apoi, modalitatea de interpretare şi comentare a „spectacolului mediatic", criteriile morale şi estetice avute în vedere, notorietatea celor mandataţi ca formatori de opinie şi credibilitatea actorilor ce joacă scenariul „dramei sociale".
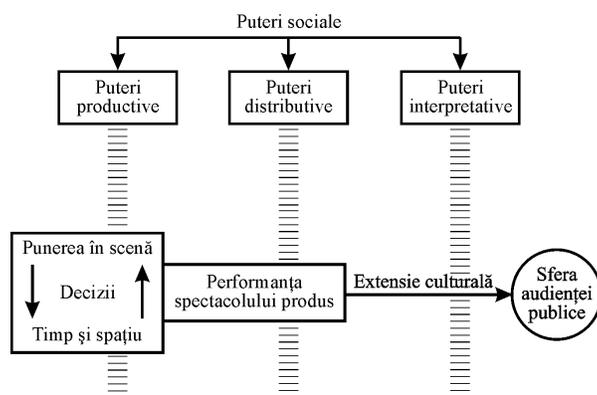
Fig. 1 Conexiunea dintre „punerea în scenă" și puterile sociale
(adaptare după Alexander, 2004, p. 557).

Cât privește publicul, problema care se pune este una
similară spectacolului de teatru. Este vorba de modul în care
spațiul dintre public și scenă este umplut cu elemente de
identificare, de măsura în care propriile trăiri și emoții sunt
compatibile cu cele de pe scenă, ca și de felul în care un spec-
tator poate pătrunde în viața de pe scenă adaptându-și trăirile la
ceea ce se întâmplă acolo. De aici, și procesele de segmentare
socială care creează nu doar interese diferite, ci și „sfere
publice multiple", ce dau naștere „unor puncte de lansare
pentru extensia culturii și pentru ținte distincte de identificare
psihologică și culturală" (2004, p. 564).

În privința condițiilor istorice și culturale ce structu-
rează un spectacol social, Alexander propune un model analitic
în care pot fi intuite următoarele elemente explicative (Fig. 2):
axa *x*, indică gradul de complexitate a structurilor sociale și
culturale de la simplu la complex; axa *y* împarte elementele ce
compun un anumit tip de spectacol, de la fuziunea totală cu
publicul (în cazul societăților nediferențiate), până la de-
fuziunea totală (posibilă mai ales în cazul societăților complexe
din punct de vedere social și cultural); poziționate ipotetic, linia
orizontală (*a*) indică acele spectacole sociale de genul
ritualurilor, care ating fuziunea maximă indiferent de gradul
complexității sociale, linia despărțitoare (*b*) indică spectacolele
– eșec sau care nu au reușit să re-fuzioneze elementele
spectacolului, tot fără a ține seama de complexitatea socială, iar

diagonala (*c*) indică nivelul de aşteptări medii în legătură cu un spectacol de succes, aşteptări ce scad pe măsură ce creşte complexitatea socială şi culturală a societăţii.

Pentru ilustrarea aspectelor legate de orientarea postmodernistă din politica culturală voi menţiona două teme sintetizate de Steven Connor în cartea *Cultura postmodernă* (1999). Prima temă aduce în discuţie latura cotidiană a fenomenului cultural şi implicaţiile acesteia în diverse sfere ale vieţii sociale. Astfel, constituirea relaţiilor de putere la nivelul colectivităţilor locale şi îndepărtarea de discursul totalizant al politicii, permit o revigorare a centrelor de interes faţă de subiecte controversate privind discriminarea culturală între rase şi sexe, politica ecologică, cele asociate drepturilor vârstnicilor sau drepturilor animalelor. „În toate aceste sfere, scrie autorul britanic, s-a demonstrat ca fiind fundamentală investigarea formelor culturale percepute ca generatoare sau purtătoare de semnificaţie, putere şi valoare. În unele dintre formele politicii postmoderne contemporane exact această eliberare a culturii şi semnificaţiei, în general, de determinismul economic oferă oportunităţi pentru forme mai largi, mai libere de autodeterminare, comparativ cu perioadele în care cultura şi reprezentarea au fost legate mult mai strâns de factorul economic" (1999, p. 313).

Nivelul de complexitate socială şi culturală

Scăzut — Ridicat — (x)

Fuziune

Spectacol de succes (ritualuri)

(a)

Elementele spectacolului

(c) Aşteptări medii pentru succes

Succes peste aşteptări

Succes sub aşteptări

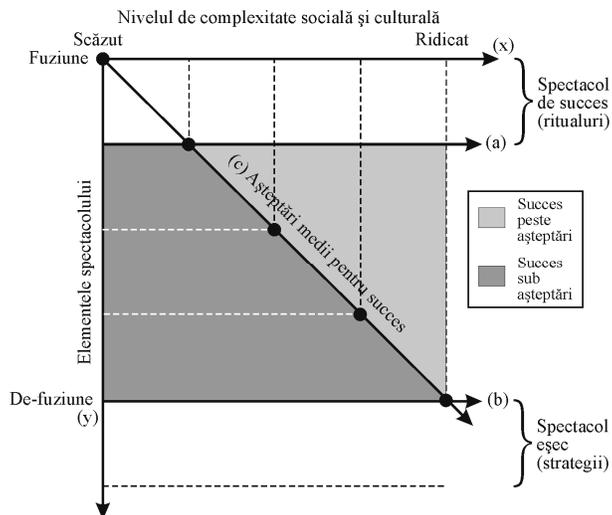De-fuziune (y)

(b)

Spectacol eşec (strategii)

Fig. 2 Structura variaţiilor ce definesc condiţiile istorice ale spectacolului social (adaptate după Alexander, 2004, p. 567).

A doua temă vizează relaţia dintre direcţiile de evoluţie ale postmodernismului şi reflectarea acestuia în componentele politicii culturale. În acest cadru, autorul insistă asupra determinărilor teoriei culturale postmoderniste privind problemele „cartografierii" sociale şi politice a spaţiului (ca reacţie la abordările acestuia prin imagistica centrului şi marginii, interiorului şi exteriorului, poziţionării şi graniţei), cât şi asupra trecerii de la epoca timpului „extensiv" (legată de deplasarea în spaţiul real), la epoca timpului „intensiv" a telecomunicaţiilor. Pe fondul extinderii tehnologiei informaţiei şi a reţelelor de comunicare ce fac posibile dezvoltarea colectivităţilor virtuale, precum şi reconsiderării unor concepţii privind diferenţele culturale sau condiţia categoriilor sociale marginale, Connor trece în revistă numeroase aspecte legate de controversata problemă a „locului" din care femeile se pot exprima, modul de reprezentare a identităţii limbajului şi a simbolurilor celor oprimaţi sau a necesităţii unor noi forme de colectivitate etică.

După propria afirmaţie, transpunerea acestor aspecte în planul politicii culturale postmoderne a declanşat o dezbatere de anvergură cu privire la asumarea propriilor istorii, poziţii şi interese, iar termeni precum: cunoaştere parţială, caracterul perspectival al cunoaşterii, valori şi identificări temporare, retorica marginalităţii, statutul de outsider, etica alterităţii, localizarea discursului sau iluzii reparatoare nu fac decât să confirme „recunoaşterea diversităţii ireductibile a opiniilor şi intereselor" (1999, p. 343).

Aş spune în încheiere că acceptarea pluralităţii de sensuri atribuite culturii pare soluţia cea mai convenabilă, deoarece aceasta ilustrează cel mai bine dinamica ideilor şi multitudinea problemelor pe care le presupune analiza filosofică şi sociologică a fenomenului cultural. În acelaşi timp, montajul discursiv la care am recurs cred că a reuşit să accentueze câteva idei cu privire la natura şi structura fenomenului cultural, dar şi să deschidă noi direcţii de dezbatere în jurul acestei teme. Şi, ca să respect spiritul discursiv al acestui articol, voi aminti câteva din temele unor posibile abordări privind cultura contemporană şi anume: consecinţele „disoluţiei" marilor teorii şi a pretenţiilor acestora de a guverna domeniul complex al activităţilor culturale; interesele care au declanşat deschiderea scenei politice faţă de diferenţele culturale şi etnice; modul în care trebuie să înţelegem relativizarea „graniţelor" dintre sferele culturii şi multiplicarea formelor de discurs cultural; „geometria variabilă" a relaţiilor de putere între instituţiile culturale şi autonomia crescândă a diferitelor forme de cultură; termenii în care se poate vorbi despre cultura administrată, despre costurile politicii culturale şi sursele de finanţare ale acestei politici; modalităţile prin care „cultura media" produce identităţi, concepţii de viaţă şi comportamente care integrează indivizii în cultura oficială.

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O CERCETARE „CRITICĂ" ASUPRA ADOLESCENȚEI ȘI A STEREOTIPIILOR

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Abstract: În cadrul unei cercetări extinse pe doi ani am aplicat, împreună cu un colectiv de cercetare de la Universitatea „Aurel Vlaicu" Arad, un chestionar referitor la valorile democratice ale tinerilor. Având în vedere tema lucrării mele de doctorat am inclus și itemi referitori la „toleranță/ stereotipii/ respect pentru valorile altor culturi". Acesta a fost aplicat tinerilor din clasele a XI-a din zece licee arădene, precum și studenților din anul I din unitatea de învățământ superior amintită. Datele au fost prelucrate obținându-se informațiile pe care le voi prezenta.

