
TWO MAIN PARADIGMS IN THE APPROACH TO ETHNIFICATION : CULTURAL-ATTITUDE AND RATIONAL CHOICE

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The process of ethnification. The increase of interethnic tensions, from quite benign forms to military conflicts which lately, in the former communist countries has become an obvious reality and, at the same time, tragic for many. Daily life, institutions, official politics and scientific communities are profoundly preoccupied with the understanding of this phenomenon. Regarding tensional inter-ethnic relations, regional but also inter-stately, about policies and ideologies, the descriptive and explaining expressions used have as a central term the traditional one of "nationalism". The older discussions on "nationalism-patriotism" and "national-socialism" still continue today. I consider that, without completely preserving the significance of the term "nationalism", the actual situation of dominance of the ethnic element political life may be better described by the term "ethnification". This is much more neutral with regard to the historical, affective and ideological connotations which the first one has accumulated. Otherwise we can observe that the problem of the ethnic factor has built a carrier in the social sciences (cultural anthropology, sociology, social psychology) and the one of the national factor more in philosophy and the humanities. It is true that the "ethnic" involves the approach of simpler problems whereas the "national" involves that of more complex ones. Speaking about the two registers of expressions, "ethnic" and "national", let us underline that the formal-linguistic homologue of "nationalism" in the first register is "ethnocentrism". However, they are not interchangeable in the semantic psycho-social-cultural content.

Using the term "etnificare" (coming from the English "ethnification") in this study which deals with such a relevant and acute problem, I am conscious of the effect of enunciation-equivalents, namely the possibility of creating only an apparent advance in understanding by way of inventing words and expressions, new words for already existing ideas (Iluț P., 1983). On the other hand, any new association of terms or terminological derivation may have, by its concision, epistemological virtues also in the field of social sciences, contributing to such a necessary standardisation here too.

Ethnification means a number of complexes and strongly connected strategies of individual and collective, social and political actors by which the ethnic factor is brought to the fore in formal and informal political life, ethnici-

ty playing the role of the dominant criterion of social cleavage, representing the main source of political propaganda, mobilisation and other collective actions. This process has several dimensions (Offe C., 1992): the attempt to have territorial borders which maximise ethnic homogeneity; the rights, prestige and social status of citizens being differentiated in terms of their ethnic belonging; associations, parties and policies based on ethnic criteria appear and function in the name of the ethnic community welfare; ethnic problems of religious, cultural, linguistic specificity take priority especially over those of social class. In different regions and states the weight of the respective elements in the assembly of the strategies of the ethnification of politics and of the policy of ethnification is different, as the virulence of ethnification itself is not the same.

The recrudescence of nationalism or ethnification, to use a more appropriate term, has visible and serious negative consequences, especially in its more violent forms, in the period of transition of former communist countries. Most Eastern and Western intellectuals condemn it. Especially the Westerners view this phenomenon as irrational, resulting from a backward (political) thought which can be explained by perceptual inertia and old mentality rooted in past realities (where it was probably functional). However, some sociologists assert that, in a more careful analysis of ethnic policy in the post-communist countries, distinguishing between short, medium and long-term effects as well as between interests and advantages of different social segments of an ethnic group (the masses and the political elite, especially) ethnification may not only be described and explained in terms of cost and profit, but it appears as rational largely.

We must admit that the attempt of answering the question why ethnification takes place is more than a mere interesting intellectual exercise. It is obvious that the manifold practical importance of such an approach in the effort of finding institutional formulas and behavioural models would assure the peaceful coexistence of ethnic groups.

Two paradigms in approaching ethnification. Keeping in mind that the following classification has a certain didactic character, I think that we may speak of two paradigms which attempt to explain the inter-ethnic frictions and ethnification: the "cultural-attitudinal" one and the theory of rational choice (TRC).

The expression "cultural-attitudinal" unites, in fact, two distinct orientations originating and professed in disciplines with proper status: cultural anthropology and social psychology. Emphasising the cultural factor (which is specific to cultural anthropology) entails, first of all, a focus on the symbolic foundations of culture. Ethnicity means collective cultural identity expressed by

