

# New Europe College

## *Europa* Program

### Yearbook 2006-2007



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STEFAN DETCHEV  
SVETLANA DONCHEVA  
ALEXANDER MAXWELL  
MIHAIL NEAMȚU  
SIMINA RADU-BUCURENCI  
RĂZVAN SEBASTIAN STAN  
SMARANDA VULTUR

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New Europe College  
Str. Plantelor 21  
023971 Bucharest  
Romania  
[www.nec.ro](http://www.nec.ro); e-mail: [nec@nec.ro](mailto:nec@nec.ro)

Tel. (+4) 021.307.99.10, Fax (+4) 021. 327.07.74

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# NEW EUROPE FOUNDATION NEW EUROPE COLLEGE

Institute for Advanced Study

*New Europe College (NEC)* is an independent Romanian institute for advanced study in the humanities and social sciences founded in 1994 by Professor Andrei Pleșu (philosopher, art historian, writer, Romanian Minister of Culture, 1990–1991, Romanian Minister of Foreign Affairs, 1997–1999) within the framework of the *New Europe Foundation*, established in 1994 as a private foundation subject to Romanian law.

Its impetus was the *New Europe Prize for Higher Education and Research*, awarded in 1993 to Professor Pleșu by a group of six institutes for advanced study (the Center for Advanced Study in the Behavioral Sciences, Stanford, the Institute for Advanced Study, Princeton, the National Humanities Center, Research Triangle Park, the Netherlands Institute for Advanced Study in Humanities and Social Sciences, Wassenaar, the Swedish Collegium for Advanced Study in the Social Sciences, Uppsala, and the Wissenschaftskolleg zu Berlin).

Since 1994, the NEC community of fellows and *alumni* has enlarged to over 500 members. In 1998 the New Europe College was awarded the prestigious *Hannah Arendt Prize* for its achievements in setting new standards in research and higher education. New Europe College is officially recognized by the Romanian Ministry of Education, Research and Innovation as an institutional structure for postgraduate studies in the humanities and social sciences, at the level of advanced studies.

Focused primarily on research at an advanced level, NEC strives to create an institutional framework with strong international links that offers to the young scholars and academics in the fields of humanities and social sciences from Romania, and to the foreign scholars invited as

fellows working conditions similar to those in the West, and provides a stimulating environment for interdisciplinary dialogue and critical debates. The academic programs NEC coordinates and the events it organizes aim at promoting contacts between Romanian scholars and their peers worldwide, at cultivating the receptivity of academics and researchers in Romania for fields and methods as yet not firmly established here, thus contributing to the development of a core of gifted young academics and scholars, expected to play a significant role in the renewal of research and higher education in Romania.

### **Academic programs currently organized and coordinated by NEC:**

- ***NEC Fellowships (since 1994)***

Each year, up to ten NEC Fellowships for outstanding young Romanian scholars in the humanities and social sciences are publicly announced. The Fellows are chosen by the NEC international Academic Advisory Board for the duration of one academic year (October through July). They gather for weekly seminars to discuss the progress of their research, and participate in all the scientific events organized by NEC. The Fellows receive a monthly stipend for the duration of nine months, and are given the opportunity of a one-month research trip abroad, at a university or research institute of their choice. At the end of the academic year, the Fellows submit papers representing the results of their research, which are published in the New Europe College Yearbooks. This program also includes a number of international fellowships.

- ***Ștefan Odobleja Fellowships (since October 2008)***

The fellowships given in this program are supported by the National Council of Scientific Research in Higher Education, and are meant to complement and enlarge the core fellowship program. The definition of these fellowships is identical with those in the NEC Program, in which the Odobleja Fellows are integrated.

- ***The Petre Țuțea Fellowships (since 2006)***

In 2006 NEC was offered the opportunity of opening a fellowships program financed by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Romania through its Department for Relations with the Romanians Living Abroad. Fellowships are granted to researchers of Romanian descent based abroad, as well as to Romanian researchers, to work on projects that address the cultural heritage of the Romanian *diaspora*. Fellows in this program are fully integrated in the College's community. At the end of the year they submit papers representing the results of their research, to be published in the bilingual series of the *Petre Țuțea* Program publications.

- ***Europa Fellowships (2006 - 2010)***

This fellowship program, financed by the VolkswagenStiftung, proposes to respond, at a different level, to some of the concerns that had inspired our *Regional Program*. Under the general title *Traditions of the New Europe. A Prehistory of European Integration in South-Eastern Europe*, Fellows work on case studies that attempt to recapture the earlier history of the European integration, as it has been taking shape over the centuries in South–Eastern Europe, thus offering the communitarian Europe some valuable vestiges of its less known past.

- ***The GE-NEC III Fellowships Program (since October 2009)***

A new program supported by the Getty Foundation started this academic year. It proposes a research on, and a reassessment of Romanian art during the interval 1945 – 2000, that is, since the onset of the Communist regime in Romania up to recent times, through contributions coming from young scholars attached to the New Europe College as Fellows. As in the previous programs supported by the Getty Foundation at the NEC, this program will also include a number of invited guest lecturers, whose presence is meant to ensure a comparative dimension of the program, and to strengthen the methodological underpinnings of the research conducted by the Fellows.

- ***The Black Sea Link (starting in October 2010)***

This Fellowship Program, sponsored by the VolkswagenStiftung, invites young researchers from Moldova, Ukraine, Georgia, Armenia and Azerbaijan, as well as from other countries within the Black Sea region, for a stay of one or two terms at the New Europe College, during which they will have the opportunity to work on projects of their choice. The program welcomes a wide variety of disciplines in the fields of humanities and social sciences. Besides hosting a number of Fellows, the College will organize within this program workshops and symposia on topics relevant to the history, present, and prospects of this region.

### **Other programs organized since the founding of New Europe College:**

- ***RELINK Fellowships (1996 - 2002)***

The RELINK Program targeted highly qualified young Romanian scholars returning from studies or research stays abroad. Ten RELINK Fellows were selected each year through an open competition; in order to facilitate their reintegration in the local scholarly milieu and to improve their working conditions, a support lasting three years was offered, consisting of: funds for acquiring scholarly literature, an annual allowance enabling the recipients to make a one-month research trip to a foreign institute of their choice in order to sustain existing scholarly contacts and forge new ones, and the use of a laptop computer and printer. Besides their individual research projects, the RELINK fellows of the last series were also required to organize outreach activities involving their universities, for which they received a monthly stipend. NEC published several volumes comprising individual or group research works of the RELINK Fellows.

- ***The NEC-LINK Program (2003 - 2009)***

Drawing on the experience of its NEC and RELINK Programs in connecting with the Romanian academic milieu, NEC initiated in 2003, with support from HESP, a program that aimed to contribute more consistently to the advancement of higher education in major Romanian academic centers (Bucharest, Cluj-Napoca, Iași, Timișoara). Teams consisting of two academics from different universities in

Romania, assisted by a PhD student, offered joint courses for the duration of one semester in a discipline within the fields of humanities and social sciences. The program supported innovative courses, conceived so as to meet the needs of the host universities. The grantees participating in the Program received monthly stipends, a substantial support for ordering literature relevant to their courses, as well as funding for inviting guest lecturers from abroad and for organizing local scientific events.

- ***The GE–NEC I and II Programs (2000 – 2004, and 2004 – 2007)***

New Europe College organized and coordinated two cycles in a program financially supported by the Getty Foundation. Its aim was to strengthen research and education in fields related to visual culture, by inviting leading specialists from all over the world to give lectures and hold seminars for the benefit of Romanian undergraduate and graduate students, young academics and researchers. This program also included 10-month fellowships for Romanian scholars, chosen through the same selection procedures as the NEC Fellows (see above). The GE–NEC Fellows were fully integrated in the life of the College, received a monthly stipend, and were given the opportunity of spending one month abroad on a research trip. At the end of the academic year the Fellows submitted papers representing the results of their research, to be published in the GE–NEC Yearbooks series.

- ***NEC Regional Fellowships (2001 - 2006)***

In 2001 New Europe College introduced a regional dimension to its programs (hitherto dedicated solely to Romanian scholars), by offering fellowships to academics and researchers from South–Eastern Europe (Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Bulgaria, Croatia, Greece, The Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, the Republic of Moldova, Montenegro, Serbia, Slovenia, and Turkey). This program aimed at integrating into the international academic network scholars from a region whose scientific resources are as yet insufficiently known, and to stimulate and strengthen the intellectual dialogue at a regional level. Regional Fellows received a monthly stipend and were given the opportunity of a one-month research trip abroad. At the end of the grant period, the Fellows were expected to submit papers representing the results of their research, published in the NEC Regional Program Yearbooks series.

- ***Robert Bosch Fellowships (2007 - 2009)***

This fellowship program, funded by the Robert Bosch Foundation, supported young scholars and academics from Western Balkan countries, offering them the opportunity to spend a term at the New Europe College and devote to their research work. Fellows in this program received a monthly stipend, and funds for a one-month study trip to a university/research center in Germany.

- ***The Britannia–NEC Fellowship (2004 - 2007)***

This fellowship (1 opening per academic year) was offered by a private anonymous donor from the U.K. It was in all respects identical to a NEC Fellowship. The contributions of Fellows in this program were included in the NEC Yearbooks.

New Europe College has been hosting over the years an ongoing series of lectures given by prominent foreign and Romanian scholars, for the benefit of academics, researchers and students, as well as a wider public. The College also organizes international and national events (seminars, workshops, colloquia, symposia, book launches, etc.).

An important component of NEC is its library, consisting of reference works, books and periodicals in the humanities, social and economic sciences. The library holds, in addition, several thousands of books and documents resulting from private donations. It is first and foremost destined to service the fellows, but it is also open to students, academics and researchers from Bucharest and from outside it.

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Beside the above-described programs, New Europe Foundation and the College expanded their activities over the last years by administering, or by being involved in the following major projects:

### **In the past:**

- ***The Ludwig Boltzmann Institute for Religious Studies towards the EU Integration (2001 - 2005)***

Funding from the Austrian Ludwig Boltzmann Gesellschaft enabled us to select during this interval a number of associate researchers, whose work focused on the sensitive issue of religion related problems in the Balkans, approached from the viewpoint of the EU integration. Through its activities the institute fostered the dialogue between distinct religious cultures (Christianity, Islam, Judaism), and between different confessions within the same religion, attempting to investigate the sources of antagonisms and to work towards a common ground of tolerance and cooperation. The institute hosted international scholarly events, issued a number of publications, and enlarged its library with publications meant to facilitate informed and up-to-date approaches in this field.

- ***The Septuagint Translation Project (since 2002)***

This project aims at achieving a scientifically reliable translation of the Septuagint into Romanian by a group of very gifted, mostly young, Romanian scholars, attached to the NEC. The financial support is granted by the Romanian foundation *Anonimul*. Seven of the planned nine volumes have already been published by the Polirom Publishing House in Iași.

- ***The Excellency Network Germany – South–Eastern Europe Program (2005 - 2008)***

The aim of this program, financed by the Hertie Foundation, has been to establish and foster contacts between scholars and academics, as well as higher education entities from Germany and South–Eastern Europe, in view of developing a regional scholarly network; it focused preeminently on questions touching upon European integration, such as transnational governance and citizenship. The main activities of the program consisted of hosting at the New Europe College scholars coming from Germany, invited to give lectures at the College and at universities throughout Romania, and organizing international scientific events with German participation.

- ***The ethnoArc Project–Linked European Archives for Ethnomusicological Research***

*An European Research Project in the 6th Framework Programme: Information Society Technologies–Access to and Preservation of Cultural and Scientific Resources (2006-2008)*

The goal of the *ethnoArc* project (which started in 2005 under the title *From Wax Cylinder to Digital Storage* with funding from the Ernst von Siemens Music Foundation and the Federal Ministry for Education and Research in Germany) was to contribute to the preservation, accessibility, connectedness and exploitation of some of the most prestigious ethno-musicological archives in Europe (Bucharest, Budapest, Berlin, and Geneva), by providing a linked archive for field collections from different sources, thus enabling access to cultural content for various application and research purposes. The project was run by an international network, which included: the “Constantin Brăiloiu” Institute for Ethnography and Folklore, Bucharest; Archives Internationales de Musique Populaire, Geneva; the Ethno-musicological Department of the Ethnologic Museum Berlin (Phonogramm Archiv), Berlin; the Institute of Musicology of the Hungarian Academy of Sciences, Budapest; Wissenschaftskolleg zu Berlin (Coordinator), Berlin; New Europe College, Bucharest; FOKUS Fraunhofer Institute for Open Communication Systems, Berlin.

### **Ongoing projects:**

***The Medicine of the Mind and Natural Philosophy in Early Modern England: A new Interpretation of Francis Bacon*** (A project under the aegis of the European Research Council (ERC) Starting Grants Scheme) – In cooperation with the Warburg Institute, School of Advanced Study, London (since December 2009)

***Business Elites in Romania: Their Social and Educational Determinants and their Impact on Economic Performances.*** This is the Romanian contribution to a joint project with the University of Sankt Gallen, entitled ***Markets for Executives and Non-Executives in Western and eastern Europe***, and financed by the National Swiss Fund for the Development of Scientific Research (SCOPES) (since December 2009)



***Civilization. Identity. Globalism. Social and Human Studies in the Context of European Development*** (A project in the Development of Human Resources, under the aegis of the National Council of Scientific Research) – in cooperation with the Romanian Academy (starting October 2010)

***The EURIAS Fellowship Programme***, a project initiated by NetIAS (Network of European Institutes for Advanced Study), coordinated by the RFIEA (Network of French Institutes for Advanced Study), and co-sponsored by the European Commission's 7th Framework Programme - COFUND action. It is an international researcher mobility programme in collaboration with 14 participating Institutes of Advanced Study in Berlin, Bologna, Brussels, Bucharest, Budapest, Cambridge, Helsinki, Jerusalem, Lyons, Nantes, Paris, Uppsala, Vienna, Wassenaar. The programme will issue its first call in the nearest future.

Other projects are in the making, often as a result of initiatives coming from fellows and *alumni* of the NEC.

***Present Financial Support (2008-2009)***

The State Secretariat for Education and Research of Switzerland  
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The Ministry of Education, Research and Innovation – the Executive Agency for Higher Education and Research Funding, Romania  
The Ministry of Foreign Affairs – the Department for Romanians Established Abroad, Romania  
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The *Anonimul* Foundation, Bucharest, Romania

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Professor of Philosophy of Religion, Bucharest;  
former Minister of Culture and former Minister of Foreign Affairs of Romania

Marina HASNAȘ, Executive Director

Dr. Anca OROVEANU, Academic Director  
Professor of Art History, National University of Arts, Bucharest

Dr. Valentina SANDU-DEDIU, Permanent Fellow  
Professor of Musicology, National University of Music, Bucharest

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Regula KOCH, Director, Zuger Kulturstiftung Landis & Gyr, Zug  
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Education and Research, Swiss Federal Department of Home Affairs,  
Bern

Dr. Joachim NETTELBECK, Secretary, Wissenschaftskolleg zu Berlin

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Cristian POPA, Deputy Governor, Romanian National Bank, Bucharest

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Bonn

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of Bucharest; Director of the Institute for Regional Cooperation and  
Conflict Prevention (INCOR), Bucharest

Dr. Ulrich SCHMID, Professor for the Culture and Society of Russia,  
University of St. Gallen





## STEFAN DETCHEV

Born Gabrovo, Bulgaria, in 1963

Ph.D., University of Sofia, 2004

Dissertation: *Russophile and Russophobic Ideologies in the Bulgarian Press:  
1886-1894*

Assistant-Professor, South-West University, Blagoevgrad

Nuffic Fellowship, Institute Oost Europa, Universit  t van Amsterdam, 1997

AECI Fellowship, Universidad Complutense de Madrid, 2001-2003

Fellowship at the Central European University, Budapest, 2002

Fellowship at the Center for Advanced Study, Sofia, 2003-2004

HESP Fellowship, Curriculum Resource Center, Central European University,  
Budapest, 2004-2005, 2005-2006

Fellowship at the Center for Advanced Study, 2004-2005

Fellowship at Collegium Budapest, Institute for Advanced Study, 2005

Participation in international workshops and conferences in USA, Great Britain,  
the Netherlands, Spain, Hungary, Greece, Turkey, Romania, Croatia, Bulgaria



# DRESS, FOOD, AND BOUNDARIES. POLITICS AND IDENTITY (1830-1912) The Bulgarian case

This article is a first attempt in Bulgarian historiography to go beyond the history of clothing and food and aiming to investigate their appropriation in political debates on the construction of national ideology, as well as the identity discourse. In this regard, I will concentrate on the images of internal political adversary and the Balkan neighbor as a part of shaping the modern Bulgarian national identity in the period of the 1830s until 1912. This was part of an ongoing process of classification in political discourse on social and national lines based on *cuisine* and dress. For this reason the project will try to put forward an all-embracing view of society. Moreover, the topic is not as narrow as it might appear since cooking and clothing have a lot to do with “the serious” things in life. Besides, as contemporary anthropological and other social studies have shown, there is too much of symbolism attached to food<sup>1</sup> and dress<sup>2</sup> and they say a lot about a society’s attitudes and characteristics.

Food and dress have not been a major theme in scholarship that covers exactly Bulgarian political culture and nationalism. However, the Bulgarian historiography has already shown that for a very long time “Bulgarian” cookery was characterized by uniformity and simplicity and it was not specialized. In the everyday practice the consumption of bread, hominy (*kachamak*), bean, cabbage, peppers, garlic, onions, broth (soup), and stew (*jahnia*) saliently prevailed.<sup>3</sup> The scholars have emphasized the strong influence of Turkish kitchen (a mixture of Arab, Persian, Indian, Mediterranean, Greek, and Egyptian influences) and dress for the high urban strata among Bulgarians, especially in the towns with Muslim, Armenian and Greek population. This tiny minority of affluent Bulgarian urban strata consumes grill meat (*kebab*), *pilaf*, meat ball (*kiufte*), stuffed cabbage or vine leaves (*sarmi*), stuffed peppers (*dolmi*), etc. Moreover, traditionally there were no sweets, instead the high Bulgarian strata borrowed Turkish confectionery (*baklava*, *kadaif*, *halva*, etc.) and sweet drinks (*sherbet*,

*boza*). Just during the feasts, the social categories mentioned above might have a loaf (*pita*), roasted meat, chops, a black-blood pudding (*karvavica*), wine, brandy (*rakia*), sweet pastry (*banica*). It is relevant that in most of the cases the Oriental or Ottoman kitchen was received first among the Bulgarian *chorbadzhii* and after that it was taken on by the urban families to become a “national kitchen”.