Keywords: democratic values, stereotypy, prejudices, democracy, liberty.

Țin să amintesc că în acest an școlar/universitar s-a aplicat din nou chestionarul urmând a realiza coroborarea datelor și compararea lor cu cele prezentate aici. De asemenea, împreună cu alți doi membrii ai echipei de cercetare(psiholog Bălaș-Timar Dana și sociolog Indricău Mihaela) am aplicat și metoda focus-grupului vizând valorile democratice, dar și problema relațiilor culturale din perspectiva toleranței și a prejudecăților.

În cele ce urmează voi face o prezentare a noțiunii de stereotipie care circumscrie analiza antropologică realizată de mine pe baza unui focus group realizat în cadrul cercetării amintite. De asemenea, am considerat de cuviință și creionarea probelemelor care pot apărea în perioada adolescenței în ceea ce privește relaționarea cu sine și cu ceilalți a adolescentului.

Noțiunea de stereotipie e necesar a fi clar definită fiind un concept cheie în cazul analizării relațiilor interculturale. Se consideră ca ele evoluează în timp și au diverse funcții în elaborarea reprezentărilor ceea ce conduce înspre importanța sublinierii laturii lor ideologice. Astfel, stereotipurile culturale structurează reprezentările colective și imaginarul popular, influențând modul de cunoaștere individuală a alterității

culturale. Tocmai de aceea apare dificultatea elaborării unei definiţii operaţionale.

În deceniul şase al secolului XX, cercetările asupra stereotipurilor au reprezentat un punct major al psihologiei sociale cognitive. Drept urmare s-au dezvoltat o serie de teorii din perspectivă cognitivistă. Printre acestea se enumeră următoarele:

➢ Teoria coerenţei cognitive şi a atribuirii (Festinger, Kelley, Miller)

➢ Teoriile „locus of control"- ului (Schneider&Parsons)

➢ Teoria formării opiniilor despre o persoană, pe linia psihologiei gestaltiste (Asch, Hastie&Kumar)- dacă personalitatea unui individ deviază în raport cu normele general admise, se reţin elemente diferenţiatoare

➢ Cercetările lui Katz şi Braly care îşi găsesc aplicaţii în domeniul interculturalităţii- ei reprezintă concepţia clasică prin care stereotipul este definit ca un mijloc de expresie şi de devalorizare a alterităţii etnice şi culturale prin atribuirea unor trăsături generale defavorizatoare

➢ Teoria cognitivistă care afirmă că individul are posibilitatea de a adapta stereotipurile diverselor situaţii. Accesul la informaţie poate induce schimbarea stereotipurilor. Astefl Babad arăta că stereotipul este o generalizare excesivă întotdeauna puţin distorsionată care are un sâmbure de adevăr

Cum am mai amintit stereotipurile sunt adesea prezentate ca un suport în elaborarea reprezentărilor, suport care evoluează pe măsură ce individul este „expus" unui grup. Acestea funcţionează ca repere. Individul nu are control asupra numeroaselor variabile care caracterizează mediul în care el trăieşte, astfel încearcă să creeze constructe care îi diminueaz incertitudinea pentru a putea anticipa evenimentele (Kelly). Această perspectivă face ca stereotipul să fie privit ca un construct cognitiv funcţional.

Dar stereotipurile nu se formează numai pe baza experienţei directe a individului cu grupul vizat. Omul este influenţat de mediul cultural căruia îi aparţine, de atitudinile şi comportamentele vehiculate de grupul său.

De asemenea este importantă relaţia între etnocentrism şi stereotipii căci ipoteza implicită e că stereotipiile

majoritarilor sunt realiste şi pozitive(Seiter). Trebuie menţionat că de-a lungul timpului teoriile ştiinţifice au fost elaborate mai ales de reprezentanţi ai grupurilor majoritare. „În acest fel apare riscul care consistă în a crede că prezenţa valorilor burgheze, ale albilor este o absenţă a stereotipurilor şi permite elaborarea unor reprezentări realiste." În acelaşi timp, Stening&Everett au subliniat lipsa congruenţei între auto-stereotipii şi hetero-stereotipii în cadrul aceleiaşi culturi. Iar auto-stereotipiile pozitive sunt mult mai puternice în situaţii conflictuale interetnice.

Pe de altă parte, se pune problema perioadei adolescenţei, care este caracterizată prin manifestarea extremelor şi încercarea de definire a sinelui. În acelaşi timp se pune problema construirii identităţii, printre care a celei etnice şi a celei culturale. Însă la această vârstă individul operează cu categorii abstracte, totale, cu valori care nu cunosc nuanţări. Pe de altă parte, insul doreşte să corespundă cerinţelor mediului atunci când e nevoie să îşi întreţină imaginea de sine pozitivă. Din acest motiv afirmaţiile subiecţilor participanţi la focus grupul organizat în cadrul acestui grant trebuie studiate urmărindu-se ceea ce declară ei, dar şi ceea ce reiese din analiza discursului. Astfel se observă,spre exemplu, că la nivel declarativ ei se pronunţă în favoarea ideii de toleraranţă, însă în urma analizării a „cum spun ceea ce spun" rezultă că fie nu sunt stăpâni pe noţiunea de toleranţă, fie sunt intoleranţi. Iar această contradicţie străbate întregul interviu al celor două grupuri avute în vedere.

Valorile democratice pe care ei le apreciază: „egalitate, libertate – de exprimare, de alegere- devotament, dreptul la decizie fără a-i influenţa pe alţii" ajung să fie în contradicţie cu valorile democratice pe care ei le adoptă, de exemplu „ dreptul de   a-ţi impune propria părere". Pentru ei verbul „ a impune" nu echivalează cu anularea dreptului celuilalt şi în acest fel imaginea lor de sine pozitivă nu este perturbată. În acest fel fiecare item al interviului este luat separat de către ei fără a realiza o conexiune între aceştia.

Aceeaşi situaţie este înregistrată şi în cazul problemei toleranţei şi intoleranţei, a prejudecăţilor. Astfel ei afirmă că e importantă pentru ei toleranţa etnică, spre exemplu, dar îi

resping pe rromi pentru că îi privesc ca şi grup pe baza stereotipiilor existente în comunitatea în care trăiesc, fără a face apel la experienţa proprie. O altă situaţie care apare e aceea în care ei îi resping pe unguri, însă dând exemple din experienţa personală acestea apar ca pretexte care să le susţină atitudinea formată sub influenţă externă sau trecând sub tăcere adevăratul motiv: „ nu-mi plac ungurii că vorbesc tare în tramvai", fără a aminti ce părere are despre ceilalţi care au aceeaşi atitudine în mijloacele de transport în comun şi care aparţin altei minorităţi, ex. rromi (cei care pot fi recunoscuţi după portul lor specific şi folosirea limbii romali).

Pendularea între toleranţă şi intoleranţă nu este sesizată nici la nivel personal. Subiectul afirmă că suferă din cauza intoleranţei „ vorbesc altfel, sunt moldoveancă şi unii mă privesc cu reţinere" dar se dovedeşte la rândul lui intolerant: „ nici în Biblie nu sunt acceptaţi homosexualii", deşi afirmă că militează pentru toleranţă şi eliminarea prejudecăţilor. Aşadar adoptarea unei atitudini tolerante este anulată de cantonarea în prejudecăţi.

Ceea ce am amintit în legătură cu întărirea imaginii de sine apare atunci când ei vin cu răspunsuri prefabricate, învăţate dar pe care în fapt nu le acceptă. Se afirmă în legătură cu toleranţa faţă de bătrâni: „ cine nu are bătrâni să îşi cumpere", pentru a continua cu declaraţii care desfiinţează acest proverb: „ pe vremuri bătrânii erau mai înţelepţi, acum sunt mai schizofrenici". În acest fel reduc disonanţa cognitivă încercând să arate că ei cred aceste „prefabricate", dar ele nu mai sunt actuale. În acest fel vor să arate în faţa celorlaţi toleranţă, dar consideră că toleranţa lor se poate manifesta dacă grupul vizat dispare: „ bătrânii să se retragă, să ne lase în pace".

Problema culturii proprii este şi mai puternică aflată sub semnul paradoxului şi al contrazicerilor. Subiecţii afirmă că este important să îţi respecţi limba maternă, dar apoi resping această idee spunând că în U.E. ar trebui să se vorbească numai limba engleză. Dar devin nesiguri când se gândesc la locuitorii mediului rural, neştiind cum să interpreteze situaţia lor în cazul „ europenizării". De asemenea ei sunt de acord că stilul de viaţă se împrumută, trebuie să învăţăm unii de la alţii – mă

refer la etnii, naționalități-dar resping vehement un stil de viață care nu le convine. Pe acesta ajung să nici nu îl tolereze în preajmă: „ Sigur nu o să vină arabii la noi cu batic pe cap...aici vorbim de maghiari, italieni, europeni”.