language, religion, rituals, common history and tradition. Ethnification is the promotion of cultural identity and, in the case of the countries breaking with the ideology and policy of homogenisation of communist totalitarianism, the recovery of this identity. The accent in the culturalist approach is placed on the feeling, the emotional community solidarity, on the expressive needs, in other words. This approach intersects the attitudinal one which has produced so many systematic and fertile studies in social psychology. Here the relations between ethnic groups are regarded mainly by reciprocal perceptions and attitudes, by stereotypes and prejudices. Therefore we may speak about a cultural-attitudinal paradigm, because both the culturalist orientation and the attitudinal one places the motivational factors of behaviour in mentality and, dominantly, in the expressive-emotional zones of it. The last feature should be underlined, because the theory of rational choice not only refers to mentality, but to its aspects of instrumental and rational calculus needs. On account of this the two paradigms are usually presented in a relation of competition, even of opposition, because the cultural-attitudinal paradigm ultimately regards ethnification as an irrational behaviour. Irrational not in the sense that it cannot be explained, but in the sense that it relies on ethnocentrism, lack of tolerance, false perceptions, prejudices. Even if ethnification seems to be justified also from the point of view of the individual or collective actor, this is an illusion because the respective actions sooner or later turn against their own interests. This also answers the question why people can be manipulated. It is an important question, as the explanation of ethnification by manipulation is noticeably present in political life and individuals' conscience as well. Surely, manipulation works, the question is why is it possible? Why does it "catch on" in some cases and in others it does not. The cultural-attitudinal conception answers by appealing to the degree of axiological closeness or openness, perceptual inertia, political culture, etc. The solutions of inter-ethnic tensions lie mainly in the activity of "illuminating" the masses, in the education of the spirit of tolerance and in accepting cultural diversity.

The basic idea of the theory of rational choice (TRC) is that the social actor, following consciously the achievement of a purpose, will select the combination of relations between resources (capital), cost and profit which is the most efficient. He will choose the optimal variant. In its endeavour of comprising the largest possible variety of human behaviour, TRC extended, starting from the micro-economic model, the conceptual repertoire: the capital is no more only financial-economic but also human, psychosocial (relational), cultural, biological, etc. Cost and profit are symmetrical. When taking decisions the actor evaluates the relation between different types of costs and profits and

takes into account different temporal horizons: short, medium, long. The more complex the behaviours and situations are, the more difficult it is to calculate the optimal variant, both by the acting subject and by the external observer (researcher). But it may be evaluated, which in fact happens at the level of practical life. One can easily observe, for instance, the increase and variety of the benefits which the position of member of the political elite of an ethnic group brings: there are financial, relational benefits and those of the prestige of cultural status; Such positions no doubt have their price, but, members of an ethnic community prove to be really naive when they consider first of all the sacrifice of their leaders and the responsibility assumed by them for the common good. Personal advantages of political leaders are not hard to evaluate, although they are purposely not made transparent. This holds good for demagogue leaders who do not sincerely and strongly believe in ethnic values and ideals often transformed in slogans, and for authentic leaders who completely identify themselves with them.

Inter-paradigmatic relations. As I have already mentioned, the relation between the two paradigms is usually considered a tensional one, concurrent and even antinomial. They are opposed because the cultural-attitudinal one explains ethnification by the autonomy of symbols, the traditional collective representations, the axiological closeness, the false perceptions, the stereotypes and prejudices, the intolerance towards cultural diversity which finally leads to a behaviour inclined to conflict, a behaviour which affects negatively all the forces implied in the game. Viewed from this perspective, inter-ethnic tensions are games of a negative sum; they appear therefore as irrational actions. The fundamental assertion of TRC is that social actors choose rational strategies. The cultural-attitudinal conception has in its essence the manifestation of emotional-expressive needs, without the cost-profit calculus, whereas TRC relies completely on the instrumental needs satisfied in the optimal variant of the cost-profit relation. The main intention of the present study is to show that the relation between the paradigms, concisely exposed here, is more complex and more nuanced, including also complementary relations, overlap and even inclusion. But we must point out two things.

The first is that, even the most severe and negative evaluations of the cultural-attitudinal paradigm recognise the fact that not all the concepts used by it cover only an emotional, affective, cultural-archetypal content, viewed by the spectrum of the subconscious and the irrational. The expression "rational attitude" is frequently at the level of common sense and also at the level of scientific research. The term "attitude" is not peripheral in the language of TRC. It is

similarly noteworthy that the term "stereotypes" should not have the pejorative connotation of "false judgement" as often happens. Systematic experimental studies showed that many of the stereotypes are true statements (Cambell T., 1976). This is also valid for the reciprocal perceptions of ethnic groups. Not all the ethnic stereotypes are false perceptions and not all the interethnic attitudes and behaviours rely on prejudices.