It is mainly for the period of the 1860s and the 1870s that the authors usually also highlighted the foreign European innovations like *macaroni*, vermicelli, ham, tomato puree, loaf of bread, goulash, oranges, sweets as well as newly introduced drinks as beer, imported wines, punch, rum.<sup>4</sup>

It was towards the end of the nineteenth century that some people began to drink coffee with milk in a “European manner”. In that way the culinary emerged as a one of the few spheres in which the Bulgarians really gained from the clash of the “European” and “Oriental.” In the 1880s beer became already a fashionable drink in the towns as well as cognac, liqueur, and vermouth. Lemonade began to substitute *boza* and *sherbet* even in the villages. At the turn of the century among the political and social elite, especially for feasts, it was fashionable to provide roe from Greece, wines from France, and sweets from Vienna.<sup>5</sup>

As far as history of dress is concerned we know from recent studies that the difference between rural and urban clothing became more visible about the middle of the nineteenth century. For a very long time the Bulgarian urban elite was under the influence of Turkish and Greek fashion. The Bulgarian urban women regarded Turkish dresses as fashionable and they covered themselves with *yashmak* and wore *shalwars*. The Bulgarian *chorbadzhii* wore *shalwars* as well. It was considered that a fur cap (*kalpak*) differentiated Bulgarians from other ethnic groups. However, from the 1830s onwards the *fez* became part of the urban fashion and the fur cap already converted itself in a symbol of a purely popular trace, but also backward one. Nevertheless, in the 1860s and the 1870s “Europeanization” became quite visible in the Ottoman towns. Whilst the older *chorbadzhii* carry on following the Greek-Turkish fashion and looking towards Istanbul and Damascus, the younger generation turned to “French” or “German” outfits through Vienna and Bucharest. Many authors paid some attention to social, professional and generational differences marked by dress as well as their social and national implications. However, the topic was still not a focus of investigation.<sup>6</sup>



From the very beginning Bulgarian nationalist leaders, politicians and journalists began to express their negative attitude towards modern fashion. In the 1860s on the pages of the newspaper *Dunavski lebed* a patriot like G. S. Rakovski expressed his special preoccupation with female fashion in the following way: *"We are talking about some places in Bulgaria where they have Europeanized, they have put on precious clothes and follow European fashion, and most of the female sex, from most refined European products."*<sup>7</sup> It was 1863 when on the pages of the newspaper *Gaida* P. R. Slaveikov spoke in a similar manner: *"We live in Europe but we are not Europeans, or we have put on European clothes, but we have not taken off the jacket of ignorance, this is the truth."*<sup>8</sup> As one can see, from the very beginning we have a deep anxiety among the Bulgarian patriots from different camps towards modern fashion that was considered in most of the cases as "French."<sup>9</sup>

This article will try to go a step further beyond this broad description of general trends in the field of fashion and food, trying to reveal the political and geopolitical implications of clothing and culinary practices in the public sphere. Bringing together the history of culture and politics I will try to argue that sometimes the "languages" of food and dress had genuine political and national messages. Besides, I will attempt to examine the complex variety of political, social and national meanings attached to food and dress. It is possible that for the lack of space I will not be able to trace down the details of the political implications of *cuisine* within the broader context of agriculture, crafts, (proto)-industrialization, the development of social structure, the emergence of *leisure* class and the economy of waste, psychological assumptions and aesthetic values. It is true as well that specialization and differentiation in *cuisine* as well as important cultural borrowings are related with economic and social stratification, modern urban revolution and the development of the "civilizing process."<sup>10</sup>

On a more concrete level, this article can contribute in revealing some aspects of everyday life including history of costume, history of the face, "gastronomic memory", drinks, and especially the geopolitical and social implications of food and dress in the region.

The approach here will be historical and anthropological, aiming at examining continuity and change over time. I will rely on the methodology already developed in several interdisciplinary studies with an emphasis on nationalism studies, urban history, history of popular culture, social anthropology, intellectual and literary history, but also cultural and

economic history. I will try not to ignore the social and cultural context that gives the objects and practices their meanings; to combine time dimension and looking in a concrete and contextual way coming from history with theoretical and generalized ways of a scrutiny coming from anthropology. Very special attention will be paid to borrowings and inventions and I will try to distinguish between them. I will make an attempt to reveal that South-East European societies were not that different as many people have thought, however, recognizing the differences alongside similarities.

### **Dress and Political Affiliation**

As a result of the Russo-Turkish war of 1877-78 a modern Bulgarian state was established in 1879. A new national state provided a much wider array of career paths open to younger generation and middle-class men. In fact, the “civilizing process”, including efforts to follow the “correct” dress, was inseparable from fashioning and self-fashioning of the modern “*gospodin*”. In this regard, adopting the dress and “gentlemen’s clothes” were part of the requirements for an “honorable” career. Many contemporaries complained that Bulgarian men were following male fashion and were involved in wearing “*tail-coats*”, “*neckties*” and “*fashion*”. Even in the discourse of the political journalism the feasts (*guljaŭ*) organized for the political class were associated with “tail-coats” and “gowns” (*frakove* and *roklŭ*).<sup>11</sup>

Moreover, the strong female energy in society to follow the fashion brought to male preoccupation and negative attitudes towards urban female consumption – “*luxury*”, “*elegant clothes*”, “*dresses*”, “*corset*”, “*face-powder and make-up*”, “*hats*”, “*fashions*”, “*fashionable journals*”.<sup>12</sup> Even one of the women translators of books about marriage complained that young Bulgarian women followed the fashion in “*baby dress*” but not in modern “*child breeding*” in which they were ignorant.<sup>13</sup> This new type of femininity, at least within urban life and culture, had no essential social and cultural barriers. That is the reason why the above-mentioned preoccupation of Bulgarian males towards female fashion, carry on a vivid expression. In May 1893, the official newspaper *Svoboda* (*Liberty*) proclaimed with trouble:

*"Minister's wife, merchant's wife, some small officials' wife, gendarmes' wife, hairdresser's wife – all of them overdressed in the same way and there is no difference between them..."<sup>14</sup>*

As a result, even according to the critical language of *Svoboda*

*"man tends to cease being anymore householder and father while the woman tends to cease being housewife and mother".<sup>15</sup>*

The above-mentioned preoccupations about fashion outfit, new model of life and increasing expenditures were combined with sayings as: *"Bad time to be a husband"* or *"Difficult time to be a parent"*.

However, despite the dominance of the above-mentioned anti-bourgeois and anti-aristocratic type of rhetoric the new cultural models overwhelmingly entered the whole *"society"* starting with the *"officers and high officials' spouses"* and conquering later the *"lower officials' spouses"* and the *"female urban population in the bigger cities"*.<sup>16</sup> Conspicuously, one of the reasons for this strong male preoccupation was the great attractiveness of the new type of culture and way of life that forged new female identities. Therefore, in different moments in the period there was a preoccupation in Bulgarian society with female *"coquette"*<sup>17</sup> and urban female consumption including *"luxury"*, *"elegant clothes"*, *"dresses"*, *"corset"*, *"face-powder and make-up"*, *"hats"*, *"fashions"*, *"fashionable journals"*.<sup>18</sup>

Moreover, the differences in dress could separate along social and even political lines and function as social and political markers. Wearing some garments could have at some instances a pure political message. Often the representatives of the liberals, radical populists and nationalists associated their political adversaries – the young conservatives – with *"white gloves"*, *"perfumes"*, cosmetic *"powder"* and *"corsets"* and ridiculed them as *"elegant"*. This picture contained the connotation that those politicians from the conservative political camp were incapable to serve to their *"fatherland"*. In the beginning of 1881 the young conservatives were depicted as educated in universities, theological schools, and other schools and receiving *"sophisticated white-glove"* education. The newspaper *Rabotnik* explicitly spoke about *"a retrograde, with white-gloves education"*.<sup>19</sup> Otherwise, the old conservatives were portrayed as *"paunchy blood-sucker chorbadzhi"* wearing *"foxy fur-coats"*. The journalists did not miss to mention that they carried also

a “*thick amber chibouks*” (“*debeli kehlibareni chibuci*”).<sup>20</sup> Similar to the young conservatives in the Bulgarian principality, even on the eve of Bulgarian Unification on 6 September 1885, the Bulgarian former revolutionary activists, journalist and writer, member of the radical circles of the Liberal Party, Z. Stoyanov associated the leaders and activists of the adversarial Popular Party in the autonomous province of Eastern Rumelia with a “*mirror*”, “*dye for small mustaches*”, and “*white gloves*”.<sup>21</sup> In that way, using the clothing description, he tried to ridicule them in the predominantly plebeian popular Bulgarian culture and to represent them as somehow feminine and incapable to lead a national policy that would bring the Bulgarian Unification.

Even the differences in smoking habits were marked in the discourse of the political journalism. Whilst in the first years after the establishment of Modern Bulgarian state authors often mentioned smoking *narghile* as a typical sign for former *saltanat* culture in the Ottoman Empire, later it was already tobacco rolled up as a cigarette.<sup>22</sup> About the end of the century more often a “cigarette-holder” (“*cigare*”) appeared on the pages of political journalism as a symbol of delicate, unmanly femininity or claims for aristocratism of the ruling Popular (conservative) Party.<sup>23</sup>

There were some changes in social and national meaning of such signs as a mustache and a beard. One should remember that in the beginning of the Tanzimat period (after 1839) every Bulgarian had had a mustache and the beard was a typical only for the clergy and old people. However, after the 1850s many young people began to have beards as well with a clear political message. In the late 1880s and the beginning of the 1890s the beard became a sign of some socialist and populist thinkers. Nevertheless, it was more a fashion of the time and many political activists had their beards. The mustaches were in fact obligatory as a sign of manliness. Z. Stoyanov describes clerks that follow the orders of their bosses like persons whose “*small mustaches are always in order.*”<sup>24</sup>

## **Dress and Ethnicity**

Besides these social and political boundaries, in the following years clothing very often served to symbolize ethnic and national boundaries as well. Moreover, during the period under consideration there were attempts to delineate – following geopolitical, cultural and national lines –

among the peoples in South-East Europe as far as clothing was concerned. Sometimes dress was even involved in crossing the boundary between social criticism and ethnic prejudice.

In fact, the political and national importance of dress was not unknown for the population and the Bulgarian political and church leaders. It was still in the beginning of the 1870s when they were not afraid that much of the possible schism with the Orthodox Patriarchy in Istanbul than of the possible change in the attire of the future priests in the Bulgarian Exarchate. According to the leadership of the Patriarchy the uniform of the Bulgarian priests should be changed in order to express externally the separation between the “schismatic” Exarchate clergy, on the one hand, and the clergy of the Orthodox Patriarchy, on the other.<sup>25</sup> However, the Bulgarian ecclesiastical and secular leaders knew very well the symbolic importance of dress in the political and cultural domains. They realized that priest without beard or without traditional Orthodox costume could look very ridiculous in the eyes of the ordinary flock. Moreover, perhaps they were not sure whether the ordinary congregation would prefer to join the “Bulgarian” church with that kind of strange and ridiculous priests or the “Greek” church with traditionally dressed ones. Besides, trying to make pressure on the Ottoman authorities, the Bulgarian leaders of the struggle for ecclesiastical independence pointed out that in this case they could receive the clothes of the Russian Orthodox clergy.<sup>26</sup> In this regard, the Ottoman authorities were wise enough to understand the risks of the possible kind of symbolism.

The same importance of dress and uniform was to demonstrate its importance after the Russo-Turkish war of 1877-78 when the Modern Bulgarian state was established together with the autonomous province of Eastern Rumelia that was left within the borders of the Ottoman Empire. Meanwhile we notice that Ottoman culture was not related in the Bulgarian political and national discourse symbolically to food or even dress but to religion and a particular culture of hygiene. Almost common Ottoman dress influenced ethnic stereotypes in the previous decades. For long the religious turban (“*chalma*”) was the only differentiation marker and it had been considered as a sign of Turkishness and Ottomanness. However, at that period it was the *fez* that became a symbol of the non-national, Ottoman rule and domination. In 1878, according to the Treaty of Berlin, Eastern Rumelia was set up as an autonomous province within the Ottoman Empire. There were Bulgarians, Greeks and Ottoman

Turks and Muslims who populated the province that was supposed to be ruled by a Governor-General. On March 13, 1879 with the protection of Russia and with the consent of the Great Powers Aleko (Alexander) Bogoridi was appointed as a first Governor-General. For a long time Aleko Bogoridi was an Ottoman statesman of Bulgarian origin, but coming from a Fanariot family he did not speak Bulgarian language at all. He was the son of the influential Stefan Bogoridi and a brother of Nicolae Vogoride, a prominent Moldavian politician. Aleko Bogoridi received his education in the Great School of Istanbul, in France and also studied State Law in Germany. He held different high-ranking positions in the Ottoman Empire. Because of the Bulgarian majority in Eastern Rumelia it was considered as very important what kind of cap Aleko would wear at the moment of his reception at the Plovdiv railway station. If he had *fez*, it would mean that he was more inclined to play a role of Ottoman administrator. However, if he would wear a fur cap it would mean that he was to follow the feelings of the Bulgarian majority in the autonomous province. As Simeon Radev wrote:

*"In the good feelings of Aleko pasha nobody had any doubts, but with what kind of instructions he would have come from Istanbul? How he would enter Rumelia – as a head of one, in fact, free province or as a Turkish vali. The population asked itself the question in a more concrete way; it asked itself: whether he would come with a fez or with a fur cap (kalpak). It had never been so crucial what a person had put on his head...."*<sup>27</sup>

In this case the fur cap, that had been considered for a long time a symbol of a lower social status, somebody "uncivilized" and backward,<sup>28</sup> it became a symbol of the Bulgarianness of the Governor-General and the province itself. Moreover, the *fez* loosed its meaning of fashionable urban clothing and was considered as a sign of Ottoman domination and rule. That is the reason why on his departure from Istanbul, together with the *fez*, Aleko Bogoridi took also a *fur cap*. When he got out of the train at the Plovdiv railway station the powerful cheering came from the crowd. And as S. Radev noted: *"In this fur cap Rumelia saluted the symbol of its liberty."*<sup>29</sup>

One should keep in mind that protesting after the establishment of Eastern Rumelia against sending Ottoman troops to the Balkans and against the flag with a half-moon, the prevailing Bulgarian public opinion

was also against different “*pashas*” wearing “red *fez*”.<sup>30</sup> Nevertheless, the Ottoman rule or government carried on to be embodied discursively in the symbol of “*chalmi*” (turbans) and “shaved heads” as well.<sup>31</sup> Even later the newspaper *Plovdiv* describes picturesquely how the “Russian government” put on “*bigger turban even than the Turkish one, forgetting about Orthodoxy, and Slavism...*”<sup>32</sup>

Besides the fur cap (*kalpak*) very often “sandals” (“*tzarvuli*”) and “dirty sandals” were represented as embodiments of something popular, considered as typical in national (Bulgarian) and social terms at the same time. Z. Stoyanov juxtaposed to the clerks and government officials in Eastern Rumelia the “*dirty sandals*” of an ordinary man. Moreover, in April 1886 the Bulgarian journalist, the politician and the future Prime-Minister D. Petkov underlined how the “democracy” for which at the moment they were fighting in Europe was inscribed on the “*sandals and the fur cap of every Bulgarian*.”<sup>33</sup> Therefore, together with the fur cap “*the sandals*” became an important element of the Bulgarian national costume at the time. Despite their striving to follow modern European fashion, the Bulgarian patriots, the representatives of the Bulgarian political class or intelligentsia, although distancing themselves from the traditional peasant costume, they used its elements (like in the case of the fur cap and the sandals) to embody or symbolize what was the meaning of Bulgariannes and Bulgarian clothing.

As far as ethnic and national boundaries are concerned the “*white gloves*” carry on being the symbol of Russian, nationally and socially alien aristocratic life in Petersburg.<sup>34</sup> Moreover, influenced by Russian populism and socialism, the Bulgarian students in Russia were depicted by their political adversaries in Bulgaria as “*naked and shabby students*”, “*with red shirts, torn high boot and coats without buttons*”, “*with long hair and dirty shirts*”, with “*miserable dress, long uncombed hair, wide caps, cynical behavior in society*”.<sup>35</sup> Otherwise, the Bulgarian students from the West were depicted with “*cylinders*” and “*expensive and elegant clothing*.”<sup>36</sup> Those images and the way of gazing to national clothes reflected how the differences between what was considered Bulgarian culture or way of dressing, and the alien, Russian one, were viewed most of all in the fields of differences based on Russian aristocracy and Russian “nihilists” appreciated as different from what was supposed to be Bulgarian – more ordinary, plebeian, urban and peasant middle class as well as reasonable.