În final, se pune problema clarificării acestor noțiuni la nivelul subiecților. Pot apărea dificultăți căci s-ar putea ca imaginea de sine pozitivă să aibă de suferit iar atunci ei vor respinge orice demers de acest fel. Pe de altă parte, apare întrebarea referitoare la persistența acestei atitudini de respingere, la nivel declarativ sau profund, a specificului identității etnice și culturale. Se poate ca o dată cu acumularea unei mai bogate experiențe de viață atitudinile să se nuanțeze sau să se modifice radical fără a impieta asupra imaginii de sine.

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REFERENTIAL AND CONDENSATION SYMBOLS

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Abstract: What is important in recognizing the symbolic forms specific to the political process is the distinction between policy seen as a sport performance (M. Edelman, 1999) and the political activity used by organized groups to get concrete benefits (influence and pressure groups). The latest results of many - insided scientific research have shown the key function of inaccessibility as influence on symbolic meanings.

Keywords: political process, groups, inaccessibility, symbolic meanings.

Each symbol tends to present something different from what it suggests, evoking an attitude too, a series of impressions, a type of events associated in time and space , by logic or imagination with the symbol.

The researchers who study the problem of symbols distinguish them fundamentally and group hem in two different categories.

a) The referential symbols are an economical way of referring to he objective elements of objects and situations, but elements identified in the same way by different people. They present the objective realistic side of a context, being based on empiric details and describing that reality. The usefulness of these types of symbols is justified as they support the logical pragmatic approach of a certain situation and its manipulation. Some examples of referential symbols are the accidents of work in industry, the figures in contracts that become political referential symbols for mass- media, although there is the danger for them to become condensation symbols.

b) The condensation symbols evoke the emotions associate to a situation. They condense in situation, sign or act, symbol, patriotic pride , anxiety , distress, memories of a glorious past or of a state of humility, promises of prosperity or a mixture of all of them (Ed. Sapir, 1934). It is important to know that where the condensation symbols appear, there is no

contact with the surrounding objective reality, as they describe only the universe and the emotional, affective impact.

The problem in the case of condensation symbols, because of the discrepancy between tem and the objective reality, is that there is no control over fantasies and the conceiving of those that can' t test their convictions in an objective way, that a politician represents the symbol of reason, intelligence and virtue in public life. They can' t be disputed, because they are correlated with emotions and are overloaded with affectivity. We can only say that those who promote symbols may or may not be right in supporting those nominees. The difficulty lies in the fact that there isn't the possibility of continuously confronting their convictions with reality (a politician who is considered a model of virtue by the public is hard to be proved unworthy, guilty of an evil past or obscure deeds that could affect his political image).

The referential and condensation symbol, according to M. Edelman (1999), can not be completely absent from any example. What is relevant is the difference between the two types of symbols and their functioning in the social area, together with their meanings.

Actually, in political analysis, each disputed or important public political act is meant to serve partially, in the end, as a condensation symbol. It evokes answers of agreement or revolt from the large masses of people, in accordance with what they symbolize: a threat or an emergency. Because the significance of an act partially depend at all on its objective consequences that the public at large can't know (as mass- media manipulation works)its meaning can result only in its psychological necessity and can be know only from the reaction of the masses of people.

Symbols and mass-media

The so- called "news" referring to political acts, broadcast by TV news or published in other forms of media, and seen by the public at large as a soap opera (with the private history of the people involved , a real CV with assumptions and behavior predictions concerning the actors involved in the soap

opera, conflict and dilemma etc.) represents the main source for such political symbolic representations. The contain everything: the ubiquitous state, detachment, crises and relaxation.

That's the political scenery. The detail or its absence, more exactly its blur (hyperbole is characteristic to soap operas and the present – day political soap operas) would show uncertainly and would lead to the weakening of the symbolic meanings we find them. The fact that the written mass- media and television present exaggerated news so that the politic spectators have vague knowledge about disrupt able public affairs or not is not a historic or cultural accident.

If political activities have in view the promotion of a social adjustment and they signify what our inner problems impose to signify, then the mass-media recipe is that they should e dramatic in form and lacking in realistic details (the present – day socio-political soap opera).

Those, editors and the owners of broadcast licenses tell the truth – true only when they find excuses for the poor quality of their journalistic performances, holding the idea that they give the audience what they want t. There are no 'professional men' that could change the real political décor in a political décor seen as a symbol. This is the transition that should be followed by the public communicators in presenting the political publicity. The audience want symbols not news.

Symbols of encouragement. Symbolic acts

The rule that outrages and abuses the citizens (according to J.L. Fouchet, M. Edelman, D. Quessada) or compels the citizens to change their or on will needs symbols of encouragement. That's why the more or less totalitarian states involve the people in debates about public affairs (in order to make their decisions clear and give the citizens the illusion that they take part in making decisions in public affairs). Public meetings, public debates, political speeches and in professional or age groups etc., different forms of age or professional or organizations could be important elements in these dictatorships. An example of such a model of encouragement is

that of the Chinese communists who used to pass criticism upon themselves in public, during political debates, arousing repulsion among democrats. This model exhausts human energy in the process of creating emotional link towards abstract political symbols and leads them to an individual creative work of reshaping creatively the environment (Thorsten Veblen called it the individual's "handicraft instinct ", a modeling activity not necessarily realistic but an organic one). Such a work of using individual energy and also of exhausting energies can bring satisfaction in the work done within this model, a work of planned manipulation of the social environment. The result is a person resistant to manipulation because of his individual creative work.

It would be unfair not to mention the encouragement existing in democracies where the government representatives involve themselves in organizing debates on political activities (political soap opera) and where this encouragement has the same effect of annihilating criticism coming from the audience. These public debates can bring satisfaction, vague threats , the illusion of victory or defeat, both in electoral campaigns and political disputes (in government, parliament or institutional relationships) but they also create the illusion of participating in the political life and especially in making political decisions or issuing a normative document. A life, created on the becomes by substitution, the pleasure of remodeling creatively, imaginatively and not necessarily objectively the concrete environment.

Naturally, there are exceptions too. It is the case of the professional politician who use policy to get new workplaces for the unemployed and votes, of the businessman who uses it to get new rewarding contracts of the group for local reform that want to create new schools playgrounds for children, better sewerage systems etc.

This is a concrete , active, instrumental policy. However, only few individuals use policy as an instrument for such a goal. For the great majority of individuals it is just a parade of abstractions, no matter who the government representatives are. Ulf Himmeristrand 's experiments (*Social Pressures , Attitudes and Democratic Process , 1960*) that

assert the above mentioned ideas, confirm that "often a non-verbal activity has the quality of bringing the actor into a direct contact with things, a quality that can't be found in a verbal activity. The direct confrontation with the things frequently talked about gives the actor the possibility to benefit from the feed- back of some non anticipated information concerning the respective things".

Himmeristrand asserts that 'probability of a creative or constructive transformation ' increases when human interactions proportionally imply less word exchanges and more non- verbal interactions. Himmeristrand classifies some acts as being symbolic acts, defined as "acts that have as exclusive object symbols, neglecting in a great degree the objective or conceptual references of these symbols". This theory is believable and applicable to the political behavior analyzed above, because symbolic acts "involve different ways of approaching political behavior, they are situated close to it, enter or remain within it, a place where verbal statements are usually made…They can also represent the maximum adherence to certain statements or they can be aggressive answers by which their modification is attempted". (Himmeristrand, 1960). Kornshauser has also come to the same conclusion, although without having Himmeristrand's scientific accuracy, because symbols have a major importance for the appearance of masses of people that can be easily manipulated by those on the top social scale (W . Kornhauser, The Politic of Mass Society). This implies an obsessive attachment to political symbols, characteristic to lots of present day political debates.

A psychological detachment from the symbols that evoke perceptions and emotions usually increases their power rather than reduces it. Few principles are stronger involved in policy, maybe in rule too, that these ones.

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THE FOOTSTEPS OF OVID

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Abstract: It was the year 8 AD when Romania received its' most famous visitor, even if he was a bit hesitant to step upon the shores of the Black Sea. This was the year that the poet Publius Ovidius Naso, better known as Ovid, was banished by the Emperor Augustus to the ancient city of Tomis, where the main port of Constanța now sits. To this day, the exact reason for Ovid's banishment remains a bit of a mystery and matter of scholarly debate, but his poetry from this period provides modern readers with insight in to the attitudes of both ancient Romans living in exile and the human condition out of its' natural element.

Keywords: human condition, ancient living style, particular culture, cultural differences.

By his own admission he was guilty of *carmen et error* – a poem and a mistake. There is no doubt that the *carmen* he refers to is the *Ars Amatoria*, a book that suggests, among other provocative things, the best ways to meet women of suspect character. The *error* is the mystery, never mentioned directly by Ovid or any other ancient source. There are a number of theories put forth by modern scholars, nearly all revolving around Augustus' licentious daughter – Julia. One of the most popular, and one which Ovid makes subtle references to himself, is that he witnessed or presided over an illegal marriage between Julia and her lover, attempting to make Julia's unborn child a legitimate heir to the Emperorship.

If this theory is indeed true, it would have been damning to Ovid. This "marriage" would have threatened not only the good name of Augustus, but upset the delicate balance of power that was designed to shift to his nephew, Tiberius, upon his death. The rumors of a scandal in the Emperor's house were threatening to undermine his authority and quick action against the crime needed to be taken. Ovid and Julia, among others, were taken before the Emperor to determine their fate.