The second remark refers to the fact that, in the effort of overcoming its own limits, TRC resorts sometimes to a kind of epistemological compromise, when speaking about a subjective rationality. This way, almost all human actions are rational in the sense that the subject chooses the solution which is optimal (rational) in his opinion. The magic rituals for bringing rain are rational actions because those who practice it believe in it (Boudon R., 1990). Extended in this way, TRC has no operational value any more. In the absence of the criteria of universality, inter-subjectivity and of objectivity it has no normative or descriptive value any more. In the field of inter-ethnic relations, following the "subjective rationality" line, any act of aggression with clear negative consequences for the aggressor itself might be considered rational because it was evaluated as such by the acting subject. (c.f. the events at Tîrgu Mureș in March 1990.) In the formula of subjective rationality TRC does not oppose in any way the cultural-attitudinal paradigm. So that in the present approach I do not operate with the pure technical-mathematical acceptance of the TRC, neither do I use its artificial, extended version of subjective rationality. For all that, as we shall see, the problem of categorising the concrete actions as rational or not, is a difficult one, raising all the time the questions 'rational from what point of view?', 'for whom?', 'for how long?'

Theoretically the complementary relations and intersection between the two paradigms may be expressed this way:

a.) Inter-ethnic behaviours, and even more ethnification, are much determined by emotional, affective-symbolic as well as rational factors. Looking after more pragmatic (territorial, economic, social) interests (profits) of the ethnic groups by way of rationally based strategies satisfies also affective, expressive-symbolic needs, historical-cultural pride. It is useful in this context to discuss the observations of Claus Offe (1992) concerning the orientations in explaining ethnification.

He shows that the major theoretical alternative for the rationalist paradigm is represented by the view according to which the policy of ethnification is the expression of natural rights (individual freedom, for example) of ethnic communities to promote their culture, language, religion, symbols,

affective, emotional and expressive dimensions of community", or maintaining their identity. In other words, the politicisation of the ethnic aspect of the community is due to the natural and universal tendency of individuals and groups to attach to the community, permanent tendency of social-human life. (This vision partly overlaps with what we called the cultural-attitudinal paradigm). The author comments: "The problem of this approach is its virtual tautological structure. The appearance of the ethnic policies in a particular point in time and space is considered to come from the universal force of political life, which, in turn, is supposed to explain the respective phenomenon. The appearance is the manifestation of a certain essence, which is itself postulated on the basis of appearance." (p.17) This kind of circular reasoning, says C. Offe, cannot explain why in certain spatial-temporal contexts the social actors, the masses and the elite mobilise themselves dominantly under the spectrum of ethnic values, while other actors, in other contexts confer, at best, only a marginal value to ethnic symbols and aspirations.

According to the author the amplitude and intensity of the ethnic movements in post-communist countries may be more consistently explained by the theory of rational behaviour, in terms of costs and profits. Ethnification would serve the fulfilment of some interests, the most important of which is the need to detach from the previous regime, which means an ample sovietisation and, implicitly, the oppression of national character and of ethnic specificity. It is felt mainly by the political elite and especially those members of it who are suspected of having sustained the communist dictatorship.

It is also about the need of territorial circumscription and of borders, of a kind of "closeness", because in case of economic crisis, specific for the transition period or when a social-economic situation of a positive sum type of games (prosperous for all) is not foreseen in the immediate future, the stress is laid on protection rather than on production, the imperative being "let us hold to what we have". The protection means, on the one hand, to prevent the leakage of insufficient resources (goods, investments, jobs) outside, "to others", and, on the other hand, prevention of infiltration of some problems (inflation, refugees, criminality) in the ethnic or national community system. When the protective power of the state diminishes, the ethnic criterion of inclusion and exclusion comes to the fore.

Thirdly, many of the internal minorities of Eastern-European states are simultaneously external minorities of neighbouring states (Turks in Bulgaria and Greece, Hungarians in Romania, Slovakia and Serbia, Russians in Estonia, Poles in Lithuania, etc.). The abrogation of the Warsaw Treaty justifies to some extent the preoccupation and concern of countries with ethnic minorities which

have neighbouring master-states; the latter ones should not extend the "protection" of their external minorities too far, towards acts of territorial annexation, in extreme cases. Of course, these more or less well-grounded anticipations and worries are sometimes used as pretexts for exclusivism and ethnic reprisals on the internal minorities. The logic of stigmatisation is even more operative when neighbouring states have reciprocal minorities. In this case an increasing spiral of hostilities might evolve, based on the consideration that if "they" do something like this to our people, "we" also have the right to do it to their people. The spiral of ethnic and national revenge has a strong historical support. The rewriting of national histories in the former communist countries serves not only the rebirth of national pride but also the creation of ethnic tensions. It is discovered and rediscovered what "some" did to "others" during the centuries, stirring up inter-ethnic dissensions.