## Food and Political Affiliations

It is evident that food and culinary were part of the political discourse as well. To illustrate the interconnections and interdependence between culinary and politics it deserves mentioning that one of the bestsellers at the time written by M. Grebenarov was entitled *"About economic and sad Macedonia. About the killed consulates. Advices how to prepare baklava and rahat-lokum"*. It deserves also mentioning that "bread" itself was part of important political slogans in the future. Many examples could be given how even the striving for political power was very often described exactly in culinary terms as a combat for a "bone".<sup>37</sup> Moreover, the very pre-election campaigns often involved food and drink. As the Bulgarian lawyer, writer, journalist and a member of the Democratic Party Aleko Konstantinov wrote in one of his feuilletons, the election campaign was accompanied with *"barrels with wine"* (*"bachvi s vino"*), *"barrels with fat cheese"* (*"kaci s tlasto sirene"*), and *"bakery of bread"* (*"furna hljabove"*).<sup>38</sup>

It should be emphasized that some of the Bulgarian national customs concerning food and culinary practices were adapted in the period even after 1879. One of these "inventions of traditions", using E. Hobsbawm's term,<sup>39</sup> was the reception of guests with bread and salt. As again S. Radev wrote it was *"a Slavic custom transmitted by the Russians in Bulgaria"* during the Russo-Turkish war of 1877-78 when the Bulgarians had to receive the Russian troops. In that way some important guests in the future begun to be received with *"bread and salt on one silver dish, artistically manufactured."*<sup>40</sup> In the very beginning this custom was considered even foreign and that was the reason why Z. Stoyanov spoke many times about *"hlebosolie"* as something more Russian than Bulgarian.<sup>41</sup>

Typical for the modernization process was that beer became also part of everyday life of the clerks in the towns. However, especially in the first years after the establishment of the modern Bulgarian state, typical Ottoman *saltanat* carried on being part of political discourse especially in order to describe some representatives of the older generation of *chorbadzhii* connected with the Conservative Party. On the eve of the Unification between the Bulgarian Principality and Eastern Rumelia on September 6, 1885 vivid description was represented on the pages of the newspaper *Borba*. It told the story how high members of the Popular Party in Eastern Rumelia drank brandy (*rakija*) listening at the same time the



noise of the dice of the backgammon they were playing.<sup>42</sup> Some Bulgarian or Eastern Rumelian statesmen were depicted with rosaries in their hands as well.<sup>43</sup> In a rhetoric that was hostile towards Bulgarian *chorbadzhii* and their behavior in the years before the establishment of the Bulgarian state very often they were depicted as drinking *mastika* (anise-flavored brandy) together with some Greek bishops or Ottoman officials.<sup>44</sup> All these cases testify how this *saltanat* culture so inherent to the tiny Bulgarian affluent strata in the Ottoman Empire and the members and followers of the Conservatives Party after the establishment of the modern Bulgarian state was a combination of modern and Oriental or Ottoman. However, in the following years, the new type of culinary was used in the political discourse in order to describe the affluent table of the Bulgarian political class or at least the new dreams among the political class what did it mean a rich table. It included already different “refreshments” (*zakuski*) like “*roes*”, “*pates*”, “*sausages, Bordeaux, cheeses, pine-apples, champagne*”.<sup>45</sup> It seems also that it was typical for the person with a lower social rank to send postcard or “*slivovica*” (plum brandy) to some high official for some special occasions like New Year or a saint’s day.<sup>46</sup> Moreover, even the discourse of the political journalism reflects that beer became a normal drink of the modern urban everyday life.<sup>47</sup>

It should be added that within the Bulgarian social and cultural context every culinary symbol had sometimes not just national, but social “reading” as well. It seems that the Bulgarian culinary practices continued the old traditions of the great social contrasts between the ordinary peasant population and the tiny minority of the affluent urban strata. On the eve of the Bulgarian Unification of September 6, 1885 Z. Stoyanov juxtaposed the popular, plebeian meal of the ordinary people “*peppers without vinegar*” (“*piperki bez oacet*”) to the governmental circles in Eastern Rumelia around the Popular Party and their supposed rich table.<sup>48</sup>

It should be remembered that for a very long time tea did not become part of the Bulgarian culture of drinking. Moreover, it was considered that only someone who was ill could drink tea.<sup>49</sup> One can come across many examples when tea culture was used in the political discourse to draw social and political boundaries as well. Tea was regarded as a pointless demonstration of elegance or as a political sign for Russophiles or young Bulgarian students influenced by Russian socialism.<sup>50</sup> In Eastern Rumelia drinking tea in the town hall (“*konak*”) with a Governor-general became a sign of collaboration with authorities and high position or ranking.<sup>51</sup>

Later invitation for “tea” was to be considered again as an unnatural, pointless demonstration of aristocratism, a custom that was alien for ordinary Bulgarians.<sup>52</sup> Even in the mid 1890s Aleko Konstantinov made in a feuilleton an irony with an imaginary Russian journalist invited to the Bulgarian court to drink “tea” with Prince Ferdinand.<sup>53</sup>

On the contrary, coffee seems to be politically a sign of pleasure, of everyday life that was part of a broader urban culture, typical for conservatives, liberals and radically oriented.<sup>54</sup> After the establishment of modern Bulgarian state coffee begun to spread even among broader urban strata.<sup>55</sup> In this case important in the political discourse was not whether you drink coffee but with whom you drink your coffee. Whether you drunk it with the Governor-generals like Aleko Bogoridi or Gavril Krastevich or not.<sup>56</sup>

### **Food, Politics and Ethnicity**

It is interesting to emphasize how Bulgarians mapped different neighboring nations using the prejudices concerning culinary and food. In this regard there were some relationship between supposed “national kitchen” and ethnic stereotypes. Since the 1880s the Serbs often began to be depicted in the Bulgarian political press as eating pigs and drinking plum brandy (*slivovica*).<sup>57</sup> It is true that most of the Bulgarians usually drunk grape brandy (*grozdova rakia*), but in the Balkan mountain area plum brandy (*slivova*) was part of the everyday life as well. Romanians were sometimes described in the political discourse as “hominy eaters” (“*mamaligari*”)<sup>58</sup> but again despite the fact that the Bulgarians very often put just corn on the table too. Nevertheless, the image of Romanians as “*mamaligari*” could be seen as an embodiment of the very idea that Romania is still a country with bigger social contrasts. In fact, the image of Romanians as “*mamaligari*” and the association of Romania with “*mamaliga*” or “*sacred mamaliga*” were very strong and persistent during the whole period.<sup>59</sup>

Using the same discourse of culinary and food the Bulgarians mapped some more remote nations as well. Englishmen were associated with *beefsteak* and the Italians with *macaroni*. For a very long time the Germans were accompanied by images of beer and potatoes (“*beer drinkers*”, “*potato heroes*”). In this regard, one should keep in mind that until the 1880s beer

was not very popular in Bulgaria. The same is true about potatoes as well. First potatoes were received among the Bulgarian population about the 1820s through Romania around the town of Ljaskovec and through Serbia and Greece about 1847. However for a long time even after 1877-78 they were not very popular. As latecomers they became more a symbol of the modernization of Bulgarian agriculture in the coming years.<sup>60</sup> It was even before the establishment of Modern Bulgarian state when a Bulgarian politician, revolutionary leader and journalist like Liuben Karavelov wrote about "*German bear-drinkers*"<sup>61</sup> or "*German potato hero*".<sup>62</sup> Even in the late nineteenth and the beginning of the twentieth century there was somewhere still suspicion towards potatoes.<sup>63</sup>

The newspaper *Tyrnovska konsttucija* blamed *Independence* for ridiculing the Russian bell since the Englishmen had "beefsteak", the Italians "macaroni", but the Bulgarians "wooden wine vessel". In this regard *Tyrnovska konstitucija* wrote the following:

*"The Russians have bell, tea-urn, the Bulgarians wooden wine vessel, the Englishmen beefsteak, the Italians macaroni, but neither the bell, nor tea-urn, or macaroni have done something so far, that a person could donkijotnichi with them. Every people is worthy of himself; every government is worthy of his people."*<sup>64</sup>

To this Z. Stoyanov answered: "*Yes, that is true, but neither the English, nor the Italians, want to impose on foreign heads their own beefsteak and their macaroni, when in Russia it is the opposite – which Russia 'T.K.' knows.*"<sup>65</sup> One should add that even in the mid 1890s in the political journalism "beefsteak" carried on to be a symbol of Englishness.<sup>66</sup>

It is extremely interesting that some nations like Turks and French were not usually associated with food and drink. By and large, one can make a conclusion that probably because of the common cooking habits of the Balkans there was not that much pejorative language as far as *cuisine* was concerned. The boundaries between Ottoman or Turkish culture, on the one hand, and the Bulgarian one, on the other, concerned more the specific culture of "splendor" ("*saltanata*"), "ablution pitchers" ("*ibricite*"), religious circumcise ("*sjunetat*"), "the harems" ("*haremite*") and religious holidays as "the bayram" ("*bajrama*"), "Ramadan" ("*ramazana*") and others, but not the products of food and culinary.<sup>67</sup> It is especially visible with the case of the Russians when we have a great variety of Bulgarian

images concerning food and drinks as "*samovar*" (tea-urn), "*tea*", "*acorn*", "*yeast*" (*kvas*), *vodka*, fish, *borshch*, *soleti*, etc. In fact, despite common Orthodoxy and Slavism, because of the different cultural zones in which the Bulgarians and the Russians lived, food and culinary became important tools for drawing boundaries between what was "Bulgarian" and what was "Russian." Sometimes even with strong irony and sarcasm authors like Z. Stoyanov spoke about "*tea*", "*vodka*", and "*seledka*" emphasizing products that were considered typical for the Russian culture and cuisine and alien to the Bulgarian one.<sup>68</sup> In the beginning of 1891 the official newspaper *Svoboda* ("Liberty") expressed its certainty that the other Great powers would not permit Russia "*to sip us like sour borshch...*"<sup>69</sup> Even in the mid 1890s Aleko Konstantinov associated the Russian culinary with "*blinami*" as well as "*aubergine paste, and cream, and salmon, and anchovy...*" ("*ikra, i smetana, i semga, i anchosi*").<sup>70</sup> He also drew boundaries between *vodka* that was drunk by the Russians, on the one hand, and *rakia* ("brandy") drunk by the Bulgarians, on the other.<sup>71</sup> In fact, "*rakia*" came in Bulgaria about the end of the fourteenth century with the invasion of the Ottoman Turks.<sup>72</sup> A special emphasize was put on the food of the Russian peasant that was associated with low quality as "*mekina instead of bread*",<sup>73</sup> "*instead of bread acorn and mekina*".<sup>74</sup> Moreover, it was the Russian peasant who very often was depicted as drinking and associated with "*vodka*".<sup>75</sup>

Despite this opposition on the level of Russian peasant there was another one on the level of Russian aristocracy when together with the "white gloves" special importance was given to the powerful images about the "*steam of the lovely tea*" and "*tea of prekuska*".<sup>76</sup> It is known that drinking tea in a Russian way was something very specific. For the Russian tea table tea-urn was obligatory and it should be put on the left side of the householder. In the nineteenth century in the Russian noble families' tea was served with rum, cognac, liqueur and wine.<sup>77</sup> In this regard, the contrasts between the Bulgarians and the Russians, as far as drinking tea was concerned, were unavoidable. It deserves mentioning that tea was not part of the traditional popular culture among Bulgarians. It was normal a person to drink tea just in case that he or she is ill. Otherwise people normally did not drink tea. That was the reason why drinking tea became important element in drawing social and ethnic boundaries. One of the articles of the Bulgarian journalists that were directed against the Russian interference in the Bulgarian internal affairs

was called "*Demokrat with a bell on his head and tea-urn in his hands*."<sup>78</sup> Even later "tea" ("*chaj na prekuska*") carried on to be represented as an embodiment of Russian aristocratic life in Petersburg.<sup>79</sup> The connotations here were clear. It was emphasized what was considered as overtly female and pointless elegance typical for the Russian aristocracy through the eyes of the Bulgarian traditional popular culture. In the opposition to the Russian aristocratic women drinking "tea" Z. Stoyanov depicted with a proud plebeian discourse the image of Bulgarian "old-ladies" associating them with "*grate radish*".<sup>80</sup>

Generally speaking, all the time in the Bulgarian nationalistic and anti-Russian discourse it was possible to mention that the Bulgarian did not drink that much as Russians; he did not drink "*vodka*" and he did not eat "*seledka*", but different kinds of wine and worm-wood wine with "*fresh kebab with salt and black pepper*"; he did not have "*tea-urn*" and he did not drink "*tea with prekuska*"; he did not eat "*balik*" cut in special "plate" ("*tarelka*"), "*varene ot malini*" and "*soletki*"; did not consume "*sour borshch*". In this regard, I would like to make two comments. Some scholars have already noticed that in the folklore the mentioning and usage of wine clearly prevailed that of *rakia*. According to them this means that different wines were better known to the Bulgarian mentality.<sup>81</sup> As one can also see here we have salient Oriental dishes as *kebapi*. It is clear that this habit is before the diffusion of sunflowers and sunflower oil that appeared on the eve of the First World War and brought in the following years to mass cooking with thickenings (*zaprazhki*).<sup>82</sup>

Within some junctures there were attempts to construct or to rely on common Balkan identity based on Ottoman heritage and habits like eating and drinking because the Bulgarians and the Turks "*used to eat and drink together...*" During the political crises of 1886-87 the Bulgarian journalists and later politician and a Prime-Minister D. Petkov wrote: "Despite that we are bad infidels, we are not as much as the Russians are because we are regarded as "*toprak kardashlar*". We have eat, we have drunk, we have grown in one land."<sup>83</sup> The common culinary practices and dishes have been noticed by many observers who emphasized the similarities in cuisine and drinks among Bulgarians, Turks, Greeks, Serbs, Romanians, etc.<sup>84</sup> What I would like to stress here is that sometimes they were used in the national political discourse in order to justify certain foreign political orientation as well.

Different kinds of food products and dresses became also symbols of Bulgarian identity and habitus.<sup>85</sup> In that way it was based on the whole rhythm and culture of everyday life evolved from the agrarian system in the Ottoman Empire [barn (*hambar*) with “food”, flat earthen baking dish (*podnica*), or basement (*maaza*) with wine and old wormwood wine (*pelin*); bread, white and red wine, old wormwood wine (*pelin*), “fresh grill meat with black pepper”, wooden wine vessel (*baklica*), “sandals and a fur cap” (“*tzurvuli and kalpak*)”].<sup>86</sup> There was also a kind of idealization of the Bulgarian home with its “basement” (“*izba*”), “stables” (“*jahari*”) “small garden” (“*gradinka*”), “small vines” (“*lozici*”), “courtyard” (“*dvor*”).<sup>87</sup> Z. Stoyanov created the image of the “happy Bulgarian” whose “barns are full with wheat, rye, barley and millet”, who has “lying in the flat earthen baking dish several barrels with wine, one white, other red, in the third old wormwood wine etc.”<sup>88</sup> Even in 1887 Z. Stoyanov again, writing about the Bulgarian riot in 1876 and the efforts of the Bulgarian revolutionary leaders to convince the Bulgarian peasants to burn their villages, emphasized the following: “*The Bulgarian cannot be cheated. It is death for him every freedom, which is not connected with home, furniture, cornfield, vineyard, and old wormwood wine.*”<sup>89</sup> In this regard Z. Stoyanov definitely appropriated an old discourse. It was still 1859 when G. S. Rakovski wrote: “*It is rare in Bulgaria to have Bulgarians without vineyards. The peasant regards himself as unhappy and it is a shame for him if he has no vineyard.*”<sup>90</sup> Moreover, he also emphasized the following: “*It is rare a Bulgarian peasant family that does not drink wine, which it has at home from its own vineyard.*”<sup>91</sup> The same was confirmed about the 1880s by a Czech observer saying: “*Everyone, even the poorest has its own vineyard.*”<sup>92</sup>

In the mid 1890s on the eve of the Paris world fair Al. Konstantinov, under the pseudonym “Shtastlivec”, was looking for “*something originally ours, something purely Bulgarian*”.<sup>93</sup> That is why he depicted with irony an imaginary ordinary poor Bulgarian “*rural house*”, in his own words “*maison bulgare*”, symbol of peasant poverty. Among different things inside he mentioned explicitly food products and dishes like “*hotchpotch*” (“*giuvech*”) as well as “*three strings of peppers and three plaits of garlic*” (“*tri naniza chushki i tri splita chesan*”). To this picture the author added the “*cellar*” (*zimnik*) with a “*keg with sour cabbage*” (“*kache s kiselo zele*”), “*earthen jar with pickled vegetables*” (“*delva s turshija*”), an “*earthenware pot with cheese*” (“*garne sas sirene*”). According to the author’s idea in the

room was supposed to situate two “*paysans de Danube*” with “*glaze by the time fur-coats*” (“*gledzhosani ot vremeto kozhusi*”).<sup>94</sup> Aleko Konstantinov even stated out explicitly, again with irony, that it would be difficult to organize this section of the exhibition that would cover “*Bulgarian culinary art*”. In this regard he wrote:

*“Bulgarian kitchen – here is one question! That is the question! – would say Shakespeare. Let just for an attempt to make here a list of Bulgarian “manji”, but really (hasyl) Bulgarian, not invented and stolen ones. I begin: sop (popara), chutney (liutenica), leek pasty (zelnik), pumpking-pastry (tikvenik) ... O, gentle Lord Creator, help me! No, no, no, seriously, is there anything more! Men and women cooks, philologists and collectors of popular proverbs, save the honor of Bulgaria!”*<sup>95</sup>

As one can see the deconstructivist approach towards “national kitchen” was not the priority of the modernist scholars working on nationalism from the 1970s onwards. There were some contemporaries who also noticed some traces of the processes of appropriation, domestication, adaptation, construction and invention at the time.

## Conclusion

In fact, food and culinary terminology was not that much central in the “purely” political and national discourse. Of course, there were some stereotypes but they were not in the core of it and crucial for its structuring. In my opinion, in most of the cases culinary and clothing rhetoric just underpinned the discourse. One of the possible explanations is that for long time economic issues or starvation were not part of the political debates. It is also clear that in the political discourse the usage of the great variety of dishes was avoided. One can hardly find in it dishes like jerked meat (*pastarma*), flat sausage (*lukanka*, *sudzhuk*), but only *kebap*. That means that they were not very often on the table and because of this it was impossible to have such a deep symbolic meaning. In the case when the difference was more visible, the Bulgarians – like many others – were disposed to make judgments and conclusions that were not always correct. However, the specific influence of different historical, social, political and cultural factors brought to different types of *habitus* that was impossible to be essentialised. Moreover, the lack of usage of many dishes in the

political discourse shows that they were not used every day, perhaps even by the richer Bulgarians too.

Despite the poverty according to many foreign criteria, the great majority of the Bulgarian peasants were relatively satisfied until the end of the nineteenth century. For a long time the peasantry was not a real challenge for the political authorities. That was the reason why there was opportunity to see the peasant life as an ideal one at the same time. It is not by accident that in the nationalistic discourse the juxtaposition was normally searched in the relation to Rumanian or Russian peasants having in mind the severe agrarian problems in those countries.

The political and national discourse clearly demonstrated the profile of predominantly rural society in the Bulgarian principality. It also shows how Bulgarian peasants were people with relative wealth, not rich but with lower expectations from life. Moreover, Bulgarian society was with a tiny urban strata and even tinier affluent minority. It is clear that in the Bulgarian case we have insignificant leisure strata as well. The discourse concerning food and dress is a reaction of the transition that took place from predominantly Ottoman *saltanat* culture of the affluent part of the Bulgarian society to a more "European" one as a result of the ongoing "modernization" process that had its traces on the consumption of food, drinks, and way of smoking.