Ovid states bluntly that he was guilty but the severity of his punishment was a matter of being in the wrong place at the wrong time. In fact, the *Ars Amatoria* should have had little bearing on the case, being published some eight years earlier. It's only point of reference was as evidence of Ovid's questionable character and disloyalty to Augustus' program of moral reform. It was an attempt to slander a prominent figure, one that could be made an example of, to show that no man, be he common or elite, was above the Emperor.

It was the fact that he was an elite, however, that saved his life. The rich and powerful were not put to death in ancient Rome; that was a fate reserved for the poor or Christian. So Ovid was sent in to exile, never able to return to his city eternal, Rome. In a very serious way, this was a fate worse than death for elites such as Ovid who described the prospect of exile as torture and an illness that is beyond the skill of a doctor to cure. In 8 AD Rome was the center of a world that was much smaller than it is today, his city was a vibrant light that shined out of the darkness of the barbaric lands of Gaul, Germania, and Dacia.

Ovid himself asks "Where's better than Rome?", and it is this question that precisely makes exile and Tomis so unappealing for the ultra-cosmopolitan poet. After being flung from "Rome that sees the world from her seven hills, Rome the place of Empire and the gods" where could he go? In Ovid's mind, nowhere except for "the furthest lands, the ends of the world." In Tomis, he would be void of the fashionable lifestyle he was accustomed to; without libraries to research his works, without a refined, Latin audience to present his poems, without an appreciative public to receive his fame.

Indeed, Ovid felt that exile was such a horrible fate that he forbade his wife from accompanying him, not wishing to push his punishment on her. In his exile poems, he draws comparisons between himself and his wife to Pirithous and Theseus, Pylades and Orestes, and Euryalus and Nisus. All were famous lovers or partners who proved their loyalty in the face of adversity or by enduring after the death of other half. Ovid sees his wife as being brave and loyal to him because he is, in all but deed, dead to the world. It seems a strange

concept in our modern world – which seems to be shrinking in size nearly everyday thanks to television and the internet – but in 8 AD, Rome was Ovid's entire world and he could never return.

So it was, and after Augustus' made his judgment it was final. Ovid had to immediately make preparations to sail to Tomis, where he spent 10 years and the rest of his life on the coast of the Black Sea. He did not stop writing though, and his two extant works from that period – *Tristia* and *Epistulae ex Ponto* – give great insight in to his attitudes and emotions of not only his exile but the city of Tomis and the ancient Dacians.

Tristia, or "Sorrows", generally is a negative poem, such as the title suggests. Full of lamentations and praises for Caesar, it reads as a plea for Augustus to end Ovid's exile and bring him back to Rome. He especially complains about the weather of the area, saying that "location makes exile milder: there's no sadder land than this beneath either pole." The constant wars were another matter that was especially maddening for Ovid, who found such violence so close to home barbaric and thoroughly 'un-Roman.'

Although Ovid wrote all of these disparaging items, and more, it must be kept within a certain context. Firstly, Ovid is writing this as a man ripped from Rome; he is still constantly comparing Tomis to his native city in areas where Tomis could not possibly come out ahead. Although the Empire was constantly at war, Rome was a relatively peaceful city, only seeing its' walls assaulted a handful on times by the Augustan Era. Tomis, on the other hand, was a border garrison between the ancient Dacians and Sarmatianas and subject to near constant attack. Further, trying to compare the cities – Rome and Tomis – is an impossible battle, especially in the eyes of Ovid. It is a gap that, realistically, still remains today; while Constanta is an important city for both economic and cultural aspects in Romania, it does not have the majestic elegance that the ancient ruins at Rome inspire.

It is worth noting that the *Tristia* was written as a plea for liberation by Ovid to Augustus. The greater Ovid painted his suffering, the greater the chance of appealing to the

Emperor's sense of clemency. His private letters, however, give a less biased, more accurate portrayal of his feelings. *Epistulae ex Ponto* – "Letters from the Black Sea" reveals privately that while Ovid never stopped pining for his city nor lamenting the harsh winters (and who can blame him for that?), he praises the residents of the city, the native Dacians. Ovid writes that "The Paeligni, my own race, and Sulmo my native place, could not have been more sympathetic to my troubles" and continues with "as the island of Delos was dear to Latona, offering her the only place of safety in her wanderings, so Tomis is dear to me, and remains true and hospitable to one who's exiled from his native land." In time, he even began composing poetry in the native language of the Dacians.

It is this Ovid, the Ovid praising the Dacian people that I identify with. I personally am in a situation very similar to Ovid's; in a very real way I am an exile in Romania, albeit self-imposed. As a Peace Corps Volunteer, I am a United States citizen who elected to spend time abroad in order to provide skilled resources and develop countries in need. Like Ovid, I am stationed in Romania; Ovid would be envious though, as I am only scheduled for two years, working as a Professor of English at Colegiul National Moise Nicoara. Beyond this, however, there exist fundamental differences between the poet and myself.

The crux of the situation rests on the manner in which each of us arrived in Romania because it has bearing on the whole attitude of the individual. Ovid was ripped from his home, he did not want to leave Rome and, in fact, for him there was no good reason to leave. I, on the other hand, volunteered to taken from my home, friends, family, and pretty much everything I had ever known. In short, I want to be in Romania. This difference has a crucial impact on how we perceive the new culture in which we are living.

Ovid felt that he lived in the greatest society there ever was, there was no need for him to assimilate to Dacian culture, for if he did he would actually be lessening his character. So, even though Ovid praised certain aspects, he never truly accepted Dacian society as a whole. His pride could never allow placing another culture on equal footing with Rome.

Ovid merely accepted the fact that he was in another society that would always be inferior to his own knowing that there was nothing he could learn from his adopted culture.

Perhaps this is the greatest lesson that Ovid can teach, one that he himself would disagree with the most. Ovid never learned anything from Dacian society, never integrated with the people of his adopted homeland, because he prejudged their society from the start. Even before he had left Italy Ovid had his opinions' about Tomis and the Dacians full formed; he was prepared only to view the Dacian culture through the lens of Roman society instead of letting it stand alone on its' own merits. And so, when Ovid limited himself to his particular culture, when he granted Rome unquestioned superiority over all things Dacian, he isolated himself from Tomis becoming only able to relate to the Latin culture in a place where the Latin culture existed only with him.

Compared with Ovid, I believe it would be far easier for me to withdraw into my American culture than Ovid withdrawing in to Rome's. American music, fashion, and media as well as the English language permeate Romania society. What is to gain from isolation though? Ovid ended up as a bitter old man, scribbling letters about his misery to his friends in Rome in an attempt to feel connected with a society he could never rejoin. I do not wish to end up become a sort of high tech Ovid; quietly typing blogs in my room to my friends back home in an attempt to combat the ever increasing homesickness.

The goal then is to become a sort of reverse-Ovid, to remain open to the adopted culture and thus be more easily able to find a place within it, a place which Ovid never sought nor found. I will never truly do away with American society within me; it would be impossible and irresponsible to do. Instead, I need to keep an open mind to the new culture surrounding me and do my best to understand it. That way, I will be able to take the best parts of both and make something new, something better than I had before.

These are the lessons that Ovid has taught me, his suffering allows me to lead a better life than he did as a stranger in a strange land. Ovid's exile poetry shows that he

closed his mind but it forces me to open my own. Instead of scorning the cultural differences with indignation and superiority as Ovid, I will learn to appreciate the fact that they are different. It is not, and will not, be easy for me because I am adjusting to not only a new environment and language but a wholly new set of cultural values. I, however, have a luxury that Ovid never did: I can simply leave, tell my administration that I have had enough. It would be the easiest road in the face of the most difficult situation, but the least meaningful. Instead, rather than quitting, I am learning to find support from new sources, everyone and everything has become a source of inspiration to keep me going and, ironically some of the best advice I have received has come from Ovid himself who stated, "Please hold to what you've started, don't desert the ship at sea, defend me and your decision in one."

THE APPLICATION OF THE SCHUMPETERIAN PERSPECTIVE CONCERNING THE INVASION OF IRAQ

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Abstract: In Joseph Schumpeters book, Capitalism, Socialism, and Democracy, he outlines a process that capitalism undergoes called Creative Destruction. The concept of Creative Destruction is how a capitalist system regenerates the same accumulation functions by destroying the old methods of capital creation. In this report, I applied this process to explain the conditions that justified the United States government actions to undertake a military campaign in the Middle East with the intent on conscripting more areas into the capitalist program for development.

Keywords: Creative Destruction, capital creation, development, capitalist system.

Introduction

The current administration's policy regarding the situation in Iraq is one that is symptomatic of larger issues regarding the capitalist economic development project to other sectors of the globe by way of force, if necessary, and in some cases, creating situations that will justify the removal of one administration for the purpose of replacing it with one that is favorable to expansionist policies. As in the case of Iraq, the Bush administration intentionally made the case for the removal of a dictatorship under the guise of spreading world peace by removing a dictator that sought and developed weapons of untold destruction and aggressing on another nation that was virtually inept at defending itself against the onslaught of a superior military machine that was capable of ending the confrontation within a 3-day time frame.