The paradigm of rationality underlines the reasons of the escalation of inter-ethnic tensions by reciprocal induction of incrimination and hostile action which should not be searched as much at the autonomous level of emotionality, national pride and feelings, but rather at that of anticipation calculus of practical consequences, of costs and gains. "The punishment" of the "others" is not done for the sake of revenge itself; it is a preventive measure taken in order to give them a lesson not to do again what they did in the past.

Finally, ethnification can be explained by the fact that ethnicity is a very precious resource for the community and for the individuals. Thus, peripheral minorities, less developed economically, tend to obtain advantages and concessions from the centre (the state) by ethnic (regional) policies. This is done by threatening with non-cooperation, secession and possible fusion with the neighbouring master state. The situation of negotiation by blackmail with the centre is possible (and efficient), especially when the ethnic-territorial units dispose over important resources or they control military means of violence. The logic, somehow perverse here - because there is no exchange of goods or positive services - is: "Do something good if you do not want me to do something bad." It is to be remembered that ethnicity serves as resource also for the richer minorities (or the majority). In this case the ethnic policy does not share welfare with other minorities in the same state. It is no accident that the Balkan countries separated first from the former Soviet Union, Croatia and Slovenia from Yugoslavia.

Ethnicity is, at the same time, a valuable source in obtaining and maintaining high social status. If a certain minority gains the right of having courts, administration, regional parliaments, mass media, schools, universities and other

institutions in their mother tongue, this means the creation of a privileged segment in manpower market, exclusively or almost exclusively for the speakers of the native language. It is then easy to understand ethnification both from the perspective of the minority - gaining some professional recesses - and from that of the majority - the concern for not losing these recesses. Speaking in terms of losses and gains, let us signal that the ethnic majority perceives the introduction of a minority language as the creation of a parallel official language, a process that implies further costs for printing materials, translation equipment, etc.

There may also be invoked other practical reasons of ethnification in the transition period. The exaggeration of the rationalist approach is that it opposes the respective reasons to the needs of affective, emotional, expressive, cultural identity types. Without precisely knowing the weight of the different dimensions of the motivation for each type of action or concrete behavioural act, the analysis of history, of actual political life and of daily behaviour suggests that it is rational to take into account the functioning of a rational-irrational motivational continuum within ethnic groups and ethnification.

b.) The cultural-attitudinal paradigm and that of the TRC are complementary in understanding the ethnification behaviour, also in the sense that this behaviour may be dominantly emotional-expressive and cultural-symbolic at the level of masses and dominantly rational at the level of the political elite. The examination of almost any manifestation of ethnification shows that the profits are greater for the elite - especially for the political one, but also for the cultural and professional one - than for the masses; the costs, inversely. The examples in paragraph a.) about the official language also illustrate this. I shall invoke here another eloquent example, that of inter-ethnic armed conflicts: let us compare the costs (including human lives) and profits (including those of prestige in front of your own ethnic group) of ordinary citizens and of military and political leaders. Otherwise, it is rational for the political elite to rely on ethnification in mobilising the masses, more precisely on the sentimental-affective background of their mentality, because in this way the cost of the mobilisation is smaller.

c.) From a strictly theoretical point of view, we admit that in some cases TRC subordinates itself to the cultural-attitudinal paradigm. This because the basic assumption in TRC is that, being given a purpose (preference), the social actor will follow the optimal strategy in achieving it. The purpose, the objective, the preference appear therefore as independent variables. But these may be precisely the attitudes, knowing that the attitude is also a motivational vector, being therefore also an objective to reach, as preference. The transfer of attitudes and values to the level of effective actions works not only spontaneously or by

automatism and habits but also by deliberate and rationally built strategies. I do not think that we should put aside *ab initio* any explanation of a scheme of ethnificanct behaviour, in which the independent variable is "the negative attitude", "the ethnic and national resentments".

d.) If the inter-paradigmatic relation, drawn above, appears more logical-formal, the empirical reality reveals, on a large scale, the reverse situation, namely, the subordination of the cultural-attitudinal paradigm to the rationalist one, in explaining ethnification. This revelation is in the sense that attitudes, feelings, expressive needs, cultural identity are also artefacts, spiritualist rationalisations, of some rational strategies in order to achieve prosaic purposes and interests. On the other hand, the non-conformation of the individuals of an ethnic group to the axiological and attitudinal system promoted by this implies a series of social, economic and, in any case, psychological costs.