From the examples presented here one can draw some conclusions concerning national kitchen and national costume. In both cases it is not necessary to be very clever in order to put them on deconstruction. In the period under consideration the national costume included "*kalpak*" and "sandals". It means that despite the fact that the representatives of the Bulgarian political class and intelligentsia followed more European fashion and never wore those kinds of dress they used traditional Oriental clothes to represent what was specifically Bulgarian. One can add here that full-bottomed or tight legged breeches ("*poturi*") were very similar to Ottoman *shalvars*. Moreover, as Al. Vezenkov emphasized the very word "*kalpak*" was Turkish as well and wearing *kalpaks* the Ordinary Bulgarians look after more to the Crimean Tatars than to the Ottoman elite officials.<sup>96</sup> According to him, it also deserves mentioning that Mustafa Kemal Atatürk gave order to wear exactly *kalpaks* or as it was said in his law "*shapka*" (tur. *şapka*) instead of *fez*.<sup>97</sup> It is strange that in their desire to make clear boundaries between what was considered Ottoman and what was considered Bulgarian, the contemporaries preferred a national



uniform that would have some elements of the costume of the Crimean Tatars or Chirkasians but not close or similar to that of the Ottoman officials like the *fez* they usually put on their heads.

As far as national kitchen is concerned, in most of the cases the Oriental or Ottoman *kuisine* was received first among the Bulgarian *chorbadzhii* and after that it was widespread among the urban families to become or at least to be received as a “national kitchen” later. It deserves mentioning that some of the “national” dishes from nowadays are very late “inventions” or cultural borrowings, like, for example, *shopska salad*. Moreover, as the Bulgarian historian Alexander Vezenkov has emphasized with irony in one recent article on Turkish borrowings in the contemporary Bulgarian language present-day “Bulgarian” dishes serves in the traditional Bulgarian “*mehana*” includes *kiufteta*, (tur. from pers.. *köfte*), *kebabcheta* (tur. from armen. *kebab*) and *shishcheta* (tur. *şiş*) as well as *giuvecheta* (tur. *güveç*), vegetables and meat on *sach* (tur. *saç*), *chevermeta* (tur. *çeverme*) and other specialties of the house and the “national kitchen.”<sup>98</sup> However, even in our period – apart from *kebab* – this rhetoric was not yet part of the Bulgarian “national” kitchen. Moreover, those dishes were definitely not part of the everyday life of the Bulgarian urban middle class and peasant majority. There was still some work left for those who were supposed to construct and invent what was supposed to be “national”.

## NOTES

- <sup>1</sup> See for example Goody, J. *Cooking, Cuisine, and Class: A Study in Comparative Sociology*. New York: Cambridge Univ. Press, 1982; Pilcher, Jeffrey, M., *Food in World History*. New York: Routledge, 2006; Civitello, Linda, *Cuisine and Culture: A History of Food and People*. Hoboken, N.J., 2004; Wiley; Belasco, Warren; Scranton, Philip (eds), *Food Nations: Selling Taste in Consumer Society*. New York: Routledge, 2002.
- <sup>2</sup> See for example Perrot, Phillipe *Fashioning the Bourgeoisie: A History of Clothing in the Nineteenth Century*. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1994.
- <sup>3</sup> It was still 1553 when a French traveler noticed: "*Bulgarians do not take great care for their stomach and for food they are pleased with bread, salt, garlic, onion, and yoghurt.*" Tzvetkova, B. (ed.), *Frenski patepisi za Balkanite XV-XVIII vek*, (French travel writings about the Balkans) vol. I, 1975., 130. With the exception of the holidays the things were not that different in the nineteenth century as well.
- <sup>4</sup> Gavrilova, R. *Koleloto na zhivota. Vselidneviето na balgarskija vazrizhdenski grad*. (The Wheel of Life. The Everyday Life in the Bulgarian Revival Town) Sofia: Universitetsko izdatelstvo "Sv. Kliment Ohridski", 1999., 111-127.
- <sup>5</sup> Ilchev, Ivan, *Mezhdено време ili balgarinyt mezhdy dve stoletija*. (Interstice Time or the Bulgarian between Two Centuries) Sofia, Kolibri, 2005, pp. 204, 206.
- <sup>6</sup> Gentchev, N. *Francia v bylgarskoto duhovno vyzrazhdane*. (France in the Bulgarian Spiritual Revival) Sofia, Universitetsko izdatelstvo "Sv. Kliment Ohrodski", 1979., 369, 384-412.; Gavrilova, 1999, 128-167.
- <sup>7</sup> Rakovski, G. S. *Sachinenija*, vol. 2, Sofia, 81.
- <sup>8</sup> Slavejkov, P. R. "De sme I kak sme" (Where we are and how we are), *Gajda*, III, No. 7, 1.04. 1863.
- <sup>9</sup> How this phenomenon was part of broader European model of nationalist reactions towards fashion see Maxwell, Al. *Sartorial Nationalism and Symbolic Geography*, unpublished paper under Europa Fellowship Program at NEC, Bucharest.
- <sup>10</sup> Elias, Norbert *The Court Society*, vol. 2 *The Civilizing process*. New York: Pantheon, 1982.
- <sup>11</sup> *Mlada Balgaria*, I, No. 30, 25.10. 1895.
- <sup>12</sup> Debe, D-r A. *Filosofia na braka. Liubovta, shtastiето, sypruzheskite simpatii i antipatii*. (Philosophy of the marriage. Love, happiness, conjugal sympathies and antipathies,) Prev. T. N. Popova. Varna, pechatnica L. Nitche, 1885. 100-101; Svoboda, VII, 15 01 1893., No. 1006. D. Levov. *Neshto za prostitucijata*, (Something about prostitution) 2-3. 21 05. 1893., No. 1103. *Nashite obshetstveni i semejni jazvi*, (Our social and familiar ulcers) 2-3.; VII, 22.05. 1893, No. 1104., 2.; Vazov, Iv. *Sabrani sychinenija*, vol.. VII, C.,

- 1976., 191.; See also "Medicinska beseda", II, ed. d-r Vitanov, 1895-96., *Vredata ot noseneto na korseta*, (The harm from the wearing of corset), d-r Sprjakov, 338-342.
- 13 Debe, 1885, 75.
- 14 Svoboda, VII, 21.05. 1893., No. 1103., 2-3.
- 15 *Ibid.*
- 16 *Medicinska beseda*, *Op. cit.*, 338.
- 17 Rodoljubec, I, 18.01. 1890., No. 39. *Koketnichestvo* (Coquetry), 5-6. Vazov, Iv. vol. VII, 1976., 191. Literature on "new woman" was to appear some years later. Bois, Jules *Novata zhena*. Prev. ot fren.. Sliven, pechatnica "Balgarsko zname", 1899. See for example also the response in *Misal*, IX, Dec., No. XII, C., 1899., 558-560.
- 18 Debe, 1885., 100-101; Svoboda, VII, 15 01. 1893., No. 1006. D. Levov. *Op. cit.*, 2-3. 21 05 1893., No. 1103., p. 2-3.; VII, 22.05. 1893, No. 1104., 2.; Vazov, vol. VII, 1976., 191.; See "Medicinska beseda", *Op. cit.* 338-342.
- 19 Rabotnik, I, No. 7, 21.01. 1881.
- 20 Rabotnik, I, No. 9, 07.02. 1881.
- 21 Stoyanov, Z. Sachinenija, vol. 3, Sofia: *Balgarski pisatel*, 1983., 123.
- 22 *Mlada Balgaria*, I, No. 36, 27. 10. 1895.
- 23 Konstantinov, Al. *Razni hora, razni ideali* (Different people, different ideals) – Konstantinov, Al. Sychinenija, v.. 2., Sofia: Balgarski pisatel, 1974., 156.
- 24 Borba, I, No. 1, 28 05. 1885
- 25 Markova, Z. *Balgarskata Ekzarhija 1870-1879*. Sofia: Balgarska akdemija na naukite, 1989., 53.
- 26 Markova, Z., 1989., 5
- 27 Radev, S. *Stroiteli na syvremenna Balgaria*. vol. 1, Sofia: Balgarski pisatel, 1990, 141.
- 28 Recent analysis of "kalpak", in my opinion, without much historical context see in Radev, R. *Ot kalpaka do carvulite*. (From kalpak to the sandals) Varna, 2002.
- 29 Radev, S. , vol. 1, 1990, 142.
- 30 Statelova, El. *Iztochna Rumelija (1878-1885). Ikonomika, politika, kultura*. Sofia: Izdatelstvo na Otechestvenja front, 1983.
- 31 Rabotnik, I, No. 1, 1.01. 1881.
- 32 Plovdiv, 12.08. 1890., No. 61. *Bylgarskoto preselenie v Rusia*. (Bulgarian migration to Russia), 1.
- 33 Nezavisimost, I, 5.04 1886, No. 9. *Literaturna letopis*, 4.
- 34 Stoyanov, Z. *Dokumenti po prevrata na 9 avgust*. S., 1887, 7.
- 35 Nezavisimost, No. 4, 15.03 1886. Z. Stoyanov "Demokrat" s kambana na glavata I samovar v rycete, 1.; I, 28.06 1886., No. 30., 3.; Svoboda, No. 112, 24.12. 1887., Z. Stoyanov *Socializmyt v Balgaria*, 2.; No. 113, 31.12 1887., 2-3.; V, 23.02 1891., 2.; VI, 11.06. 1892., No. 832., 1.

- 36 Svoboda, VI, 11.06. 1892., No. 832., 1.
- 37 Borba, I, No. 4, 18.06. 1885., Stoyanov, Z. Sachinenija, vol. 3, 118, 127.
- 38 Zname, I, No. 43, 20.01. 1895.
- 39 Hobsbawm, Er.; Ranger, T. (eds.) *The Invention of Tradition*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1983
- 40 Radev, S., vol. 1, 1990, 167.
- 41 Nezavisimost, I, 2.04.1886, No. 8. Z. Stoyanov. Do Georgja Kardzhiev, redactor na v. "Napred", 2.; 12.04 1886., No. 11. Z. Stoyanov, *Slanceto sprjano!*, 1-2.; I, 28. 05. 1886., No. 22., 3. Svoboda, No. 43-44, 2 04. 1887. Z. Stoyanov *Prikaz po vojskam.*, 1-2.; Svoboda, No. 37-38, 14.03. 1887. Z. Stoyanov. *Ruskite vestnici*, 1-2.
- 42 Stoyanov, Z. Vol. 3, 125.
- 43 *Ibid.*, t. 3, p. 135.
- 44 Zname, II, No. 22, 9. 11. 1895.
- 45 *Mlada Bulgaria*, I, No. 30, 25.10. 1895.
- 46 Konstantinov, Al. *Razni hora, razni ideali ...*, 149.
- 47 *Ibid.*, 150.
- 48 Stoyanov, Z., 1983, vol. 3, 117.
- 49 Sedefcheva, V. *Travestijata na chaja*. – In: *Trapezatas v kulturata na balgari i sarbi*. Veliko Tarnovo: Univesritetsko izdatelstvo "Sv. Sv. Kiril i Metodij", 2004, 101.
- 50 Ilchev, Iv. *Mezhdeno vreme ili balgarinyt mezhdu dve stoletija*. Sofia: IK "Kolibri", 2005.
- 51 Stoyanov, Z. *Sachinenija...*, vol. 3, 119.
- 52 Nezavisimost, I, No. 11, 12. 04. 1886.
- 53 Konstantinov, Al. *Torzhestvuiustaja Bolgaria* (Triumphant Bulgaria) – Konstantinov, Al, vol. 2., 1974., 108.
- 54 This is my impression from its usage in the political journalism. In the beginning of the 1870s it is somehow confirmed also by T. Ikonov who considered the coffee among the drinks of the middle class people - neither affluent people nor the poorest ones. See Ikonov, T. *Filosofski i sociologicheski sachinenija*. Sofia, 1983, 125.
- 55 Georgiev, G. *Osvobozhdenieto i ethnokulturnoto razvitie na balgarskja narod 1877-1900*. (The Liberation and the ethno-cultural development of the Bulgarian people) Sofia, 1979., 168.
- 56 Borba, I, 28.05. 1885.
- 57 Svoboda, IV, 15.02. 1890., 6p. 339. Za "brachata", 2.; IV, 15.09. 1890., No. 395., 1.; Svobodno slovo, I, 25.03, No. 17.
- 58 Savremennik, No. 2, 1889, Razgrad.
- 59 Konstantinov, Al. *Occupatiunea Bulgariei de la armata nostra*. – Zname, I, 26.07. 1895.

- 60 Pavlov, Iv. *Prisastvija na hrankeneto po balgarskite zemi prez XV-XIX v.* Sofia: Akademichno izdatelstvo "Prof. Marin Drinov", 2001., 45-46.
- 61 Karavelov, L. Sachinenija, vol. 9, 38
- 62 *Ibid.*, vol. 9, 39.
- 63 Pavlov, Iv., 2001., 48-49, 55.
- 64 *Tarnovska konstitucija*, III, 29.03 1886., No. 18., 1.
- 65 *Nezavisimost*, No. 12, 19.04 1886
- 66 *Zname*, I, No. 58, 29.03. 1895.
- 67 *Dojde mu vremeto Ot R.K.* Sofia, 1886., 14-15.
- 68 *Svoboda*, No. 79, 29.08 1887. Z. Stoyanov. *Tablica na chernite*, 2-3.
- 69 *Svoboda*, V, 4.01 1891., No. 425., c. 1.
- 70 Konstantinov, Al., 1974., 108.
- 71 Konstantinov, Al. *Materiali dlja izuchenii Bolgarii – Konstantinov*, Al. Sachinenija, vol. 2., Sofia: Balgarski pisatel, 1974., 116.
- 72 Pavlov, Iv., 2001, 60.
- 73 *Svoboda*, No. 47, 15.04. 1887., Z. Stoyanov. *Slavjanofilite.*, 2.
- 74 *Svoboda*, No. 13, 13.12 1886. Z. Stoyanov *Ruskite slavjanofili*, 1-2.
- 75 *Svoboda*, III, 18.03 1889., No. 253. *Bylgarskija gravdanin i ruskija muzhik*, 3.; IV, 13.01.1890., No., 3.
- 76 Stojanov, Z. *Dokumenti po prevrata ...*, 7.; *Svoboda*, No. 43-44, 2.04. 1886. Z. Stoyanov. *Prikaz ...*, 1.; No. 51, 29.04 1887. Z. Stoyanov. *Novite proizvodstva*, 2.
- 77 Sedefcheva, V. *Travestijata ...*, 2004, 100.
- 78 *Nezavisimost*, No. 4, 15.03 1886. Z. Stoyanov. "Demokrat" ..., 1.
- 79 Stojanov, Z. *Dokumenti po prevratat ...*, 7.; *Svoboda*, No. 43-44, 2.04. 1886. Z. Stoyanov. *Prikaz ...*, 1.; No. 51, 29.04 1887. Z. Stoyanov *Novite proizvodstva*, 2.
- 80 *Svoboda*, No. 51, 29.04 1887. Z. Stoyanov. *Novite proizvodstva*, 2.
- 81 Pavlov, Iv. *Prisastvija...*, 61.
- 82 *Ibid.*, c. 96.
- 83 *Nezavisima Balcarija*, No. 60, 14.02. 1887.
- 84 A. Kiossev, "The Dark Intimacy: Maps, Identities, Acts of Identifications." In: Bjelic Dusan I., Savic Obrad (eds.) *Balkans as metaphor. Between Globalization and Fragmentation*. Cambridge, Mass: The MIT Press, 2002, esp. pp. 167, 169-170, 172. According to the Bulgarian historian Alexander Vezhenkov the positive discourse on "the Balkans" is not only about underestimating or denying the Ottoman heritage but it is also about appropriating it, about "converting" it to "Balkan heritage". According to him a lot has been written about the use of the characterization 'Balkan' as a stigma, but the very same name 'Balkan' is also used as a euphemism to avoid terms such as 'Turkish', 'Islamic', 'Ottoman' or 'Oriental'. In this regard, according to Al. Vezhenkov, 'Balkan cuisine' is a widely used

denomination for traditional Turkish and Oriental dishes and in many cases the same is valid also for 'Balkan music' and more generally for traditional 'Balkan culture'. See Vezenkov, Alexander "History against Geography: Should we always think of the Balkans as part of Europe?" - In: *History and Judgement*. A. MacLachlan, I. Torsen, eds. Vienna: IWM Junior Visiting Fellows' Conferences, Vol. 21., pp. 10-11.

- 85 Using the term *habitus* here I refer to those aspects of culture that are anchored in the body or everyday practices of different individuals and groups. It includes learned habits, different styles and tastes that "go without saying" for a specific group. Although it was developed still in Marcel Mauss and Norbert Elias, after 1960s the concept of habitus was developed and elaborated by sociologist Pierre Bourdieu. He extended the scope of the term to include a person's beliefs and dispositions. An individual's disposition, according to Bourdieu, is predetermined by the social habitus. For more see Bourdieu, Pierre. *Esquisse d'une théorie de la pratique*, Genève, Editions Droz. (éd. revue), Paris, Editions du Seuil, 1972.
- 86 Svoboda, No. 13, 13.12. 1886. Z. Stoyanov *Ruskite slavjanofili...*, 1-2.; Svoboda, No. 63, 10.06. 1887., *Syrbskata kriza*, 1-2.
- 87 Svoboda, No. 111, 20.12. 1887. Z. Stoyanov. *Socializmyt v Balgarja*, 2-3.; VII, 8.05. 1893., No. 1095., 2.
- 88 Svoboda, No. 13, 13.12. 1886. Z. Stoyanov. *Ruskite slavjanofilite...*, 1-2.
- 89 Quoted according to Stoyanov, Z. *Zapiski po balgarskite vastanija*, Sofia, 1976., 460.
- 90 Rakovski, G. S. Sachinenija. Vol. IV. Sofia: *Bylgarski pisatel*, 1988., 76.
- 91 Rakovski, G. S., 1988, vol. IV., 51
- 92 Quoted following Pavlov, Iv., 2001, 72.
- 93 Konstantinov, Al. *Skromna lepta na obshtija zhertvenik* – Konstantinov, Al. Sachinenja, vol. 2., Sofia: Balgarski pisatel, 1974., 162.
- 94 *Ibid.*, 164.
- 95 *Ibid.*, 167.
- 96 Vezenkov, Al. "Paradoksalnata upotreba na turcizmi v balgarskija nacionalen diskurs" – *Literaturen vestnik*, No. 17 / 3-9.5.2006, 10-11.
- 97 Vezenkov, Al. "Paradoksalnata upotreba...", 10-11.
- 98 *Ibid.*, 10-11.