Unfortunately for Saddam's administration, they became the unlucky recipients of capitalist policies that are designed to spread the capitalist development strategy to all corners of the globe under the auspices of freedom and

security. The situation that I have just described is what can be described as capitalism's way of spreading and transforming other economies to one that is beneficial to the creation and the continued circulation of capital. But in the wake of the capitalist program for development, what institutions have been created, as well as destroyed, as a result of the perpetual seeking out and expanding the capitalist development program? This question can be answered using what Schumpeter calls creative destruction.

The process of creative destruction is where the capitalist framework for development destroys outdated methods of capital circulation by destroying archaic institutions and laying the groundwork for new production processes. In the case of Iraq, for example, the old method of extracting a natural resource to fuel America' dependence on foreign oil was destroyed in the sense that the natural economic process of supply and demand was subverted for the purpose of creating a viable avenue to continue to supply America's needs.

The solution to the crises was to create conditions that were necessary to use the military machine to destroy the economic process with one that will allow for multi-national corporations based primarily in the United States, Great Britain, and Japan to occupy the Iraq oil reserves for the purpose of gaining control over the world's supply of oil, as well as continuing the circulation of capital by allowing the profits to fall directly in the laps of the corporations with the overall plan being to control the world's supply of a vital economic resource.

A point of interest that should be taken note in describing this situation is how the previously mentioned countries also have seats on the United Nations Security Council. This is the same council that can authorize military action against another country. I will not go into greater detail about this issue other than to note the relationship between multi-national corporations and government leaders who can sanction economic expansion with the use of force. In the case of the Iraq invasion, the end result will be increased economic power for the United States, Great Britain, and Japan to dictate to the rest of the world, through the use of its multi-national

corporations, what the price of a vital resource will be on the international market place by controlling a definite supply. The institutions that will govern this action and make it a legitimate process, of course, are already in place. Institutions such as the International Monetary Fund will sanction this monopolistic program by insuring that any resistance to the system will be swiftly dealt with by labeling any resistance as terrorist and creating charges that will justify the use of military force.

The question in this research project that I am about to undertake will answer various questions, such as how the process of creative destruction will lend itself to ever increasing rates of capitalist accumulation that will only benefit the established global economic interest that are primarily controlled by multi-national corporations that reside in the United States, Great Britain, and Japan, with the explicit purpose of benefiting the owners of the corporations.

The justifiable use of military force in the pursuit of such ends, and the incorporation of foreign economies under the capitalist program, is just a few of many examples as to the extremes that these countries are willing to use to expand their interest throughout the globe.

For the purpose of this research paper, I will incorporate the work of Schumpeter and his most influential treatise entitled: "Capitalism, Socialism, and Democracy" in explaining how this process ties in with the survival of capitalism and whether or not the capitalist program can maintain itself in the face of ever diminishing opportunities for investment.

Imperialistic Tendencies of Nation-States:

To open my discussion about the fiasco that has come to define our current administrations decision to invade Iraq, let us first discuss the imperialist nature of countries that have come to dominate the global order. From the time of the Roman Empire, every nation that has had hegemonic influence over the global and economic order has sought to expand in ways that will enrich the established regime. The methods of

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expansion are often done through the legitimate use of military force, or through such means as accusations that another state is violating the economic security of another. The creation of accusations that eventually provide the basis for an invasion is used to justify military force. In the case of the Iraq invasion, accusations that resulted in the justification for military intervention actually aided in spreading the influence of a dominate nation against a country that was not in a position to resist any outside aggressiveness. The Iraq regime's ability to resist outside aggression was primarily due to the international sanctions that were imposed by the National Security Council, which the United States has a seat. The United States viewed the weakness of the Iraqi government as a means to an economic end that would result, not only in expanding economic interest, but also in expanding the influence of the United States by providing it with a presence in the Middle Eastern part of the globe. Schumpeter has come to define the expansion of the state by force as one that he has termed as *plus ultra*, or the expanded use of violence for the sake of domination to pursue a definite end. In the case of Iraq, the end has been achieved by capturing a major oil reserve that can be used for other purposes, namely to dictate the price of oil on the global market place by controlling a definite source of supply. How can the term *plus ultra* be used to define the imperialistic nature of nation-states? The answer is as obvious as the underlying reasons for the Iraqi invasion was guided more by economic reasons than by a secret weapons program. Imperialism factors into the situation when state expansion without a defined limit to its violence can be used as an instrument toward an economic end. Thus, Schumpeter defines Imperialism as the *object-less disposition of a state to expansion by force without assigned limits.* Schumpeter begins to trace state expansion throughout history by explaining humanities instinctive nature to violence.

He begins to explain the violent tendencies of nations by stating that humanity is inclined to war and conquest for no definite reason but for the purpose of conquest. One of the major side effects of this conquest, however, is the continued expansion and control of other nations either directly or

indirectly. The direct way is to establish governments that are favorable to the interest of the conquering force. Once again, Iraq can provide a perfect example of this tendency by how the current administration has managed to establish a puppet regime that is favorable to the interest of global capital under the guise of freedom and democracy by allowing the inclusion of foreign owned business to extract the natural resource in that country and redistribute them for profit on the global market place. The Halliburton Corporation, who use to be managed by our current Vice-President, is just one example of this effect. These established regimes, however, only last as long as the current administration will allow. This is evident by a recent New York Times article dated March 29, 2006, in which our current President called for the resignation of the current Prime Minister who was elected through the national voting process. So his resignation should come as no surprise. The question then becomes, if establishing a democratic government was the reason for the invasion, how can a foreign power instruct another country on how to conduct its internal affairs? Is this situation not a violation of this countries sovereignty and the democratic principle of national elections? The contradiction in this situation is only lending itself to how the dominant power can dictate to the governments of other nations without regard to its sovereignty or the democratic process of free and untainted elections.

Another area that is important in describing the imperialist tendencies of nations is how they have a functional need for war and that the reason for the use of its military capabilities lies within the situation that has been created by the dominate power. The situation that resulted in the invasion of Iraqi was due to their apparent suppression of the rights of the Sunni Muslims and the unwillingness to subject themselves to inspections that were supposed to result in the confirmation of an illegal weapons program. When the weapons were not discovered, the superficial reason for the violence shifted multiple times so that the justification for military force could be legitimized. For example, the situation that called for the use of military force in Iraq shifted from a weapons program to

one that would suit the justification for the invasion as a way to preserve national security.

Other areas of interest that need to be addressed in relation to the imperialistic nature of nation-states are how supporting groups benefit from the use of force that has no desired limit, nor a desired end. Schumpeter states that groups who stand to benefit either economically or socially by imposing what is termed as "martial policy" on another nation state intentionally alter the perception of its own citizens by way of political propaganda or psychological motivation. In the case of Iraq, the current administration used the images of September 11, 2001 as a psychological motivator for its people to rally behind a cause that did not have a clear reason to use the force that was applied towards another nation. The political propaganda came in form of stating that Saddam Hussein had the capabilities to become a threat to our national security by developing weapons of untold destruction. However, after the invasion, the reason for the use of force could not be justified by material evidence. Therefore, I question who really is the biggest threat to world peace and security if the dominate global power can use force without restraint? All that can really be said about this particular situation is that multi-national corporations, especially U. S. Corporations, have benefited handsomely from the Iraq invasion by using the situation to raise the price of a precious resource throughout the world and report profits that range in the billions of dollars per quarter. Exxon Mobil is just one example when their first quarter profits of 2005 were estimated at 82.5 billion dollars (Washington Post 2005).

The Process of Creative Destruction and the Monopolization of Markets

Now that the Imperialistic nature of dominant global powers have been exposed, I need to turn my attention to the Schumpeterian perspective of what is termed as creative destruction and how this process can actually lead to the monopolization of international markets once a nation-state has secured, by means of force, if necessary, another resource that

can be extracted from a foreign entity and commodified and sold on the global market-place for the purpose of continuing the global circulation of capital.

The imperialistic nature of nations will allow for the perpetual expansion of markets by first, gaining control over the countries government by establishing a puppet-regime, and then, using the policies of that government to direct the workings of its economy to suit the interest of global capital accumulation. This process, of course, is done under the guise of spreading freedom and democracy. Before expansion can occur, however, there has to be internal logic into the workings of the foundations of the capitalist development program that will allow for fabricated equilibrium to occur in such a way as to guarantee the self-regulation of supply and demand. But from a sociological standpoint, this belief in a self-regulating market is a myth. What conservatives believe is that the market can maintain itself by what Samir Amin calls "optimal equilibrium," in which the market will regulate and balance itself without outside interference. The "invisible hand" myth does not factor in the competing forces within society that can disrupt the internal logic of a free market. The competing forces are the various economic classes in society that are effected by the workings of the market in ways that will allow the market to dictate the social conditions in society by creating an atmosphere that is based on class domination. This domination has the resulting effect of blending the social, political, and economic reality of everyday life that will govern relations between individuals, not in terms of personal relations, but in terms of economic relations determining the social conditions in society. The process of creative destruction will feed into the capitalist ideology in ways that will continue global expansionism.

The process of creative destruction blending with capitalist ideology rests with the fact that capitalist systems must undergo changes within the production process to conform to the changing social and political makeup of a particular society. As Schumpeter notes, the change can come in the form of wars or revolutions. Either situation will necessitate the changing character of the production process.