Through different psycho-social mechanisms, the members of an ethnic group who deviate from what is considered to be the pattern, are negatively sanctioned, blamed, sometimes even in public. An analysis of the content of the press from Romania since 1990 would wholly emphasise this. (Of course, a completely important question, theoretical but also practical is, who defines the pattern and the deviations from it and in what way). It is useful to notice in this frame that in such a dynamic and confused period of transition, if there are potential and real costs of the deviation from ethnification, there are also benefits of adopting the liberal, European and universalist position. These are spiritual and psychological benefits, but also very pragmatic ones. The results of the examination of the Romanian intellectuals' attitude towards the Soros foundation in terms of cost-benefit would be instructive and symptomatic in this sense. A fertile field would constitute the respective examination also for the theory of cognitive dissonance - which goes along, otherwise, very well with the one of rationality - in deciphering the modalities of construction and of the content of the ideologies which justify the adopted attitudes and behaviours.

Future evolutions. As I suggested at the beginning, the benefits of ethnification are partially and strongly discriminatory in favour of the ethnic elite. The costs on a short term, especially in the case of armed conflicts and at the level of the population, are obviously greater than gains. The anticipation of some medium and long-term profits of ethnification is theoretically fragile, because the data of world situation (economic-technological, political, cultural, etc.) in a long period of time may be only vaguely represented. In a holistic eval-

uation of the phenomenon of recrudescence of ethnic and national tensions, the cost-profit relations appear to be clearly positive in favour of the first term; ethnification, with its tint of aggressiveness is undesirable and is viewed as such by almost everybody. (The above statement does not contradict what was said until now concerning ethnification as being rational. In principle, also the actors implied in its development reject it. The essential argument in their favour is that it is not to be desired, but it is necessary and therefore rational).

By its global negative consequences, especially the danger of local wars with the tendency of regional and even world-wide extension, the increase of inter-ethnic disagreements and conflicts polarise the attention of governments, international organisations and of humanity in general. There were attempts at their peaceful solving, primarily at constitutional and institutional level. But the identification of some efficient procedures and principles is not at all an easy enterprise. Democratic vote, direct and indirect, public debate with the participation of all the representatives (parties) of the interested parts, negotiations behind closed doors, presidential prerogatives or the transnational arbitration present difficulties and disadvantages in solving the problems. It is clear, for instance, that if a controversial question of ethnic interest is submitted to a referendum in a country with a significant majority ethnic group, the last one will win, which implies a virtual "tyranny of the majority".

The difficulty with transnational organisations resides in the fact that being formed of different powers, divergences are possible, and exist in fact, in taking some decisions. Further, because the principles and modalities of solving the tensions come and are supervised from the exterior by the great powers, usually by the reward-punishment mechanism, or, at least, by threatening-promise, they are suspected of "imperialism". Neither of the conflicting parties considers such solutions objective and just, therefore they may lead to the intensification of conflicts instead of their extinction or settlement.

However, the main impediment, which sums up in a way the others, in identifying some viable solutions of the tensional interethnic relations is the following (quasi) paradox (Offe C., 1992): given the dissension of views upon diverse problems, there are few chances to unity regarding the establishment of the procedures solving them. When the political rights of ethnic groups are at stake, the above mentioned paradox takes the form of the question "who has the right to decide, who has the right to participate in collective decisions?"

In a social system with marked social cleavages (ethnic ones for example) when a situation which advantages one party and disadvantages the

other intervenes, when a conflict of interests is created, two evolutions are possible: the separation of the parts; finding some means of solving the conflict or at least reducing it in order to maintain the system at its parameters of functioning. In the first variant, frequent in the case of multi-national states - see for example the dissolution of the Soviet Union - the sore points are the distribution of some former common goods and services (military arsenal, territory, currency, investments, etc.), the belonging of which is disputed. Thus, also in these cases the mentioned paradox remains, given the fact that before the separation is produced, the implied parts must decide when and how does it happen and to what extent.

Concerning the second possible evolution, let us notice that there are systems in which the separation of the parts is impossible because they do not exist as parts but as a system: this is the case of professional cleavages (client-patient, student-professor) and the cleavages of social classes. In these cases or when the breaking of the system is not wished, being considered too expensive by both parts - this is the game of negative sum - the elaboration of some conciliatory procedures is imperious.