## SVETLANA DONCHEVA

Born in 1973, in Bulgaria

Ph.D. Candidate, Institute for Balkan Studies, Bulgarian Academy of Sciences,  
Sofia (dissertation to be finished in 2006)

Dissertation: *Institutions of Self-administration in the Balkan Provinces of the Ottoman Empire: Christian Guilds in Adrianople, Bitola and Pazardzhik during the 19<sup>th</sup> Century*

Fellowship of the Greek Ministry of National Education and Religious Affairs,  
University of Crete, Rethymno, 2004-2005

Participation in conferences in Romania and Bulgaria

Papers published in Bulgarian and Greek academic journals and collective volumes

Participation in research projects jointly organized by the Institute of National History, Skopje, Macedonia and "Nicolae Iorga" Institute of History, Bucharest, Romania





# SMALL REVOLUTIONS ON THE TABLE: MODERNIZATION OF FOOD HABITS IN THE BULGARIAN TOWNS DURING THE 19<sup>TH</sup> CENTURY

*"We may learn more about man's problems from the menu of a banquet than from the account of war events, from a cookery book than from a set of diplomatic paper, and from the statistics of food products than from the story of court intrigues"*<sup>1</sup>

During the second half of the 18<sup>th</sup> and the 19<sup>th</sup> century the Balkans became a place where two different mainstream lines crossed – the European line of the Enlightenment and the Oriental one. As a result of this interaction several modernization processes started – the bourgeoisie was slowly formed and the urban intelligentsia was created. The latter was the main social power involved in the development of new mental processes, which transformed everyday life, people's relations, attitudes to life and death, i.e., the transformation of everything that could be called mentality.

The presented paper is focused on only one aspect of the process of the modernization of mentalities, specifically the formation of diverse attitudes towards the feeding process that lead to radical changes in the living customs of the urban strata during this period. I will not discuss here what "modernization" is. I use the word "modern" according to its common usage, to indicate that a person or a practice are up to date, that they are different from the out-of date practices or people of the past.<sup>2</sup>

The region chosen for the research are the Central Balkans and specifically the Bulgarian lands. This region was situated in close proximity

of the Ottoman capital Istanbul, and, in addition, in an area that remained for a long time under Ottoman rule. As a center of the peninsula, the Bulgarian lands compounded influences from both East and West. The neighboring countries of the region – Greece, Walachia (Romania) and Serbia, became too a powerful source of influence over the urban life in the Central Balkans throughout the urban population that studied and worked there. This was a mixture of Balkan and European influences transformed in the light of the Balkan realities.

The main aim of my research is to trace the ways in which new ideas and realities reached the everyday life and customs of the Bulgarian urban population in the 19<sup>th</sup> century. The investigation is focused on the way in which the new mentalities lead to the creation of a new feeding culture. Here are some points to be demonstrated. The new feeding culture contained changed attitudes to feeding habits – as an instrument for healthy life and, at the same time, as an amusement. Scientific literature appeared and terms like “dietetics” and “healthful life” went into circulation. The new perspectives on life lead also to a different attitude towards religious fasts, which have been the only controller of the dietary customs for a long time. The religious view on abstinence conceded its place to the Enlightenment’s idea of moderation in feeding habits. For a long period this idea was contrary to another new moment in the attitude to feeding, like its relation to art and amusement. I will also analyze the reasons for which the feeding stereotypes were transformed and the reactions of the bourgeoisie to the new ideas.

The attitude to food could be understood only throughout an investigation of cookery. In the beginning of the 19<sup>th</sup> century it wasn’t sacrament or art or entertainment but housework. However, during the next decades cookery acquired all the above-mentioned characteristics. The publishing of the first cookbooks in the Balkans could prove this fact. It expresses not only the development of the urban environment, but also deep mental changes.

The comparative analysis used in the research will provide a representative picture of the researched areas. The sources, taken into consideration, range from memoirs and diaries of Bulgarian urban intelligentsia to various scholarly studies and articles in the Bulgarian nineteenth-century popular magazines (whose aim was not only to present different kinds of food but also to reveal the damages of being heavy-handed with food), and scholarly books on healthy living. Foreign travel notes

contain useful information on how the different national cuisines from the Balkans were seen by westerners. The first cookbooks published in the region constitute a rich source material for food habits and practices. Various guilds' and merchants' documents will be consulted, too.

One can examine food and feeding in several discourses – religious, scientific /mostly medical/, social, even in the context of amusement and entertainment. But before doing so, we can take a glimpse of what the urban population from the chosen region ate during the 19<sup>th</sup> century. Many factors influenced the development of the menu and food habits of a given society or region. First of all, the geographical factor determined the kinds of fruits and vegetables to be planted and the kinds of animals to be raised in the region. Besides, financial factors, which set the quantities and the quality of the food to be produced and bought, and even ethnical factors, were of no less importance. Due to the Ottoman rule in the Bulgarian lands, for instance, the Turkish cuisine had an enormous impact on the Bulgarian one. Another factor is the so-called “guildsman culture”, strongly patriarchal, whose main purpose was to make money, out of the food goods in particular.

My example is the usual menu of a family from Koprivshtitsa, which was a middle-size town, with a population of 6-8,000.<sup>3</sup> In his memories, Mihail Madzharov, born in 1854, described the usual menu of his family, which included mostly bread, beans, peas, vegetables, cabbage and sauerkraut, pepper, pickled vegetables, onions etc.<sup>4</sup> The vegetarian food predominated, but the meat was part of the family's menu. He wrote up the way of preparing various kinds of preserved pork and sheep. Here we should add that the Madzharov's family was among the rich families in the town, because of the merchant activities of the father who reached Egypt. We dispose also with the later observations of Jozef Antonin Voracek, who was of Czech origin. He worked in Sliven in late the 1870s and early 1880s of the 19<sup>th</sup> century. Since he was interested especially in Bulgarian everyday life, his publications on foods and feeding are quite detailed. According to him, Bulgarians were vegetarian nation because they were eating mostly vegetables and they had meat only on special occasions.<sup>5</sup> However, the author lists quite a large number of various meat dishes, which were part of the Bulgarians' menu, when they did not fast. Among them were almost all kinds of meat – beef, lamb, goat, chicken, and

duck – boiled or roasted with vegetables; during the winter dried meat, different kinds of sausages, salt pork, and game, too.<sup>6</sup>

It is impossible, of course, to speak about townsmen's feeding habits without having in mind the social and professional stratification. There existed too many social boundaries between the poor and the rich, between guildsmen and their apprentices, between the urban people and villagers who moved recently to the town, between newly formed intelligentsia and the old community members. Here are some examples. Petko Slaveykov, a prominent Bulgarian poet, journalist, publisher and teacher, wrote that during his childhood his family happened to be very poor. For this reason his mother was compelled to weave for her neighbors and usually received for her work one *oka* flour. And his father was helping in a butchery where he was given chitterlings and this was the only meat they tasted.<sup>7</sup>

The different position in professional hierarchy led also to different menus. Kiro Tuleshkov from Târnovo provides a good example for this. In his "Memories"<sup>8</sup> he dedicated several pages to the meals eaten by the master's assistants and apprentices from the town's guilds. The master paid their food. The bread for the workers was made of cheaper flour – a mixture of grain, rye, pear barley, millet and corn. In this way the masters reduced their expenses through the low quality and quantity of flour, and as a result the bread was not tasty and the workers were eating less of it. During the non-fasting days the master bought very fat meat for the same reason, and namely, to make the workers to eat less. Meat of good quality was not bought because its higher price. During the spring fasts the apprentices were picking nettle, after that pigweed, dock, and saltbush and were cooking soup. However they were not cooking spinach because it had to be bought from the market. During the winter the main dish was sauerkraut but it had to be cooked – usually boiled with rice, otherwise the workers were eating too much bread with it. Later the masters started to buy beans, too. During the non-fasting days pork or sheep meat and *pastârma* made from goat were added to the sauerkraut.<sup>9</sup>

Among the first developments were the merchants' and craftsmen' shops that appeared in such places, where different kinds of food and food products were sold. Most of the townsmen had their own garden and animals. For a long period of time this kind of food supply was basic for the bigger part of the urban population. Gradually, and due to various reasons, townsmen started providing themselves with food mainly from the

market. This led to changes in the menu of the urban population. It should be noted that bakeries, butcheries and groceries existed long before the 19<sup>th</sup> century, especially in the cities and bigger towns, where administration and garrisons existed. In the town of Bitola, for instance, there were more than twenty professions and different shops involved in public alimentation.<sup>10</sup> We can divide them into several groups, and namely: producers of bread and related products such as bakers, producers of *simit* (small round bread), and *burek*, producers of meat and meat products like butchers, producers of salami, *pacha* (headcheese), *meze*, and *kebab*, producers of milk and cheese. The other group includes professions related to production and sale of different drinks and sweets such as coffee, *sheker*, *halva*, *leblebia* and other sweets, as well as sellers of lemonade and so-called *mrazari* who offered ice for the lemonade.

There were three different guilds responsible for the sale of vegetables and fruits – *bahchevandzhii* (gardeners), *zarzavatchii* (sellers of vegetables) and *emishchii* (sellers of fruits). And finally, to the professions which played role in the alimentation of the urban population we can add the owners of taverns, inns, and other different places for cooking and eating, among them *handzhii*, *ahchii*, *gostilnichari*, *krachmari*. Most of the people who were involved in these businesses belonged to guilds with numerous members.

Many other similar examples related to different guilds involved in food production and trade could be shown. Among the Christian guilds in Adrianople, for instance, whose members paid taxes to the local Christian community, there were guilds of *balaktsides* (fishermen), *furundzides* (bakers), *undzides* (producers of flour), *kaimaktsides* (cream makers), *handzides* (inn keepers), *patsadzides* (headcheese makers), *ahtsides* (cooks),<sup>11</sup> *mpozadzides* (*boza* makers).<sup>12</sup> In Skopje there was a guild of *dondurmadzhii* who made ice cream,<sup>13</sup> in Shoumen – of *sherbetchii* (sherbet makers).

For sure not all of these crafts appeared only in the 19<sup>th</sup> century. Besides, all these towns were among the biggest in the region with a population exceeding 20,000 people. However, it was namely that century when guilds of bakers, butchers, *zarzavatchii*, *halvadžhii*, cooks, etc. were extant almost in every town. This fact only proves that the urban population gradually (faster in the bigger towns and slower in the small ones) pointed at buying not only the basic food products like bread and meat.

Some changes in the food habits could be provoked by the market opportunities, or more precisely, by offering of new food products, already known at other places. One of these products without which we cannot imagine today's Bulgarian cuisine are potatoes. They reached the Bulgarian lands via different ways and in different time. In 1825 the abbot of the Preobrazhenski (Transfiguration) Monastery, near Târnovo, noted in the monastery's chronicle that gardeners from Liaskovets had brought for the first time potatoes and had taught the monks and the local population how to cultivate them.<sup>14</sup> Several years later, in 1835, D. Smrikarov from Samokov in West Bulgaria brought potatoes to the town, probably from Serbia. We can see where potatoes came from even from their names. The word "*kartoŭ*", which is today the name of this vegetable in standard Bulgarian language, derives from Romanian, while in Romanian it is borrowed from the German "*kartoffel*". Another name of the plant, which testifies the same Bulgarian – Romanian connection, was introduced by the above mentioned gardeners – "Wallachian beans". In some regions, it is a dialect wording still in use. From the Czech lands, probably again through Wallachia, came the word "*baraboy*" from the Czech "*brambor*".<sup>15</sup> The German designation for potatoes "*grund birne*" passed into Serbian, where it was transformed into "*krompir*" or "*krumpir*" and afterwards it reached the west Bulgarian lands, where today potatoes are still called "*kompir*". From the Greek word "*πατάτες*" the word "*patati*" entered the south Bulgarian lands. This very detailed description only proves heterogeneous influence over the Bulgarians' every day life, and over the food habits, in particular.

Although the appearance of the potatoes proclaimed true nourishing revolution in Central Europe, nothing happened like this in the Bulgarian lands. French economist Jeromme Adolphe Blanqui who visited Bulgaria in 1841 noted in his book *Voyage en Bulgarie pendant l'année 1841* that the potatoes are almost unknown and he couldn't order potatoes anywhere during his visit.<sup>16</sup> The potatoes were not much used in Koprivshitsa even during the 1860s. The grandmother of M. Madzharov had told him, that she remembered when they started to grow potatoes in the town. They were very rare and many of the people did not want to eat them because they looked like brain. But later when they started to roast them, people began to cultivate them more.<sup>17</sup>

Although several articles which included information about potatoes and advice on how to grow them were published in the first Bulgarian

periodicals (the first one was published in *Liuboslovie* magazine in 1844<sup>18</sup>) even during the 1870s they were still rare. Most of the articles dealing with the usefulness of the potatoes were published exactly during the 1870s. The prominent Bulgarian publisher Hristo Danov explained in his encyclopedic calendar *Letostrui* that potatoes are God's blessing during the cold years when there is not enough grain and in those regions, which are mountainous and cold, and the grain could not be grown there. According to him it is good in these mountainous regions to grow more potatoes because it would help the paupers.<sup>19</sup> Another writer and publisher, Ivan Bogorov, in his article "The village's doctor" recommended:

"The "baraboy"- this priceless wart, which when there is starvation, feeds the European poor people, is food, very nice and good for the health; it is put on the table both in the rich and the poor house. It won't be bad if every one of the villagers sows in his yard several roots of "baraboy" and then it won't be necessary to loan grain and to return it after the harvest two or three times more."<sup>20</sup>

The poor cultivating of potatoes impressed the Czech teacher who came in Bulgaria after the Liberation in 1878. Jan Wagner wrote in the beginning of the 1880s:

"The potatoes are sold in Bulgaria in kilos like the apples at home... Previously the cultivation of potatoes was almost unknown. More serious attempts for their distribution were made right after the Russians came but the results are not encouraging."<sup>21</sup>

A couple of years later, in 1884, the Czech Konstantin Jireček drew the same conclusions, explaining that potatoes started to disseminate slowly only then, and still they were almost unknown in some mountain regions.<sup>22</sup>

Another plant, which is basic for the contemporary Bulgarian cuisine, but became known only during the second half of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, is the tomato. Considering the name "*domat*" it was probably brought from the Mediterranean. Although it was known by Bulgarians and before mid-19<sup>th</sup> century they were using only the green tomatoes for pickles. In his manual for healthy life, *Zdravoslovie* (1865), Sava Dobroplodni advised the readers to eat more plants and less meat. He listed a great number of

vegetables and fruits such as pumpkins, cucumbers, spinach, cabbage, salad, onions, turnip, leeks, melon, water melons, eggplants, gumbo, even anginari, which are not typical for the contemporary Bulgarian cuisine, but did not mention tomatoes.<sup>23</sup> Nikola Enicherev, who was a teacher in the town of Prilep in Macedonia, remembered that before his arrival in the town in late 1860s its inhabitants haven't eaten potatoes and ripe tomatoes.<sup>24</sup> In his *Memoirs*, Mihail Madzharov noted that only in 1868, when he was on pilgrimage to Jerusalem, he tried for the first time salad made of ripe tomatoes.<sup>25</sup> In the region of Plovdiv and Rodopi mountains the word "*frankiove*" (that is "franks") was used as a name for this vegetable. Another similar name is "*frenk patladzhan*" (meaning "French eggplant").<sup>26</sup> The naming is probably connected to the French workers who built the railway of Baron Hirsh in the early 1870s. The first Bulgarian cookbook published in 1870 includes a recipe for stuffed tomatoes under the condition that "tomatoes are available".<sup>27</sup> However, in the second book, five years later, tomatoes were not mentioned among the vegetables known in the urban cuisine,<sup>28</sup> which shows that they were not popular enough even in the mid-1870s.

Corn was another less popular food. We do not have any information when not only animals, but also humans began consuming it. The first sources mentioning it are dated 1799. In the history of his life called *Legend*, the monk Sofroniy described how he was forced to eat bread made of corn in the house of a poor family from the town of Pleven during the Great Fast before Easter. It seemed to be something unusual for him.<sup>29</sup> The attitude towards corn as food is rather condescending even half a century after that if we have in mind some lines written in the Manual for ethnographic studies of G.S. Rakovski:

"It is remarkable that the Bulgarian peasants eat bread and not mamaliga (polenta) as some neighbor nations do. But some times they say: let's boil kachamak, i.e. mamaliga. One can see that the Bulgarians have eaten bread for a long time and they call the mamaliga divenik, i.e. food for wild people!"<sup>30</sup>

In contrast to these new but still known foods many other products introduced to Bulgarian cuisine, were in fact previously totally unknown. They came in different ways with their own names. Unfortunately, we usually do not know how these innovations like macaroni, *franzela* (white



bread), *jambon*, and sandwich appeared for the first time in the Bulgarian towns. There are a few sources and one of them is Todor Burmov's *Memoirs*. He studied in Russia and came in the town of Gabrovo to work as a teacher. He was using *samovar* for preparing tea<sup>31</sup> – a drink, which couldn't manage to become as popular among the Bulgarians as the coffee for example. Tea was usually used as a medicine and only those who had spent some time in Russia drank black tea. Again T. Burmov wrote about an Italian merchant who came in Gabrovo for business. He invited to a dinner teachers and merchants and served them "European food" prepared with *jambon*.<sup>32</sup>

Although we don't have information about the quantities of food products sold in the urban markets, we can trace also changes in the quantity of some foods consumed. The most significant example for this is the meat. Further to the religious limitations in the consumption of meat, there were other regulations which prescribed when and what kind of meat to eat. For example mutton was cooked for the occasion of wedding, funeral, engagement, town's fair, memorial service; pork was cooked for Christmas, lamb – for the day of Saint George, chicken – for the day of Saint Peter. Besides these there were other limitations, too – no young animals were butchered until the Saint George's day, veal was eaten during autumn, when it was difficult to feed the cows.<sup>33</sup>

The changes in meat consumption happened mainly for economical reasons. The trade with meat, mostly sheep, increased significantly in the Bulgarian towns from the late 18<sup>th</sup> and the early 19<sup>th</sup> century. Among the richest Bulgarians were the so called "*dzhelep*".<sup>34</sup> In conformity with special order of the sultan, they were supplying with meat the biggest Ottoman cities in the Peninsula like Istanbul and Adrianople. The increased trade led to an excessive meat supply on the market. In smaller towns like Drianovo, Samokov, Sevlievo, etc., the merchants who were selling meat even created special "*dzhelep*" guilds. These guilds traded not with animals but with different meat products<sup>35</sup> Hristo Daskalov, a native of Triavna wrote:

"My grandfather used to say that earlier when Stoyan the Butcher was butchering one sheep, after that he was carrying it around whole week and could not sell the meat; and now even if twenty sheep would be butchered per day, they will be sold"<sup>36</sup>

Religion was the only regulator in the field of nourishment until the end of the 18<sup>th</sup> century. As a matter of fact, the Orthodox fasting days all together take up almost two thirds from the year. The Long Lent (the main Easter fast) lasts forty-five days, the fasts before the day of Saint Peter (celebrated on June 29<sup>th</sup>) – thirty-five days, the fast of Holy Mother (celebrated in August) – fifteen days, and the advent (Christmas fasts) – forty days. We should add also to these holidays the Wednesdays and the Fridays because they are fasting days, too. So, there were only 134 non-fasting days during the whole year, while the number of the fasting days was 232.