So how does capitalism account for the changes in the political make-up of a particular society so that it may continue to accumulate and encompass all areas of social and political relations? The process of accumulation can continue by seeking out and destroying other markets so that it may have another outlet to consume and commodify the resources that can be sold on a global market place. The destruction that occurs as result of the penetration of new markets will allow for the reorganization of those markets that were previously creating products with outdated material and transforming that particular market into one that is driven by industry that is supported by the building of factors to mass produce more products. So as one can note, the old processes of production are destroyed in favor of new processes. This expansion is the essential nature of capitalism, because without expansion and consumption, the capitalist system will cease to exist. There are other ill-side effects associated with the expansion of markets. One dangerous side-effect that is worth noting is the inevitable creation of monopolies.

Monopolies only come into existence when global resources are consumed to a point that investment opportunities become minimal. When this occurs, multinational corporations begin what I like to call cannibalistic practices that allow them to consume other corporations, and thereby, decreasing competition within the market place. This situation will only lend itself to a few corporations determining the supply of products that are available to the masses. Once the supply is in the hands of the producer, the producer is in a position to determine prices on products that will be guided by the amount of profit that is expected to be received. The profit that is derived from the technique is essentially used to finance other opportunities. Schumpeter makes perfect reference to how monopolies come into existence when he notes:

In either case of these cases restrictive strategy would produce no result other than an increase in profits at the expense of buyers except that, in the case of balanced advance, it might prove to be the easiest and most effective way of collecting the means by which to finance additional investment. The interplay of the social and political will

determine the changing economic conditions to suit the changing conditions within society. These changes will take the form of destructive practices and the inevitable monopolistic tendencies by corporations who are faced with ever diminishing avenues of investment opportunities. This fact is in addition to how states must legitimize the expansion of multinationals by creating conditions in prime markets that will ensure the continued accumulation of capital.

As in the case of the Iraq, the oil companies have managed to further expand their influence over the global oil supply by creating a new market, through means of warfare, and gaining control of a valued resources that industrialized nations depend upon, especially China, who I suspect that the United States will attempt to use its influence over fossil fuels as leverage against an impending threat.

I will discuss more about this issue at a later date. But for now, I will continue my focus on the monopolistic tendencies of multinationals and how governments create conditions for them that will allow for increased global domination.

Once again, in the case of Iraq, the multinational force that was directed by the United States ensured, through the use of its propaganda machine, that forced expansion could be justified by stating that the current Iraq administration was a threat to world peace by supporting terrorism and building weapons of unparalleled destruction.

This was in addition to the fact that the invasion was also a means to bring democracy to a country that was living under a tyrant.

As the situation progressed, the weapons of destruction were not discovered. However, multinational oil companies managed to negotiate contracts with the new Iraqi government for the use of its oil fields and build extraction devices that would ensure that the oil reached the global market place.

The results were predictable. The increases in profit for the corporations were the largest in history. Once again, I want to take note about Exxon Mobil reporting first quarter-revenues in excess of 82.5 billion dollars (Washington Post 2005).

So the expansion of global interest was legitimated and accomplished under the guise of spreading freedom and democracy and ensuring national security.

Diminishing Investment Opportunities

Along with the monopolistic tendencies that were described earlier, there are other reasons associated with diminishing opportunities for investment. Schumpeter outlines these reasons perfectly in his analysis of the Capitalist system in relation to these diminished opportunities.

The diminishing opportunities for investment are obvious in the fact that our current administration is using its military machine to the point of exhaustion for the purpose of forcing other areas into the capitalist program. This penetration of foreign markets is being done for the purpose of expanding the U. S. hegemonic state as well as creating avenues to continue the recreation of investment opportunities for multi-national corporations that reside, not only in the United States, but in Europe and Japan. The countries that I have just mentioned are all following the logic of capital accumulation. Schumpeter would relate to the penetration of new markets as sign that, once new geographic areas have been created for new investment opportunities, the chances to extract the potential profits are short term, and as a result, new geographic areas have to continuously be conscripted under the capitalist program for development. Without this continual conscription of geographic areas, opportunities for profit will diminish.

The expansion of the capitalist machine into new areas of the globe for the continual circulation of capital are evident in the manner in which countries who do not follow the capitalist logic for development are labeled terrorist. A prime example of this situation is how our current administration is labeling certain countries in the Middle- Eastern part of the world as terrorist if they do not agree to certain economic conditions. As a case in point, when the government of Saddam Hussein toppled, our administration characterized the victory as one against terrorism, while at the same time, allowing for multi-national corporations to invest in the

country under the aegis of spreading freedom and democracy. Now that this particular country has been brought under the capitalist program of development, other areas have to be conscripted for the purpose of creating new markets that will increase the opportunities for investment. The next country that is on the agenda that is also rich in natural resources is Iran. This country is being labeled as a threat to world peace as well as supporting terrorist organizations whose aim is to produce weapons of mass destruction. As the American people previously witnessed, the same reason is being sought to invade Iran, was also the same reason that was used to justify the Iraq invasion. If an invasion were to occur, will the public witness another Iraq in which there was no weapons program? If so, will the reasons for the invasion lack credibility as in the case of Iraq? Or will our administration recreate the justifications for the Iraq invasion as a reason to invade Iran? I can only speculate as to Iran's true purpose of enriching uranium, but the American people must also note that United States processes weapons grade uranium for our nuclear arsenal. So how can we tell another country that their production process of uranium is a threat to world peace? The contradiction in this logic is ludicrous. But when the capitalist system is faced with ever diminishing opportunities for investment, the conditions to recreate them have to be sought at whatever the cost.

The Apparent Demise of Capitalism

In the face of the diminishing opportunities for investment, the signs that capitalism can not maintain itself are evident. In an era of decreasing investment opportunities and shrinking profits for the corporation, the multinational corporations are in a position to continue to force the expansion of the capitalist program for development by pressuring its government to create certain conditions that will warrant the expansion of its powers for the purpose of extending its influence to new markets. This practice of externalizing cost to the government of nations is evident in how the invasion of Iraq called for a "coalition of the willing." These nations,

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against United Nations approval, managed to use military force that went unchecked for the sole purpose of extracting oil that could be sold on the global market place. These multinational corporations are located in countries such as United States, Great Britain, Japan, and the European Union. Let us not forget, that some of the oil companies that conduct business operations in the United States are not domestically owned. Beyond Petroleum (BP), who consolidated resources with AAMCO, is a British owned company that conducts its affairs globally, and also depends on its source of petroleum that derive from the Middle-Eastern part of the globe. BP / AAMCO, along with other multinational corporations, such as Exxon Mobile, are ever faced with diminishing supply that is a product of diminishing opportunities for investment. How does this short supply eventually create the conditions that will bring about the apparent demise of the capitalist program for development?

The answer rests within the logic of capitalism itself in that it depends upon resources that can be extracted and sold on a global market place. But since the supply of natural resources, not just that of oil is diminishing; the opportunity for investment and eventual profit will decline as well. When this happens, the system itself will be faced with a crisis of accumulation that will have no outlet for reinvestment to recreate additional profit. Since the system is not designed to operate with surplus capital without an outlet for additional investment, other means of displacing this capital must be sought at whatever the cost.

The Crises of Accumulation

In order for capital to continuously recreate the accumulation function, there has to exist areas within the global economy that excess capital can be used to create further opportunities for investment. How and when these opportunities for invest occur is not a major concern of multinational corporations. Their only concern is that the revenue that is generated from the accumulation function has outlet to pursue further investment opportunities. But when the

opportunities for further investment become restricted, the state and financial institutions must often step-in to relive the resulting inflationary pressure that is caused by excess capital. One such relief option that is available to the governments of nations is to generate credit, so as to have the effect of finance companies investing in infrastructure projects that will relieve some of the capital that is committed to other projects. By taking this measure, the government has actually freed the excess capital to invest in other areas that are not as productive. The government can also debt finance projects that are in excess of the corporation's ability to cover the cost that are associated with new opportunities for investment. Either approach will allow for the excess capital to generate new areas for investment. A prime example of either approach is our current administrations decision to invade Iraq, which was motivated more by economics than national security.

The decision to invade Iraq was also due in part by two factors. The first factor being that there lacked sufficient investment opportunities for capital to invest in for the purpose of extracting resources that could continue the accumulation function. The next reason was due in part by the excess capital that was created due to a lack of sufficient invest space. When faced with both factors, our government was forced to intervene in such as way as to justify the forced penetration of new markets. Accompanying this penetration, of course, was the issue on how to finance the building of the war machine. The solution was sought by borrowing monies from other nations with the intent on repaying what was borrowed by the excesses that were going to be created as a result of the new opportunities for investment. The results of this action by our government were predictable. The invasion did occur with the oil companies gaining access to the Iraq oil market and the American people paying the price for the expansion with higher gas prices that are the result of deficit spending. Arrighi quotes Harvey in this accumulation function in that:

Like war in relation to diplomacy, finance capital intervention backed by state power frequently amounts to accumulation by other means. An unholy alliance between state powers and the predatory aspects of finance capital forms

the cutting edge of a 'vulture capitalism' that is as much about cannibalistic practices and forced devaluation as it is about achieving harmonious global development.

So the situation that necessitated the invasion of Iraq was due in part by economic interest that demanded a new area for investment.