Without surpassing the serious theoretical and practical difficulties which intervene in taking (collective) decisions when we have a situation of this kind, J. Coleman (1991), starting from the analogies with economic-fiscal strategies, offers suggestions which follow the method of compensation. This means that if an action, an event, a measure leads to benefits for one part in the detriment of the other, the first one will have to pass from its benefits to the second one a share of such a size that the last one will at least not lose. It is needed therefore that the collective political (and legislative) decisions be of such a nature that even if some of the social actors gain more, none shall lose and the system shall be maintained, namely, the decisions be "...both decisive and non-decisive". (J. Coleman, 1991, p.16).

Although the current negotiations and policies in the former communist countries are not totally devoid of certain forms of compensatory strategies, the actual political-legislative structures appear as a little permissive to the efficient application of the principle of compensation, understood in the spirit of the rationality paradigm I presented above, true, very short and in a simplified way. Future changes and institutional re-shaping should also take into account the principle in case.

Many analysts, the supporters of the cultural-attitudinal paradigm especially, see the decrease in intensity and the extinction of ethnification possible. A sustained and ample action of education could replace exclu-

sivistic values and attitudes (which are specific to ethnocentrism) with those of tolerance, of the admittance of cultural variety. The erasure of negative prejudices and stereotypes and the forming of a modern, political culture would lead to a profound change in mentality and, from here, to the passing of hostile behaviours and actions to reciprocal understanding and esteem. I have already pointed out why the representatives of TRC are sceptical towards such a position. I will add here a single observation: the main thesis of the rationality paradigm is that the ethnic groups and their leaders especially, consider ethnification as rational. And there are arguments also for the exterior observers to appreciate it as such. Let us still notice that it is perceived as rational by the actors in case. It is possible that at a more attentive analysis many of the manifestations of ethnification appear as irrational. Therefore, the two paradigms are not opposed in all areas. More precisely, TRC has here a fertile soil for an application, even if more diffuse, of the normative function, revealing the cost-profit relations of different actions and indicating the optimal solution in achieving the proposed purposes. Education may be therefore efficient on condition that it will not focus on principles and moral-axiological codes, but on the understanding and analysis of the practical consequences on different horizons of time (short, medium, long) of individual and collective actions; on working out some optimal educational and cultural strategies (in terms of costs and profits) which should lead to the forming of the rationalist mentality. An important aspect in this context is the overcoming of the mentality of the null sum game in the inter-ethnic relations too, of the conception that gain for a group means loss for the other. As A. Hirschmann (1991) argues, conservative political forces share this mentality. The scepticism of some experts in the Eastern-European problem of transition and ethnification goes so far that they consider inopportune any attempt of setting up institutional models or of changing mentality. Ethnification in their view is the product of the accumulation of some structural, "natural" causes and it will become extinct also in a "natural" way, by itself. The main arguments in the laissez-faire vision in favour of a predictable decrease of inter-ethnic tensions and of the policies which sustain them are: the masses will not learn according to didactic programs but from life-experience; the benefits are rather for the elite, and the costs for the masses, which will lead to the discredit of ethnification and to pressures for stopping it. Along with the structuring of the economy in the former communist countries on the free market econ-

omy model, the criterion of social-political class will become more important and will reduce the weight of the ethnic one. Generally, the liberalisation and diversification of the social-political and professional life, the forming of the true civil society will increase the phenomenon of multiple identity of individuals; professional and regional belonging, sex, age become more relevant than the ethnic one.

I tried to show in the present essay that although the two main paradigms explain alternatives of the process of ethnification, they are also in complementary relations, they overlap and even include. The same holds good for the prediction and the solving of ethnification. We must admit that reforms operating at the constitutional-institutional level and at the level of political practice as well as deliberately (educationally) induced changes in mentality - all these operating on the background of some objective factors, namely, the "natural" evolution of social systems - are a more realistic perspective than the one which relies exclusively or almost exclusively on structural-institutional changes, or on the actions of "illumination", or on the laissez-faire effect. If they do not want to avoid the empirical evidence - resulting from systematically gathered data and daily observation - and wish therefore to have credibility, the supporters of the two paradigms should not be intolerant to each other. The optimal strategy within inter-ethnic relations, from a humanistic, moral point of view, but also from that of costs and profits, is to accept "the other", as it happens in inter-paradigmatic relations.

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