Usually fasts days were kept very strictly. In Silistra those who did not observe the fast were labeled as “Jew”, “Frank-Mason” and “Turk” – i.e., someone who is an outsider of the Christian community.<sup>37</sup> And here is an indicative example from the mid-19<sup>th</sup> century town of Kalofer. Once, during the fasts of Saint Peter, eggs with butter were cooked in the house of a certain family. But the tasty smell of the butter spread fast in the *mahalla* and half of the townsmen became aware of that until the evening. The consequences for the family started after that. The child was laughed upon at school and was forced to go back home crying. The priest did not go to the house to sanctify water, even though he had been invited twice. When the townswomen happened to meet the sinful woman, they were watching at her badly, ready to beat her with their distaffs and wishing her bad things like a thunder striking her house, or the death for someone in her family. Moreover, a long period of drought and sickness of a lot of children was thought to be due of neglecting the fasts.<sup>38</sup>

Nikola Enicherev, a teacher in Prilep, remembered that one of the town’s elders told him “My dear teacher, I like you very much, but if I see you greasing (i.e., eating meat or other animal food), I will kill you”.<sup>39</sup>

In the town of Koprivshtitsa all the townsmen kept the fasts without exceptions, even those on Wednesdays and Fridays. Moreover, some women fasted on Mondays, too, as one of the church punishments, which generally excluded men.<sup>40</sup>

However, the attitude towards fasting also became a subject of change. People belonging to the upper social stratum had rather neglectful attitude toward the observation of religious fasts. In this respect Petko Slaveykov’s autobiography provides a good example. In 1845 he was advised by Hagi Minco, one of the most influential people in Tryavna not to reveal to the villagers his fast inobservance. Hagi Minco himself confessed that

he had eaten meat during the Long Lent, but nobody could reproach him at all.<sup>41</sup> Another evidences about this different attitude one can find in the above-mentioned memoirs of Kiro Tuleshkov who remembers how, during the fasts, the soup for the workers was cooked without butter, but the master cooked for himself with butter, because he did not consider that sinful.<sup>42</sup>

Not only some of the rich people, but also some well-educated people had a different attitude to the religious limitations. The available sources provide a lot of such evidence. In late 1850s in Gabrovo the doctor Vicho Paunov told the young ordinary boys that fasts are a superstition, but was warned by one of the teachers to stop claiming this. Panov studied medicine in France and it was naturally for him to have different views on this issue. Ivan Seliminski's behavior provides another similar example. He studied in the famous Greek high school in Kidonia, then he was a student of medicine in Athens, and afterwards he lived for a long time in Bucharest and Brashov. Sava Dobroplodni, the translator of the first manual for healthy life, blamed Seliminski who, as an alumnus, had a mocking attitude towards the instructions from Atone and fasting.<sup>43</sup> Such a neglecting and negative attitude towards fasting was spread not only in the Bulgarian lands, of course. The Greek monk Athanasios Parios, teacher in the island of Chios and fierce opponent of the Enlightenment, wrote at the beginning of the 19<sup>th</sup> century that all these people, who went to study in Europe, boasted with their way of feeding and got free from their superstitions.<sup>44</sup>

Besides the evolutionary attitude towards religious fasts, a new one, which could be called revolutionary, appeared during the 1870s. Zachari Stoyanov, participant in the uprising of April 1876, mentioned in his "Notes on the Bulgarian uprisings": *"Bay Ivan, as many other rebels, wasn't an absolute Christian... Except on Wednesdays and Fridays, he also didn't keep the fasts even during the Great Lent."*<sup>45</sup>

Hristo Botev, a prominent Bulgarian poet, who also participated in the April uprising, and a great opponent to the Orthodox priests and church, appealed:

"Instead of forbidding the different popular traditions... they could destroy the fasts which have killed the energy and the physiological power of the bigger part of the nation and which led this nation ...to the level of herbivores."<sup>46</sup>

Another step further on the development of attitudes towards feeding is the appearance of the first scientific publications – books and articles, which had to do with the different aspects of the feeding process, the various kinds of foods, and appropriate diets. This step became possible after the appearance of a small group of well-educated people who spoke foreign languages. On the other side, there were enough readers whom these – mostly translated, especially at the beginning – books were addressed to.

In 1837 Rayno Popovich, who was a teacher, translated from Greek into Bulgarian the book *Hrisotithia*<sup>47</sup>, which could be translated as “A Manual of Useful Knowledge and Good Manners” or as “A Guide to Etiquette”. It was addressed mainly to the young people, but also to all others interested in these matters.

The book contained advices about how to behave both in public spaces and in the family, about the relations between the people. Moreover, it dealt with clothing, walking, the way of talking. The manual included gnomes from the ancient culture and described the lives of some Greek philosophers like Aristotle, Plato, Homer, and Pythagoras. It included also a part, which is of particular interest for us, dealing with culinary practices and table manners. The author gives some useful advices about the table manners – to wash hands before eating, not to spit, not to cough, not to scratch, not to eat fast and greedily, not to fill the mouth with food, not to sip, not to throw bones on the floor, not to lick the fingers, not to talk with a full mouth, which is according to the author “a rustic manner”, and many other advices about the proper behavior at the table.<sup>48</sup> This book was republished in 20 years – in 1855 in Tzarigrad/Istanbul/.

*Igionomia* was another similar publication, which became quite popular. The title could be translated as “A Guide to Health and Hygiene”. This book was written originally in French and Greek by the teacher Arhigen Sarantev and translated into Bulgarian by the teacher Sava Dobroplodni. It was published in three editions – in 1846 in Tzarigrad,<sup>49</sup> in 1853 in Zemun,<sup>50</sup> and in 1865 in Bolgrad.<sup>51</sup> S. Dobroplodni noticed in the last edition’s introduction, that after so many books, which spoiled the mind, it is necessary to have one about health and health care.<sup>52</sup> A separate chapter is dedicated to foods and feeding. The author drew attention to the main reason, which, according to him, brings sicknesses: uncontrolled feeding. And he continued:

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# ХРИСТОИѢ

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## БЛАГОПРЯВІЕ

ПРИГОВОКУЩЕНІЯ

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на Славено - болгарскїатъ нашъ ѣзыкъ  
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### РѢИНА ПОПОВИЧА

изъ Жѣравна  
Карловскагѡ Ёллино - грѣческагѡ оучителѡ.

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посвѣщѣна

на

ГОСПОДИНА Г. МЯЛКИ ВОЛКА ЧОРБАДЖИ К.  
ЧАЛІКОГЛА

ИЗДАНИЕ ПЕРВОЕ

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Chrestoethia.

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ВЪ БУДИМѢ,

Писмены Кралъ: Тѣпографъ: Оунгарскъ: 1857:

НАРОДНА СЪБОРА

# ІГІОНОМІЯ

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СЯВВА Х. ИЛІОВИЧА ДОБРОПЛОДНАГО СЛИ-  
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ВЪ ЦАРИГРАДѢ

Въ Патріаршескѣ-тѣ Тїпографїѣ

1846.



"We do not have bigger enemy than the tasty dishes. Cookery is the most pernicious creature ... The art of the cook forces us to eat more than we need ... the main goal of the cooks is to create new dishes ... Therefore the dishes which are not unhealthy themselves, get pernicious when we mix them with many other different things"<sup>53</sup>

As examples he refers to eggs, milk, butter, and flour. When one mixes them and prepares baklava, burek, mlin, the stomach is being tortured. The useful counsels are not avoided in this book, too. But here they are not related to good manners, but to health care – to wash and care for our teeth, not to eat cold and hot food together, not to engage in any intellectual activity when we are eating, to eat less in the evenings.

During the next two-three decades the number of publications on food and feeding was growing side by side with the increasing interest to the natural history and sciences and the emergence of urban intelligentsia. The first Bulgarian periodicals had an encyclopedic character and were paying attention to the feeding as social phenomenon, as connection to the nature and as immutable human privilege.<sup>54</sup> So, for example, Konstantin Fotinov published in Lyuboslovie a small article entitled "The Table", in which he showed the damage that could be provoked by food:

"When I'm seeing a table full with many different dishes, it seems to me that I see among the plates there: all the parts of the body with edema, temperature, headache, and another multiple sicknesses, ordered there."<sup>55</sup>

The same author paid attention to the feeding value of different kinds of foods like grain, rye, barley, beans, lentil, pea, meat, etc.

The problem of nourishment had a special place in the works of one of the first Bulgarian philosophers – Todor Ikonomov. He examined the influence of food on the human body, how the various food products and the substances such as sugar, salt, fats and proteins reflected on the health. He described also the significance of drinks like coffee and tea, and of rakiya, too. According to Ikonomov, coffee influences in a very good way the mental work, because it stimulates it. He noticed also the social function, which coffee had as a mediator, making the boring conversation more interesting. Ikonomov did not avoid the harms caused by coffee to the people who have a nervous temperament. In his opinion, rakiya could

be useful if drunk fairly and in that case it acts like a medicine, helps digestion, and invigorates.<sup>56</sup> Todor Ikononov wrote that the three basic food substances are salt, bread and meat, which are not only products but also elements responsible for social peace. For example, he claimed the taxes imposed on salt were “a crime against mankind” and insisted that salt should be distributed to the poor for free because it helps them to endure their difficult life. Ikononov pointed out the fact that the high prices of bread brought not only deceases but also social conflicts and even revolutions. According to him, meat influences directly the activity of the mind, as well as the passions like love, patriotism, pride, courage, and hate. He gave an example with the Anglo-Saxons who eat more meat than the others and therefore the biggest philosophers originated from this nation. And the opposite, people who do not eat meat, get sick, became lethargic, cold and weak-kneed.<sup>57</sup>

Another development is the emergence of the personal accounting of the urban population in the mid-19<sup>th</sup> century. I mean here not the bills related to the economical activity of a certain merchant or craftsman, but only those bills, which gave an account of the personal incomes and expenses of a household, including the expenses for foods.<sup>58</sup> The available sources are various personal bills of merchants, craftsmen, teachers, i.e., of the people who are representatives of the newly created bourgeoisie and intelligentsia. In fact, the earliest available sample of a personal accounting, including expenses for various foods bought, dates from the beginning of the 19<sup>th</sup> century. Todor Tsenov, a merchant from Vratsa who undertook a pilgrimage to Jerusalem in 1803, bought “15 okas fish in Enes for 12 piaster, 8 okas small fish in kit for 6 piaster, in Sakas 2 okas caviar and fish for 4 piaster, and 35 oka pastarma in Enes for 22 piaster.”

Another example for personal accounting, circumstantial too, we can find in a letter written in 1827 by the well-known Bulgarian merchant, teacher, and publisher Konstantin Fotinov. On the back side of the letter Fotinov wrote down the expenses he had for food products during the period of December 9-20.<sup>59</sup>

But the first real example for tactically kept personal record book is the one of Stefan Izvorski – a teacher, priest, and poet. His book covered, unfortunately, a small period of time – about two months, and namely January and February of 1866. It was published and analyzed by M. Todorova and D. Tsanev,<sup>60</sup> and for this reason here we will use



their analysis for the part related to food. The bigger part of the family expenses was spent for food products – about 52%. These expenses are pretty diverse – 150 loafs of bread, buns, 12 kg. meat and 55 chickens, fish, caviar, milk, eggs, flour, onions, olives, beans, mushrooms, hazelnuts and almonds, honey, different fruits – lemons, apples, oranges, alcohol – wine, rum, mastic, rakiya, also sweets, jam, tahan. Relatively low are the expenses for eggs, which according to M. Todorova means that the family had their own chickens. The absence of vegetables could be explained with the winter season, and the absence of yogurt – a typical food for Bulgarians – with the assumption that they had prepared the so-called “autumn yogurt”.

These records, even only for two months, allow us to compare the budget of this teacher’s family of Izvorski with another one – a worker’s family from the town of Samokov. In 1848-1849 two French scholars A. Daux and Le Play was sent to the Ottoman Empire to examine the status of the workers there. They chose for target of their study the family of a Bulgarian worker in samakov – a small manufacture for producing iron. Their study, which was published later on, was very detailed and covered both the family’s annual incomes (from the salary, the personal household, etc.) and expenses (for food, clothes, for house, debts, and taxes).<sup>61</sup> As a matter of fact it is difficult to make a proper comparison between the two sources because of their different contents – Izvorski’s budget showed only the expenses for the food he bought, the occupations are different, the period of accounting is different, and we should not neglect the fact that almost 20 years separated them. However, the comparison made by M. Todorova, which shows in percentage the differences in the expenses for the food products, gives us a clear idea about food consumption in these two middle-class families.<sup>62</sup> The family from Samokov spent more money for grain. On the other hand, the bigger part of the animal products in the same family could be explained with the above-mentioned fact, that in Izvorski’s record book only the foods that were bought were noticed. However, if comparing only the consumption of meat, one may conclude that it was bigger in Izvorski’s family. The French scholars underlined that even in the studied family of Samokov alcohol was not consumed at all, its head used to visit the town’s tavern (krachma) where he drunk rakiya – about 16 liters for the whole year.<sup>63</sup>

Teacher N. Parvanov's notebook is also interesting. Although it was not systematically filled in, there are some curious moments in it. In the first place, these are the money spent for deserts – a bourgeois innovation. The other interesting moment is the creation of a steady tradition to go out for eating, i.e., to visit special places offering meals. His lunch menu in an Istanbul restaurant is interesting. He writes down on 12.04.1871, without noticing the prices of the dishes "vrasto razsol – soup with meat, patatis – meat with potatoes, posto – roasted meat, tas kebab – like yahniya (stew), kazartma – fried meat, chorba (i.e., soup) with bits, grilled steak, pacha – head cheese made of calf feet – good".<sup>64</sup> Not only that he describes the quite diverse menu, but he also gave the Turkish and Greek names of dishes and explained them in Bulgarian.

We could add the cookery books to the most important sources about everyday life. Cookbooks are not only instructional manuals for the culinary arts, but they also reflect food habits of a population, and they are repositories for traditional (or completely unknown) dishes. They could act as markers of major historical events, and record technological advances in a society. For all these reasons we can regard cookbooks as socio-historic and cultural, even economical, documents. Putting the first Bulgarian cookbook in the context of the first Balkan cookbooks will help us to analyze its place and its role in the development of new urban culture.

Although it wasn't printed, one of the first gastronomical texts in the Balkans that have been preserved is from the time of Wallachian Prince Constantin Brancoveanu (1688-1714). The manuscript is entitled *Cookery Book Writing about Fish and Crawfish Dishes, Oysters, Snails, Medicines, Herbs, and other Fast Days and Meat Days Dishes; Each One According to its Appropriate Place*.<sup>65</sup> The author of this gastronomical text is unknown. Obvious, but not surprising is the Italian influence because of the strong trade relationships between Wallachia and several Italian cities. At the same time, one could see the Oriental influence in using oriental cookery appliances like *filigean, tingire, tipsie*, etc.<sup>66</sup>

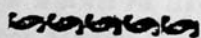
The first printed cookbook in the Balkans was published in Greek language in 1828 and had the very simple title of "Ἡ Μαγειρική" or "Cookery".<sup>67</sup> The town of Ermoupolis, island of Syra, where the book appeared, remained free during the Greek Revolution (1821-1829) and kept its contact with the European countries, which supported and sympathized with the Greek struggle for independence.

Η  
ΜΑΓΕΙΡΙΚΗ

Μεταφρασθεῖσα

ΕΚ ΤΟΥ

ΙΤΑΛΙΚΟΥ.



Ἐν Σύρῳ,

1828.



This made the urban environment, which the cookbook was published in, unique. The society in Ermoupolis consisted mainly of merchants from Chios and Smyrna, who brought with them into Syra different habits of well, contributing to the development of urban life. It attracted many Greeks from the continental part of Greece, which was still under Ottoman rule. For these reasons new influences penetrated much easier in the island. The famous Greek writer Emanuil Roidis wrote that in those years took place “the transformation of the inhabitants of the island into Europeans”.<sup>68</sup>

The cookbook was translated from Italian by Panagiotis Zontanos, a man who, being a doctor, wasn't related directly to the cookery. It contained 100 recipes. Most of them are for cooking different kind of meat – lamb, pork, veal, goat, as well as some more rare kinds, like rabbit, birds; fish, vegetables. Although the original book was Italian, the translator included recipes from different places – boiled meat cooked like in Genoa, rabbit cooked in the style of the Spaniards, fried meat in the style of the Venetians, snipe (game) in the style of the Frenchmen. There are another recipes cooked like the Germans, Dutch, and Englishmen, from Prussia, Portugal, and Russia. Most of them are French. Except the diverse products and spices, this book gave women the opportunity to change them, so the dish could be different every time. For example, the basic recipe is entitled “Baked oysters cooked like the Germans”, but if the reader would like to cook in the Spaniard, English or Russian way, he could do this by adding some lemon, rum or wine.<sup>69</sup>

The enlightened Romanian politicians and intellectuals Mihail Kogalniceanu and Costache Negruzi published in 1841 their famous book *200 Tested Recipes of Dishes, Cakes, and other Household Duties*.<sup>70</sup> It was printed on the expenses and under the care of a society striving for the progress and excellency of the Romanian nation. The book was reedited in 1842 and it was published for the third time four years later – in 1846. The authors understood how important this book was. They saw it as a factor of progress and civilization, and the privilege of an elite<sup>71</sup> and they thought that in the future the people of Moldova would call them “those who introduced the culinary art in Moldova”.

In an article published in 1990, H. Notaker points out that, in spite of Kogălniceanu's “genuine and serious” interest in cookery, notwithstanding the fact that

“the book was truly innovative and was intended to produce a culinary revolution, and that, since it went into three editions, it was successful. Nevertheless, the cookbook does reveal certain ambiguities in Kogălniceanu’s attitude: between national and foreign: bourgeois and popular, modern and traditional.”

Actually, all these recipes couldn’t be used in a peasant’s house, for example, or in a modest town, because they are too exquisite. There were no recipes for *dulceață* – probably because every woman knew how to prepare it. But at the same time there are eleven recipes for jelly prepared in different ways. There aren’t recipes for *borsh* or *ciorba*, however there are some recipes called *mandelcuhen*, *consommé*, *supa de raci* and French soup.