Can Capitalism Survive: The Conclusion

Although Schumpeter agreed with the capitalist framework for development, he did have his concerns about how the production process that are inherent in the capitalist system can only have the effect of a self-defeating venture. The reasons for this perspective are obvious. Schumpeter makes the point that the system can not maintain itself due to its inability to recreate the production processes that justify its existence. The system also undermines its own logic of capital creation by limiting and destroying the foundations of capital creation by setting in motion the conditions that will give rise to monopolistic and imperialist tendencies that are a result of diminished investment opportunities. In the case for Iraq, for instance, the system created conditions that would justify the use of military force so that it could expand its influence into another marketable area. This action of course was done under the guise of spreading freedom and democracy as well as addressing national security concerns about Iraq having the ability to produce weapons of untold destruction. I think that the case for the invasion was driven by the economic conditions creating the concerns about national security. So will capitalism survive, no? The reason is that the conditions that are created can not sustain themselves. However, there are alternatives, such as a socialized system, that I will address at a later date.

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RESEARCH METHODS FOR BUSINESS AND MANAGEMENT

Cristina Dima

Abstract: *The article was meant as a help for students, professionals and any person interested in research methods. It is a useful tool for any manager. The article contains an introductory part about research methods, in depth analysis of the questionnaire, interview, focus groups, case study and observation. The article ends with a note on how the data should be analyzed and interpreted. One very interesting key point of the article is the part about on line focus groups, used often nowadays when almost anyone can afford to log on to the Internet.*

Keywords: research methods, questionnaire, interview, focus groups, case study.

Introduction

A research is the search for and retrieval of existing or discovery of new information for a specific purpose. The goal in selecting research methods is to get the most important information to key decision makers in the most cost-effective and realistic way possible. When choosing a method consider knowing some facts: what information is needed to take the decision, how much of the information needed can be collected in a low-cost manner, how accurate will the information be, can you get the information by using the method, will you be willing to use additional methods to retrieve additional information and how can you analyze the information. The researcher always uses a combination of methods.

The scope of the research process is to produce new knowledge. This can take three main forms: exploratory research, constructive research and empirical research.

The forms of business research are:

• Marketing research, also called consumer research, is a form of applied sociology which concentrates on understanding the behaviours, whims and preferences of consumers in a

market-based economy. Marketing research was pioneered by Arthur Nielsen.

• Product research deals with what products can be produced with the available technology and what new product innovations near future technology can develop.

• Advertising research attempts to asses the likely impact of an advertising campaign in advance and also measures the success of recent campaigns.

• Market research examines all aspects of a business environment. It asks questions about competitors, market structure, government regulations, economic trends, technological advances and numerous other factors that make up the business environment. Sometimes it refers to the financial analysis of companies, industries or sectors providing results to investment advisors and potential investors.

Researches can be either qualitative or quantitative. A *qualitative* research is defined as a study which is conducted in a natural setting where the researcher gathers words or pictures, analyzes them inductively, focuses on the meaning of participants and describes a process that is both expressive and persuasive in language. A *quantitative* research seeks out relatively objective information about customer preferences; it can seek out ordinal information by asking subjects to rank items or it can measure cardinal information by asking people to attach values to the variables being measured.

There are four levels of information a researcher can get about the customers or clients, including:
1. reactions and feelings;
2. learning;
3. change in skills;
4. effectiveness.

The further you go down the line the most useful the research results. Unfortunately it's very difficult to get information about effectiveness but information about learning and skills is quite useful.

Ideally, the organization's management decides the need of a research and sets its goal. Then the research expert helps the organization to determine what research method should be used

and how the resulting data will be analyzed and reported back to the organization.

• Questionnaires
A questionnaire is a document that is used to guide what questions are to be asked respondents and in what order, sometimes lists the alternative responses that are acceptable.

Purpose
These are used when the researcher needs information fast and easily and wants lots of it without threatening people.

Advantages
It can be done anonymously, it's inexpensive, it's easy to compare and analyze, can be administered to may people , therefore can get lots of data and has the advantage that a lot of sample questionnaires already exist.

Challenges
Lack of efficient feedback, they are impersonal, some experts like sampling experts are needed, for example in surveys and doesn't get full story.

Preparing and conducting a questionnaire
The first step to be taken when designing a questionnaire is making sure you know what problem or need is addressed using the information gathered. Also make sure you know why you are doing the evaluation and what you hope to accomplish when finishing it.

When attempting to talk to the respondent include a brief explanation of the purpose of the questionnaire, as well as a very clear explanation on how to complete it. If they have to mail it give specific information on where to provide the completed questionnaire. Always remember the conditions of confidentiality.

Be sure to ask what you need to know, the simpler the questions, the better. Take into consideration if the respondent is willing to answer your questions (either the questions can be too difficult or too silly or maybe even to private). Do not use technical words, be careful when using the slag or cultural-specific words and also consider that strong words may influence the respondent. Never ask multiple questions. Ask one question at the time. When using closed questions (yes / no

questions) do not use the word "no" in the question. When using multiple choice questions be sure the choices exclude each other and are very clearly stated.

Be careful not to include too many questions. Start with fact-based questions then continue with the opinion-based ones. You can start with demographic facts then with their opinions. This way they are more relaxed when they get to the question you are most interested in. Do not forget that they can complete a questionnaire anonymously and if you decide to do such one be sure to mention it before you ask their name. Try to get further comments upon their answers so do not be shy to include open questions as well.

Test the questionnaire on a small group of clients or fellow colleagues. Ask them everything and be willing to change some questions or maybe add others. Always keep a record of the dates when you modified it fur future reference.

● **Interviews**

An interview is a conversation between two or more people where questions are asked to obtain information about the interviewee. Interviews can be divided into two rough types, interviews of assessment and interviews for information.

Purpose

You can conduct an interview when you really want to fully understand your clients' impressions or experiences and also if you want to learn more about their answers to a questionnaire.

Advantages

Using interviews you can get full range and depth of information and most important can develop a relationship with the client with great feedback and you can also be very flexible during an interview.

Challenges

An interview can take much time and can be hard to analyze and compare, therefore it is costly.

Types of interviews:

    1. **informal**, this is an open interview, no premeditate questions, during the interview the interviewer "goes with the flow";

2. **general interview guide approach,** this is an interview that collects the same general areas of information from each interviewee; it still allows a degree of freedom and adaptability but is more focused then the informal one;

3. **standardized, open-ended interview**, in which the same open questions are asked to everyone , they can much easily be compared and analyzed;

4. **closed, fixed-response interviews**, in which all interviewees are asked the same questions and they have to choose from among the same set of alternatives.

Preparing and conducting an interview

An interview can be a great follow-up to the questionnaire as they reveal in depth information around a topic. The interview contains mostly open questions.

As in the case of the questionnaire, before you start to design the questions clearly state what you need to find after the interview is completed , what problem or need is to be addressed using the information gathered.

Always choose a setting with little distraction. Avoid an "interrogatory like space" with load noises and lights and make sure the interviewee is comfortable (you can ask if she/he is). Remember they might feel more comfortable at their home or office. Explain the purpose of the interview. This is a must. As in questionnaires you should address terms of confidentiality. Then, explain the format of the interview, its type and nature. If you want them to ask questions tell them they can do that either during the interview or at the end. Tell them how long the interview usually takes. This eliminates stress. Also tell them how to get in touch with you later if they want to. This is extremely important for feedback. Ask if they have any question **before** you start the interview. Note the answers down, never relay on your "elephant" memory. Ask for permission to record the interview or take notes.

The questions asked in an interview can be about behaviors, opinions/values, feelings, knowledge, sensory and background/demographics. The tenses used are important as well but these kinds of questions can be asked at past, present or future.

Pay attention to the sequence of questions asked. Don't bore the respondents with too many general questions, try to get them involved in the interview as soon as possible. Before asking about feelings and conclusions, ask about facts. To avoid long lists of fact based questions insert them throughout the interview, otherwise you might find the responded is not attentive anymore. Begin with the questions about present then continue with ones about past and future since it is easier to talk first in present time. The last questions must be open questions allowing the respondent to state their impressions of the interview as well as other information they want to provide. The most important thing you ought to know is to word questions as clearly as possible. Questions should also be as natural as possible and should be asked one at a time. Be careful about the "why" questions which might get the respondent defensive. Most of the questions must be open allowing the respondents to answer on their own terms.

While doing the interview be sure to check if the tape recorder is still working, if you are using one, of course. Encourage responses but be neutral especially when taking notes. If u jump to taking notes might seem you are please about the answer which may influence further responses. Provide transition between topics and of course don't loose control of the interview.

After the interview verify the notes and the tape recorder. You can also make additional notes and write down observations made during the interview, such as if the respondent was nervous, if there were any surprises during the interview, things that may affect the answers.

● **Focus groups**

A focus group is a form of qualitative research in which a group of people are asked about their attitude towards a product, concept, advertisement, idea or packaging. Questions are asked in an interactive group setting where participants are free to talk with other group members.

Purpose

The general purpose of a focus group is to explore a topic in depth through group discussions. It is very useful in evaluation and marketing.

Advantages

In a focus group you can get quick and reliable common impressions, it can be efficient to get much range and depth of information in a short period of time and can cover key information about programmes.