The second cookbook published in Romanian was *500 Tested Recipes from the Great Kitchen of Robert, First Cook in the Court of France*,<sup>72</sup> edited by *postelnic* Manolachi Drăghici. This book was a translation from French of the work of a certain Robert, a very famous cook during the 17<sup>th</sup> century, well known for his sauces. On the first page of the translation Drăghici wrote: “We should publish the works about household duties, because every nation has them.”

The third Romanian cookbook was entitled *Cookbook, contains 190 recipes, sweets, creams, jellies, ice-creams and how to preserve things during the winter, all selected and tasted by a friend of all housewives*. It was published in 1846 in Bucharest and republished five times during the next twenty years. Maria Maurer was a teacher in a boarding school in Bucharest. Probably her origin is Transylvanian Saxon. This book was written two years earlier for her students. It contained all the advice necessary for a marriage. But, according to the author, it could be useful for women in general.

It was addressed to the middle class, probably because the upper class had already learned to cook while in Paris and Vienna, and brought from there cookbooks. An evidence for this was the above-mentioned French book, published by M. Drăghici. This book differs from the others from several points of view. First, the measures used in the book are Wallachian. The ingredients for the recipes were easy to be found. The dishes weren’t luxury and were easy to cook.

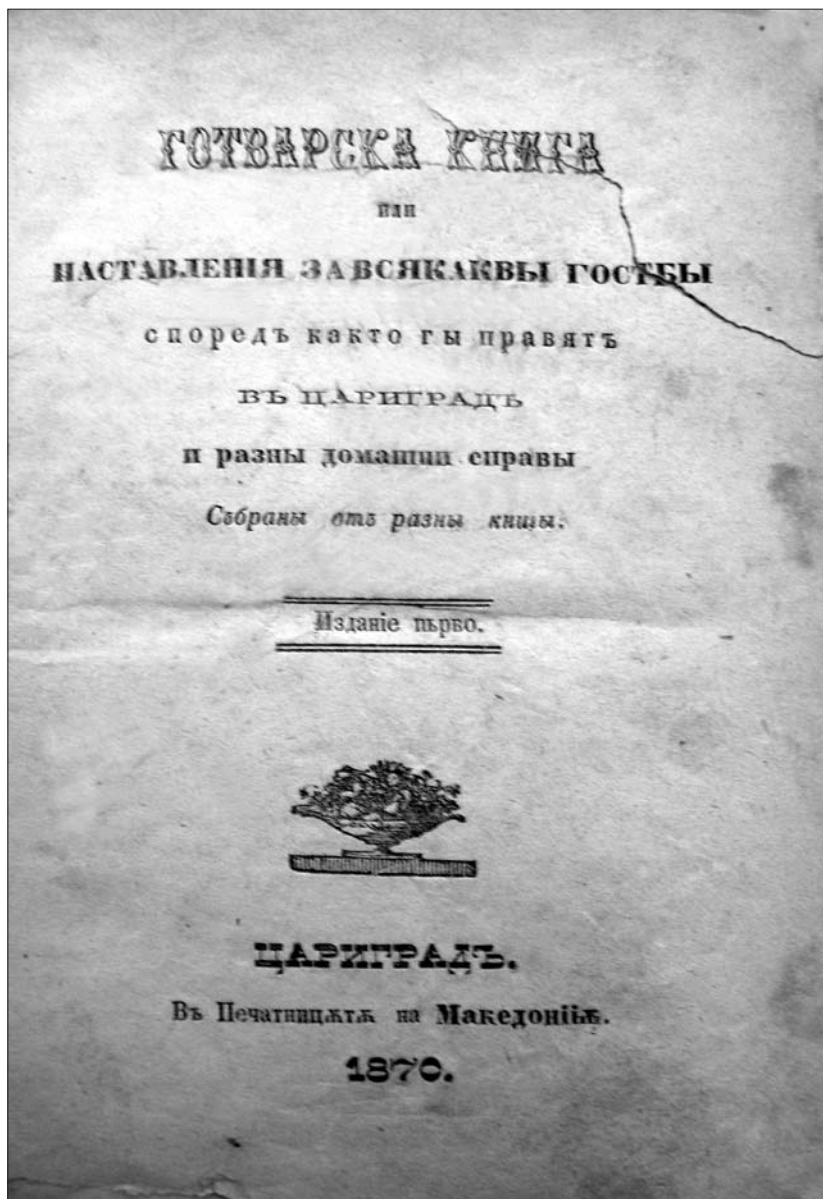
The first Serbian cookbook was published by Jerotej Draganovic<sup>73</sup> in Belgrade in 1855 and was reedited twice in 1865 – in Novi Sad and

again in Belgrade. It had the title *Serbian cookbook, in German kochbuch*. The author was a monk in the Krushedol monastery and also the cook of patriarch Rajacic. The book had 6 chapters – about different soups, meat dishes, fishes, pastries, compotes, salads, and ice cream.

The first Bulgarian cookbook appeared much later than in the other Balkan regions. It was published by Petko Slaveykov in 1870 in Tsarigrad (Constantinople).<sup>74</sup>

The book had no introduction, but it had a motto – “Nothing is more important for the household duties than the choice”. And the book begins with explanations on how to recognize and choose different kinds of meat, fish and other things for the dishes. The other eight chapters are dedicated to soups, kebabs, stews and meatballs, dishes prepared in *tava* (large baking dish), among them – egg plants, liver, different kinds of meat; next chapter is about the dishes made from pastry like *burek*, sweets – like *baklava* and *kadaif*. It comprises a separate section about *halva*, cooked vegetables, *sarmi*, pilaf, compotes, sweets. The book ends with an appendix with useful advices.

This work was an original compilation, not a translation of some foreign cookbook. Its title pointed out that the recipes were collected from different books. During the 70s, Bulgarian newspapers in Constantinople were publishing articles on political news from all over the world, philosophical essays of famous scholars, translations of novels. The cookbook achieved this information universality, too, and it was an answer to the interest of people in everything foreign and new. The recipes circulated were from many parts of the world, not only from Europe. For instance, in a recipe for stew, which was quite expensive and took much time to be prepared (the basic ingredient was tender veal, which should be cut in two pieces, drenched with garlic and offered with fried potatoes as side dish “because they are better”), P. Slaveykov motivated the waste of money and time with the explanation that this stew is “famous among the Frenchmen”. He also found in an English newspaper a recipe on how to preserve milk for longer time. But the most interesting part are the recipes for the preservation of meat. Slaveykov collected recipes not only from different countries, but also from different towns. So, one can find in the book English salt leg, Russian *presolika*, Italian, Dutch, French sausages, German *knack wurst*, and also sausages from Bologna, veal from Westfalen. There are several American recipes, too – for American yogurt, American wine, yeast from New York.



If we compare the patriarchal culinary practice with the one suggested in the book, we could find many differences between them. In the patriarchal culinary practice the experience and the cooking skills were taught at home, they depended on the family and the settlement's tradition (or the absence of tradition). The cookbook eliminated this limitation – everybody who reads the book could learn how to cook.

The patriarchal table tradition was hierarchical – only the mother, mother in law, the older daughter in law, etc. could prepare the food. In this way they had the privilege to choose the menu, to divide the portions. But the book provided equality of the messmates. Even in the recipe for wedding meal – and this event was highly hierarchical – it was written expressly that there should be so many pieces of meat as many guest were invited.

The patriarchal table was closely bound with the rituals, calendar, etc. I mentioned in the previous section that there existed different rules about what to cook during the religious holiday, for instance roast lamb for Saint George's day, fish, usually carp, for Saint Nicolas' day, etc. The cookbook didn't mention these ritual tables.

Among the main principles of the patriarchal table are the moderation and economy. The author of this cookbook wasn't an austere or judicious person, neither the head of a patriarchal family, who should count his money to feed his relatives. He was an epicurean who shared his amusement and delight with the reader. His intervention in the recipes is for one only reason – to make the dishes tastier. In the recipe for *kebab* roasted in oven, Slaveykov recommended: "If they put hazelnuts and raisins, the mince would be even better." For the same reason he also recommended to add one or two eggs with lemon in the stew, to roast the *kebab* slowly in order to make it softer and tastier, etc. Gastronomic pleasure was the only criterion for the author.

It is difficult to say how popular this book was. Unfortunately, we don't have information about the total print of the book. The quantities of the products and the time for preparation suggest that probably it was addressed to the young people who came in Constantinople to work as cooks, confectioners or innkeepers.

Because of the different sources, Slaveykov used many measure units – together with the oriental *oka* (equal to 1,28 kg) and *dram* (equal to 1,78 g), he mentioned pound, gallon, even bottle as measures. In my opinion, because of this diversity and the fact that quite often the quantities of the



cooked products are approximate for Slaveykov it was more important to present these recipes, to teach the reader what the people in the world eat and drink, what are the names of the foods, hoping that some day that reader will even cook them.

Although, the books presented above were published in different places and in different times under different conditions, we can draw a picture of the Balkan cookbook. The authors were intellectuals not necessarily related directly to the cookery, who had spent some period of time in Europe. Most of the mentioned books were a balanced combination of Oriental and European cuisine – Italian, French, German. They tried to introduce a new type of table culture, which wasn't a mere stage in the development of the traditional cuisine but a completely new and different one. The authors wanted to help their contemporaries to penetrate into the urban culture, using examples, recipes, and the habits of the foreigners.

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The paper presented is an attempt to create a picture of the modernization of everyday life of the Bulgarian urban population and to elucidate the dimensions of the cultural history of food through the "period's eye". The Orthodox religion kept its "monopoly" in determining the feeding norms and standards. But the deep mental changes and the different developments of mentality transformed the feeding stereotypes and customs. The attitude to food changed and a new "philosophy" of nourishment based on completely different understanding of cooking has been adopted. The clash between approval and refusal of new habits only demonstrates the difficulties in the process of legitimating modernization of Bulgarian society. The leading role in these transformations was assumed by the urban intelligentsia, as promoter of modernization in general. Further studies should analyze the changes in feeding of the other social strata, urban and rural, in order to establish the mechanisms in which the modernization promoted by the intelligentsia under this respect influenced and triggered the modernization of the entire society.

## NOTES

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## **ALEXANDER MAXWELL**

Born in 1969, in Los Angeles, California, USA

Ph.D. in History, University of Wisconsin, Madison

Dissertation: *Choosing Slovakia, 1790-1938: Slavic Hungary, the Czech Language and Accidental Nationalism*

2004: Visiting Lecturer at the University of Wales, Swansea

2005: Research Fellowship at Erfurt University, Germany

2006: Visiting Lecturer at the University of Nevada, Reno

2007: Lecturer in History at Victoria University in Wellington, New Zealand

Published numerous articles and book chapters on Slovak history, Balkan history, linguistic nationalism, cultural nationalism, and history pedagogy

Presently working on a book manuscript titled *Patriots against Fashion*





## SARTORIAL NATIONALISM AND SYMBOLIC GEOGRAPHY

Clothing can express several social meanings, and attitudes toward clothing reflect and embody not only ideologies of gender, class, but also nationalism. The national dimension of clothing was perhaps most salient during that period when the manufacture of clothing became an international industry. In the eighteenth and nineteenth century, nationalist attitudes toward fashionable clothing became intertwined with anxieties about the nation's vitality, autonomy, and moral development. Fashion was linked to cultural superiority: sartorial discourse associated centers of fashion such as Paris and London with civilization, and folk costume with picturesque backwardness. By examining the xenophobic themes in fashion discourses, one can construct a symbolic geography of European sartorial nationalism.

Sartorial nationalism is a subset of nationalism, here understood in a broad and non-pejorative sense. This study rejects any contrast between virtuous "patriotism" and pathological "nationalism."<sup>1</sup> Instead, it uses the term "nationalism" to distinguish theories of political legitimacy that rest ultimately on the will of the "people," however imagined, from the monarchical principle, which ultimately derives its legitimacy from divine sanction. Early nationalism, both sartorial and otherwise, inherited many traditions and concepts from the hierarchical power structures of pre-national monarchies, and an analysis of sartorial nationalism requires a survey of clothing politics in pre-national monarchies.

Most pre-national states expressed royal privilege and social hierarchy through sumptuary laws, which assigned sartorial restrictions to different estates.<sup>2</sup> Such laws defended and supported elite power and privilege, though a charitable interpretation of sumptuary legislation might see the desire to curb wasteful luxury as benign paternalism.<sup>3</sup> Medieval clothing regulations were not gender-blind, but concentrated mostly on social

hierarchies. Liselotte Eisenbart's study found that "in the majority of sumptuary laws, the estate principle is clearly the most important and trumps all others."<sup>4</sup> Duke Amadeus VIII of Savoy, for example, assigned unique sartorial privileges to 39 different social categories,<sup>5</sup> though most German ordinances specified a social hierarchy with six estates. For example, Vienna's 1552 law, reconfirmed in 1671, created six classes of citizens, each with its own rules, leaving the upper aristocracy unfettered by any restrictions.<sup>6</sup> Sumptuary laws rarely specified the shape or design of garments, focusing instead on restricting the use of precious materials, such as gold, silk, fur, or expensive dyes, to social elites.

Despite the best efforts of sumptuary legislators, clothing styles are subject to gradual cultural drift. Under the reign of Louis XIV, however, a new phase in human sartorial history began with the emergence of what might be called the "fashion system." At the court in Versailles, elites displayed their wealth and power not only through the use of expensive materials, but through continual changes in fashion. During the seventeenth century, as the luxury and extravagance of the French court became proverbial, arts, artisans and luxuries enhanced and sustained the glory of French absolutism.<sup>7</sup> These early fashions followed royal whims; Antoine Furetière's 1690 *Dictionnaire universel* even defined fashion as "the manner of dressing that follows the received usage at court."<sup>8</sup> As the court at Versailles became the envy of other European monarchs, the fashions of French aristocrats became the model of elegance for noble elites throughout Europe.

During the eighteenth century, however, the structure the fashion system changed. The ability to set the *bon ton* ceased to be a royal monopoly: new styles of clothing came in and out of fashion through the dictates of an amorphous public consensus. The geographic center of fashion shifted from the court at Versailles to Paris. Montesquieu wrote that "A woman who leaves Paris to spend six months in the country, returns from it as out of date as if she had been forgotten for thirty years. The son does not know the portrait of his mother, so strange does the dress in which she was painted appear to him."<sup>9</sup>

The social center of power shifted down the social hierarchy from the king and the aristocracy to certain fashionable individuals.<sup>10</sup> These new trendsetters aroused considerable social anxiety. Fashionable salon ladies undercut male privilege,<sup>11</sup> but more threateningly, dandies of indifferent social origins usurped social status from aristocrats.<sup>12</sup> The very concept

of “good taste” has been interpreted as a middle-class weapon against the aristocracy: immense wealth ceased to define status, if, as Jennifer Jones put it, “the most essential quality for dressing fashionably was taste (*goût*) rather than ostentation (*luxe*).”<sup>13</sup>

The ever-changing codes of the fashion system proved a more powerful marker of status than ineffective sumptuary regulations.<sup>14</sup> By the end of the eighteenth century, the importance of Paris as the center of fashion resulted in what Jean-Jacques Rousseau called a “general European tendency to adopt the tastes and manners of the French.”<sup>15</sup> A German traveler wrote in 1804 that “French fashions are spreading with the same speed in Italy as everywhere else.”<sup>16</sup> In 1808, Leipzig’s *Allgemeine Moden-Zeitung* [General Fashion Magazine] claimed that “Paris fashions rule in Holland, as in other countries of the continent.”<sup>17</sup> Indeed: the influence of Paris spread to other continents as well. In 1839 Woodbine Parish found that “the men of the better classes in Buenos Ayres are hardly to be distinguished in their dress from the French and English merchants who have fixed themselves amongst them, whilst the ladies vie with each other in imitating the latest fashions from Paris.”<sup>18</sup> Paris retained its centrality for the entire nineteenth century, and the first half of the twentieth. The American ready-made industry dethroned Paris after the Second World War, but Elizabeth Hawes, a fashion designer who had worked in Paris and whose company did much to destroy Parisian hegemony, still began her 1938 tract against fashion by attacking the “French legend” that “all beautiful clothes are made in the houses of the French couturières and all women want them.”<sup>19</sup> Even in the post-war period, the memory of Parisian dominance remains, since no other city has ever proved able to claim an equivalent monopoly on fashion.<sup>20</sup>

During the nineteenth century, therefore, France occupied a singular place in the European sartorial system. As American traveler James Jarvis put it in 1855,

Paris is the central star of fashion. Whatever is seen elsewhere is a ray from her light, diminishing in luster as it recedes from that city. ... There is not a race on the globe that does not seem destined to lose its national costumes and habits before the invincible power of French fashions.<sup>21</sup>

In Jarvis’ Copernican analogy, each national fashion would be a planet orbiting the French sun, though the balance between centrifugal

and centripetal forces often shifted. This analogy suggests, however, that French sartorial nationalism forms a special case. Though French fashions drew inspiration from foreign clothes, French sartorial nationalism did not develop in opposition to the influence of a foreign fashion industry. If anything, it formed a source of pride: "The whole civilized world dresses itself out in the cast-off clothes of Paris," boasted one French traveler in England: "What has Paris not?"<sup>22</sup>

The fashion system had numerous critics, and the backlash against it, both within and beyond France, had several dimensions. Fashion, once liberated from the monarch's control, threatened the aristocratic hierarchy. Elites sought to maintain their hold on sartorial power by attacking the "presumption" or "arrogance" of their inferiors.<sup>23</sup> Antifashionism drew on traditional morality: moralists criticized fashion as a species of sinful luxury, and clergymen condemned fashionable clothes as evidence of vanity.<sup>24</sup> Sarah Maza has further argued that "fear of 'luxury' signaled aversion to change."<sup>25</sup> Many antifashion pamphlets emphasized economic arguments: patriots influenced by cameralism or mercantilism, for example, believed that money spent on fashionable clothing would be better spent elsewhere.<sup>26</sup> All these patriots, however, juxtaposed "national" clothes with foreign fashions, thus placing the sartorial nation in geographic context.