Challenges

Sometimes the results can be hard to analyze and there is the need of a good facilitator for safety and closure. It is also difficult to schedule 6 to 8 people at the same time.

Preparing and conducting focus groups

A focus group can be defined as a powerful mean to evaluate services and new ideas. Basically, they are interviews with 6-10 people at the same time. A lot of information can be drawn from a focus group.

When preparing for the session first identify the major objective of the meeting. Prepare five to six questions, plan the session. Call and invite de members to the meeting. Send them an invitation with the proposed agenda and the questions the group will discuss. The agenda can contain: welcome, review of agenda, review of goal of the meeting, review of ground rules , introduction, questions and answers, warm up. Make sure to tell them you will send them the report of the meeting. About three days before the meeting call the members again and remind them to attend.

When developing the questions make sure you always know what problem or need would be addressed by the information gathered during the session. Remember that a focus group is made up by multiple interviews so the problems discussed about the interviews apply here as well.

Plan the meeting to be one hour to 1.5 hours long. Hold the session in a conference room with adequate lightning and air flow. Provide name tags and be sure that the members can see each other (a round table is most adequate for that). Provide refreshments and lunch boxes when the session is held during lunch time (which proves to be one of the best times people have spare time). It is very important that all members

participate in the discussion. Establish some ground rules, such as:

a) keep focused;
b) maintain momentum;
c) get closure on questions.

Attempt to select members who don't know each other but have similar nature such as similar age group, similar status in a programme. Try to find members who are likely to be participative. Plan to record the meeting with either audio or video recorder. Never relay on your memory. If they don't approve of recording get someone to take notes (also called the co-facilitator).

Begin by introducing yourself and the co-facilitator, if used. Then, explain the means of recording the session. Carry out the agenda as present to them in the invitation. After each question is answered reflect back a summary of the answers (the co-facilitator might do this). Make sure every participant talks. If one or two "take over" the discussion call on others. Consider using the round table approach and allow each person one or two minutes to answer the question. If this approach doesn't help ask the group what is to he done to insure everyone's participation. Tell members again that they will receive a copy of the report, thank them for coming and close the session.

After the session if finished verify the recorders, if used as well as make sure the notes were taken during the session. As in interviews, note down any observation made during the session, for example time and place of the session, the nature of the participants, if there were any surprises during the interview that may influence the answers.

On line focus groups

The Internet is a rich source of data for many questions of interest to researchers even in Management. Internet studies have employed both quantitative and qualitative methods. Widely Internet applications have matured to the point at which the Internet can now be exploited not only as data source but also as a platform for conducting research, such as studies utilizing online surveys. The Chat was firstly used to conduct online focus groups. But on line focus groups, particularly those done for the purpose of market research didn't always

produce the desired results. As a result some researchers concluded that on line focus groups can't be a substitute for face to face focus groups.

The limitations of on line focus groups are:

- diminished role of the moderator;
- limited on line groups dynamics;
- lack of non verbal inputs;
- limitations regarding observer's involvement in the monitoring;
- participant anonymity;
- limitations of exposing participants to external stimuli;
- limitations caused by technical difficulties.

It can be concluded, thou, that on line focus groups are useful and appropriate according to the specific research context. For example on line focus groups can fall short when it comes to evaluating new tangible products but can be beneficial for explanatory research, experiential research , particularly of on line experiences, and theoretical research.

• Case studies

A case study is a particular method of qualitative research. Rather than using large samples and following a rigid protocol to examine a limited number of variables, case study methods involve an in-depth, longitudinal examination of a single instance or event: a case.

Purpose

The major goal of a case study is to fully understand or depict client's experiences in a programme and to conduct comprehensive examination through cross comparison of cases.

Advantages

It fully depicts client's experiences in programme input, process and result and is a powerful mean to portray programme to outsiders.

Challenges

Usually a case study is time consuming to collect, organize and describe and it also represents depth of information, rather then breadth.

Uses of Case Studies

Case studies are used in depicting a holistic portrayal of a client's experiences and results regarding a programme. They are used to organize a wide range of information about a case and then analyze the contents by seeking patterns and theme in the data and by cross comparison with other cases. Case studies emphasize detailed contextual analysis of a limited number of events or conditions and their relationship. They usually answer one or more questions that begin with "how" or "why". Critics of the method believe that the study of a small number of cases can offer no grounds for establishing reliability and generality of findings. Some dismiss case study research as useful only as an explanatory tool.

Many well-knows case study researchers such as Robert E.Stake, Helen Simons and Robert K.Yin have written about case study research and suggested techniques for organizing and conducting the research successfully.

Developing a Case Study

All data about the case is gathered. Data could result from a combination of methods, such as documentation, questionnaire, interview and observation. The data is organized into an approach to highlight the focus of the study. After these are done, a case study narrative is developed. The narrative is a readable story that integrates and summarizes hey information around the focus of the case study. It should be written in such a way that an outside reader must understand what happened regarding the case. The narrative might be validated by review from program participants. The case studies can be cross compared to isolate any themes or patterns.

As a conclusion, the steps needed to be taken in order to set up a case study are as follow:

1. Determine and define the research questions: the researcher establishes the focus of the study by forming questions about the situation or problem to be studied and determines a purpose for the study.

2. Select the cases and determine data gathering and analysis techniques: during the design phase of the case study

research, the researcher determines what approaches to use in selecting single or multiple real-life cases to examine in depth.

3. Prepare to collect the data: because the case study generates a large amount of data from different sources, systematic organization of the data is required to prevent the researcher from being overwhelmed by the amount of data and to prevent him from losing sight of the original research purpose and questions. After investigators are trained, the final advance preparation step is to select a pilot site and to conduct a pilot test using each data gathering method so that the problematic areas are uncovered and corrected.

4. Collect data in the field: exemplary case studies use field notes and databases to categorize and reference data so that it is ready for analysis.

5. Evaluate and analyze the data: the researcher examines raw data using many interpretations in order to find linkages between the research object and the outcomes with reference to the original research questions.

6. Prepare the report: case study reports data in a way that transforms a complex issue into one that can be understood, allowing the reader to question and examine the study and reach an understanding independent of the researcher.

● **Observation**
Observation basically means watching something and taking note of anything it does

Purpose
An observation purpose is to gather accurate information about how a programme actually operates. It is used particularly about processes.

Advantages
Observation views operations of a program as they are actually occurring and it can adapt to the events as they occur.

Challenges
Sometimes it can be difficult to interpret seen behaviours and can be complex to categorize observations. It can also influence behaviours of program participants and can be expansive. Observation is time consuming because in order to obtain reliability, behaviours must be observed several times.

Types of observations

♦ Direct (Reactive) Observation

In direct observation, people know that the researcher is watching them. The danger is that they may be reacting to the research and can influence the results by not showing who they **really** are. That is not necessarily bad. A long observation will often catch a glimpse of the natural behaviours. Also, the sample of individuals may not be representative of the population or the behaviours observed are not representative of the individual. Again, a long time observation will overcome the problem.

There are two commonly used types of direct observations:

1. *Continuous Monitoring*: involves observing a subject or subjects and recording as much of their behaviour as possible. It is used to evaluate performance. Yet it might be problematic due to the Hwthorne Effect. It states that workers react to the observer and in turn productivity increases. Other continuous monitoring in used in education, such as watching teachers-students interactions. A lot of data is acquired when using this observation.

2. *Time allocation*: involves a researcher randomly selecting a place and time and then recording what people are doing before they see you. This is useful when trying to find the percent of time people are doing a thing.

♦ Unobtrusive Observation

It involves any method for studying behaviour where individual **do not** know they are being observed. It eliminates the concern that the individual might change the behaviour. When conducting unobtrusive observations, issues of validity need to be considered. Numerous observations need to take place in order to generalize the findings. Many groups posse unique characteristics which make them interesting studies. However, the main problem is ethical. Issues involving consent and invasion of privacy are paramount here.

As in case of direct observation, we'll present two types of unobtrusive observation:

1. Behaviour trace studies: involve findings things people leave behind and interpreting what they mean. Trace studies yield enormous data.

2. Disguised field observations: the researcher pretends to join or actually is a member of the group and records data about that group. The group doesn't know they are observed for research purposes. The observer may take a number of roles. They are likely to yield reliable data but the ethical dilemmas are a trade-off.

Analyzing and Interpreting Information

Always start with your research goals. When analyzing quantitative information make copy of the data and store the master copy. Always use the copy for editing and cutting and so on. Tabulate the information and for ratings and rankings consider computing a mean or average, for each question, also consider conveying the range of answers. When analyzing the qualitative information read through all the data and organize comments into similar categories. After that, label the categories and theme and attempt to identify patterns or associations and casual relationships in the themes. Keep all the commentary for several years after completion in case you need it for further reference.

The content of the report is dependent on who reads it. Be sure that employees have a chance to carefully review and discuss the report. Translate the recommendations into action plans or business plans including assigning tasks and dead-lines. Bankers would need a report that includes an executive summary. This is a summary of conclusions and recommendations, description of the organization and the programme, product or service under evaluation, explanation of the research methods, goals and analysis procedures, any other relevant attachments like interviews, questionnaires. Record the research plans and activities in a research plan which can be referenced when a similar research effort is needed in the future.

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