Nationalists attacking the fashion system, who might be collectively called "sartorial nationalists," started from the assumption that dandyism was unpatriotic and that fashion was a national problem. They proposed a variety of solutions that progressed in tandem with the national clothing industry. During the eighteenth century, when clothing production was a cottage industry, most sartorial nationalists urged their countrymen to wear simple clothes of unchanging design, a position that might be described as "frugalism." Frugalists often had a social agenda, usually manifested in an attempt to revive or reform sumptuary legislation. Several proposed the introduction of a mandatory civilian uniform to enforce the barriers between social estates.<sup>27</sup> Gustav III of Sweden, equating his nobility with the "nation," actually imposed a *nationella dräkten* on his court.<sup>28</sup>

Frugalism could also have an egalitarian tone. During the Age of Revolutions, several radicals suggested national uniforms that were specifically designed to erase social hierarchy. In 1787, an Irish journalist who had emigrated to the United States proposed an American uniform for the new Republic,<sup>29</sup> but uniform proposals were widely discussed at the

highest levels of government during the French Revolution: Robespierre himself suggested that children wear a uniform beginning at the age of five so as to inculcate egalitarianism.<sup>30</sup> After Napoleon's eventual defeat, hierarchical uniform schemes enjoyed a comeback, particularly in Germany,<sup>31</sup> but also in Holland.<sup>32</sup> As late as 1860, English author John Ruskin argued that

Every effort should be made to induce the adoption of a national costume. ... it is the peculiar virtue of a national costume that it fosters and gratifies the wish to look well, without inducing the desire to look better than one's neighbors – or the hope, peculiarly English, of being mistaken for a higher position of life.<sup>33</sup>

Such proposals rarely had much impact, but the consistent desire to use clothing regulations as a tool for social engineering illustrates how much anxiety ever-changing fashions aroused in patriotic circles.

A different critique of fashion became dominant during the nineteenth century, however, as the industrial revolution progressed. A school that might be called "fashionism" argued that producers of clothing were important to the economy. The main target of fashionist rhetoric was slavish obedience to *foreign* fashions. Fashionists promoted domestic manufactures from economic patriotism: why should foreigners dominate the market for fashionable goods? Did not local producers possess the taste and skill to manufacture fashionable clothing? The glorification of domestic manufacturers meant that any locally produced folk costume became a symbol of national vitality.<sup>34</sup> Fashionists sometimes even defended sartorial extravagance on economic grounds, since it transferred wealth from the rich to the working classes: as Mary Wilton put it in 1864, "Spinning, dyeing, weaving, give employment to multitudes of people, and the very mutability of the mode is greatly to their benefit."<sup>35</sup> Anne Aikin-Barbauld wondered that an anthropomorphized Queen Fashion could be "so cruel, so fickle and so arbitrary," yet accepted that she benefited "the industrious poor, to whom the queen was secretly distributing bread. I saw the Genius of Commerce doing her homage, and discovered the British cross woven into the insignia of her dignity."<sup>36</sup>

Fashionists saw fashionable clothing as an integral feature of modern civilization, and proclaimed the need to wear clothes produced by the fashion industry. In 1892, an English author calling himself "K." wrote that

dress is a very foolish thing, and yet it is a very foolish thing for a man not to be well-dressed, according to his rank and way of life ... the difference between this man of sense and a fop is, that the fop values himself upon his dress, and the man of sense laughs at it, at the same time he knows he must not neglect it.<sup>37</sup>

Even staunch advocates of fashionable clothing saw male dandyism as morally suspect, though female love of fashion was accepted with resignation as a peculiar weakness of the fair sex. Fashionist patriots, however, concentrated on the economic aspects of fashion: they were concerned that national manufacturers could compete effectively. Fashionism peaked under the fascist governments in the interwar period, since both Mussolini's Italy and Hitler's Germany established state-run fashion institutes to compete with Parisian manufacturers.<sup>38</sup>

All schools of sartorial nationalism, however, attacked foreign clothing, which situated the nation in a symbolic geography that juxtaposed the nation against the foreign. This sheds light on national anxieties. Sartorial nationalism in the German-speaking countries, for example, defined Germany in opposition to France. Johann Zedler's frugalist essay in the *Universal-Lexicon* of 1732 claimed that "We Germans generally get our fashions, and particularly in clothing, from France, because most of us have the preconception that the French are the most clever in creating new things."<sup>39</sup> Zedler saw this as a problem:

the French, more than all other Europeans, are the most changeable, and are the greediest in adopting new fashions. Since we Germans have started to admire and imitate them, and to visit them in their own country, so this changeability has started to influence our countrymen. The frequent asylum granted to Protestants driven from France and their settlement in German provinces has helped not a little in making German provinces half French.<sup>40</sup>

Francophobia proved an enduring feature of German antifashion, and such examples are easily multiplied. In 1778, for example, H.P. Sturz wrote that it was "tasteless to dress like a Parisian under every sky, if the climate, custom and body demand different coverings."<sup>41</sup> Viennese author Joseph Sonnenfels claimed in 1785 that he "cast a scandalized sideways glance at the Germans, who ... at the wave of a Frenchman's hand, change

clothing, hairstyle, coach and household items, and finds nothing beautiful or civil which is not sent from Paris or Lyon."<sup>42</sup> In 1786, the appearance of fashion magazines aroused disgust in Berlin: "The country on the far side of the Rhine does not only think about how to reform our taste in light of its inventions, but assists us in easily learning about the most important of these inventions."<sup>43</sup>

Weimar's *Journal des Luxus und der Moden* [The Journal of Luxury and Fashion], an influential fashion magazine, marks the transition from Frugalism to fashionism. In 1786, the journal published a frugalist scheme to introduce a German national costume "available to rich and poor," arguing that imported clothing imported "lowers the level of our morality, our finances, and our balance of payments."<sup>44</sup> In January 1793, it complained Germans have "paid gigantic annual sums in gold cash for France's idiocies, for her exciting luxuries, for her refined sensual pleasures."<sup>45</sup> August 1793, complaining that, "France has led Germany around like a slave on a chain," the journal also called for the creation of "a National Industry Institute for Germany" which would be "solely devoted to discovering natural resources in their province, promoting the cultivation thereof, and to animating the artisanship of its inhabitants."<sup>46</sup> By 1815, a Berlin correspondent used explicitly fashionist arguments in an essay rejecting the idea, then popular, of introducing a mandatory "old German costume":

But do not think of me that I am for *foreign* fashions. No, a *German* should wear products of domestic factories, dress according to personal taste, and not abandon claims to individual taste and discernment by aping the form and cut of others. Why should *Berlin* and *Vienna* lag behind Paris in good taste, and though I do not wish to denigrate the latter city, why should it not perhaps be nobler and better here than there, precisely because we never showed such vanity and craving to please?<sup>47</sup>

Fashionism had become the dominant theme in German sartorial nationalism by 1848. During the Revolution, a Viennese fashion magazine wrote that "Good German women should not seek to dress according to fashion journals à la Paris, but in a German way."<sup>48</sup> Leipzig's *Allgemeine Moden-Zeitung* wrote hopefully that German fashion could free itself of French influence

if we only desire it, i.e. when the women in seriousness wish to buy only German fabrics, and when the manufacturers decide not merely to imitate the French and German fabrics but to create new things on their own and to compete with the products of French art and labor also in *taste* and *elegance*.<sup>49</sup>

The *Allgemeine Moden-Zeitung* explicitly rejected a national uniform, encouraging Germany's capital cities to become centers of German fashion:

We would like very much to report on beautiful patterns for clothing, hats and so forth, whether they appear in Berlin, Vienna, Munich, Leipzig, or wherever else if they deserve to be imitated – only against one thing do we declare ourselves opposed, and not only in the interest of elegance and luxury, but also in the interest of the hard-working hands that receive their occupation from the continuous *change* in fashion [...]: to devise and introduce a German costume.<sup>50</sup>

German national fashion proved easier to desire than to create: German manufacturers responded by putting tricolor decorations on their products.<sup>51</sup> Three issues after its call for German fashion, the *Allgemeine Moden-Zeitung* despairingly urged national manufacturers to show “more restraint and taste. We saw, for example, new fabric for summer clothing which had stripes in the German colors the width of a hand on a gray background; can anybody consider this beautiful? A lady in such a dress would look like a living flag.”<sup>52</sup>

The supremacy of French fashion in German-speaking Europe caused particularly bitter resentment during the First World War. Norbert Stern, whose *Mode und Kultur* [Fashion and Culture] included a chapter called “Away from Paris!”, called for the Parisian fashion system to be overthrown and replaced with a German fashion:

We will not be able to leave Paris wholly behind. We will still make purchases there, things that can be made useful for our fashion. But we will no longer pay so many million Marks as yearly tribute to its great name. [...] In the land of philosophers and poets, one will also found and materialize a spirit of fashion as well.<sup>53</sup>



Habsburg official Adolf Vetter, in a 1917 pamphlet on “Fashion Reform,” described Paris as “a technical, artistic and financial organization of the fashion industry, such as exists nowhere else in the world,” and admitted that German fashions had not yet achieved “the special artistic skill and good taste of the French.”<sup>54</sup> In 1923, when the trade journal of the German fashion industry called for its members to boycott French fashion products, it admitted that “we in fashion are fully aware of our dependence on Paris to provide us with the taste of worldwide fashion. It is better to say things directly than to talk around the issue.” The journal suggested that its members could “travel to Holland, Switzerland or Vienna to view French developments and perhaps purchase copies from houses that were in Paris” since “the purchase of original patterns from Paris or any sort of fashion goods originally from France is not permitted.”<sup>55</sup>

An equally consistent tradition of Francophobia characterizes sartorial nationalism in England, spanning the transition from frugalism to fashionism. In 1889, when Oscar Wilde described fashion as that of a Queen who “rules the civilized world from her throne in Paris,”<sup>56</sup> sartorial nationalists in England had literally spent centuries condemning French influence on national fashion. In 1661, frugalist John Evelyn had linked French clothing imports to national security: his *Tyrannus, or the Mode* claimed that “La Mode de France, is one of the best Returnes which they make, and feeds as many bellies, as it clothes Backs; or else we should not hear of such Armies, and Swarmes of them, as this one City alone maintains”<sup>57</sup> Two years later, Samuel Butler wrote a “Satire upon our Ridiculous Imitation of the French.”<sup>58</sup> In 1711 frugalist Joseph Addison wished for “an act of parliament for prohibiting the importation of French fopperies.”<sup>59</sup>

English frugalism began to give way to fashionism at the end of the eighteenth century. In 1783, a public debate was held on the question: “Is the excess of Dress and Fashionable Amusements more prejudicial to the Morals, or beneficial to the Commerce of this Country?”<sup>60</sup> Characters in an 1832 novel described the crinoline as “the most deforming of all fashions to a fine figure ... introduced, no doubt, by some cunning Frenchwoman, ... which Englishmen have ridiculed in vain.”<sup>61</sup> In 1892, an author identifying himself only as “K.” lamented that since the English followed “every variation in *la mode Parisienne*, and slavishly followed its decrees,”<sup>62</sup> the very words *Modes de Paris* “reveal the national supremacy of France.” K. expressed his fashionism, however, by highlighting and

praising the British contribution to the fashion system: “the prevailing genius of Fashion to-day in Paris is [Frederik] Worth, not Monsieur, but plain English Mister Worth, born among us, here in England. O wise, and worthy Worth, how we do honour thee!”<sup>63</sup>

Germany and England are both in close proximity to France, and might be expected to feel the cultural influence of their immediate neighbor. Similar forces operated to France’s southern neighbors. In 1765, Giuseppe Parini’s analysis of Italian fashion discussed the “daring genius of France.”<sup>64</sup> Characters in an 1860 opera by Spanish playwright José Picón refer to Paris as the birthplace of new fashions;<sup>65</sup> and in 1916 the fashion magazine *Les Élégances Parisiennes*, which despite its title was published in Spain, wrote that “Paris creates fashion, and the whole world goes to Paris to seek the secret of elegance.”<sup>66</sup>

The influence of Parisian fashion, however, was not merely a question of simple proximity to France, since the pull of French fashions was equally powerful on the other end of the European continent. John Thomas James wrote that in St. Petersburg “French manners and fashions give the ton [sic], and their poison, which is not always rejected by men, is incense to the female heart. Women ... are captivated by ever thing that breathes the air of Paris.”<sup>67</sup> Saxon physician Johann Friedrich, furthermore, reported that French fashions had reached provincial Russia circles. In 1825, he attended a ball at the home of an Armenian customs official in Astrakhan, and found to his surprise a “modern house not only tastefully decorated in the European style, but also a ball arranged as at home. The Armenian ladies of this obviously none-too-numerous society appear, like the Russian ladies, in French costume.”<sup>68</sup>

As in Germany and England, the influence of French fashion led Russians to sartorial nationalism. Aleksandr Shakhovskoi’s 1815 play about spa culture characterized aristocratic fashion as “an infection initially contracted from a French governess during childhood.”<sup>69</sup> The defining features of the play’s villain, the philandering count Ol’gin, are “fawning before French fashion, syrupy speech peppered with Gallicisms and utter hypocrisy.”<sup>70</sup> Shakhovskoi, of course, wrote immediately after the Napoleonic invasion, a time when anti-French sentiment was widespread in Russia. Sartorial nationalists in both Germany and France could also draw on a long tradition of anti-French prejudice; sartorial opposition to Parisian fashion built on non-sartorial Francophobia.

Sartorial nationalism could however be Francophobic even in a Francophile political context. In Adam Mickiewicz's play *Pan Tadeusz* [Sir Thaddeus], which takes place during the Napoleonic wars, an outspoken supporter of Napoleon condemns French fashions:

Ach ja pamiętam czasy, kiedy do Ojczyzny  
Pierwszyraz zawitała moda francuszczyzny!  
Gdy raptem paniczki młode s cudzych krajów  
Wtargnęli do nas hordą gorszą od Nogajów,  
Prześladując w Ojczyźnie Boga, przodków wiarę  
Prawa i obyczaje, nawet suknie stare.

Ah, I remember the times when our fatherland  
First saw these French fashions!  
Suddenly, these young lords from foreign lands  
Invaded us more violently than barbarian hordes.  
Oppressed God the faith of our fatherland,  
Our laws, and customs, even our national dress.<sup>71</sup>

In 1929, barely ten years after Romania and France had fought as allies in the First World War, Matieu criticized "the purely Romanian trait, which is to humiliate ourselves *in front of other people by denigrating our own country*," and condemned the "fascination [that] the smallest trifles from Paris exerted over us!"<sup>72</sup>

But while the influence of Paris had a long reach, several sartorial nationalists directed their ire against other centers of fashion. Sartorial nationalists from the Celtic nations of the United Kingdom, for example, focused primarily on the struggle against *London* fashions. In 1662, for instance, Irish patriot John Lynch wrote that "the adoption of the English dress supplies no better proof of the conquest of Ireland by the English ... We were never such victims of fickleness that, like Proteus, we should be constantly changing our dress, according to the fleeting fashions daily imported from England."<sup>73</sup> In 1794, Welsh patriot Edward Williams unfavorably compared devotees of fashion to

the *Hottentots*, a very *polite* people according to modern ideas of *politeness* [...] The *Hottentot* [...] would rather *be out of the world than out of the fashion*, dresses his hair well with any kind of grease, and then powders it, *à la mode des Londres*, with fine pulverized *cow-dung*, just in the same

manner as the *cockneys* use pomatum and powder; with this difference, that the *Hottentot* never imports.<sup>74</sup>

In 1858 *Cambrian Journal* proclaimed the existence of “a national Welsh costume,” it urged “all who really love Wales and its usages to bring it more generally into vogue. It is certainly better adapted to both the climate and scenery of Wales than the absurd English dress of the present day.”<sup>75</sup> The same year a Scottish essay lamented that “in the Lowlands of Scotland, even in the most out-of-the-way rural districts, how seldom now is to be seen the *blue bonnet* and *hodden grey* of her independent sons. London fashions reign instead.”<sup>76</sup> Sartorial nationalists in the United States also struggled primarily against English fashions, at least in the years directly after the country won its independence from Great Britain. Consider Matthew Carey’s 1787 scheme for a civilian national uniform:

Perhaps we shall be told, that an American is not in fashion, who dresses like other Americans; he must dress as people do in London. If they change their clothes once a month, so must we. If they wear buttons the size of a saucer, in the form of a hexagon, or a square, so must we. What a pity it is, that fashions should wear out in London, before they can arrive at New York or Philadelphia! If there was a glass in the moon, we might catch the fashions as they rise.<sup>77</sup>

If English fashion orbited the Parisian sun, then English colonies were moons circling an English planet.

Sartorial nationalists beyond the direct reach of the British Empire also felt the pull of London. Starting in the era of the French Revolution, some authors began to imagine the universe of European fashion orbiting not merely the Parisian sun, but a binary star system. In 1798, for instance, the German fashion magazine *London und Paris* explained its title with the claim that

all other capitals of Europe step willingly into the second row. From London and Paris orders are issued that are more rapidly obeyed in Philadelphia and Calcutta, on the Neva or in Cape Town, than could be made noticeable to the most sensitive electrometer of a political observer.<sup>78</sup>

Joseph Marshall also saw London and Paris as equivalent centers of luxury,<sup>79</sup> and Francis Trollope's 1856 *Fashionable Life* was subtitled "Paris and London."<sup>80</sup>

Fashions that came jointly from Paris and London offended sartorial patriotism as deeply as purely Parisian fashions. An 1784 poem condemning "The Fashionable Tone," published in Halle's *Damenjournal* [Ladies' Journal], attacked Britain and France as joint corrupters of German morality:

<i>Man spottet des Gebets, höhnt</i>	One mocks prayer, scoffs at
<i>die Religion</i>	religion,
<i>und dies nennt man den</i>	and this is called the fashionable
<i>Modeton.</i>	tone
<i>Seitdem die Gallier und Briten</i>	Since the Gauls and Britons
<i>Verfeinerer der deutschen Sitten</i>	have become the refiners of
	German custom
<i>und – unser Muster worden sind.</i>	and – our models to emulate. <sup>81</sup>

In 1808, by contrast, a fashionist article in the *Allgemeine Moden-Magazine* envied Britain and France for possessing a great capital city to serve as a center of fashion:

France and England, which set the tone of fashion, have a large capital city, where the most admired and richest people press together. Wealth creates luxury; luxury, changes in fashion. Germany has several capital cities, but none rules over the entire German land, but only that realm of which it is capital. The German capitals are neither as rich or as populated as London or Paris and cannot bring about either luxury or hunger for fashion.<sup>82</sup>

Nor were Germans the only Europeans to treat London as a rival to Paris. Dining at a Christian house in Varna in 1845, English scholar Andrew Paton conversed with a local "Dandy of the lower Danube," whom Paton referred to simply as "Exquisite."<sup>83</sup> Speaking in poor French, Exquisite asked if Paton had ever been to Bucharest, because he wished to know "if Bucharest is now like Paris or London."<sup>84</sup>

Vienna also formed a regional center of fashion, though it never rivaled either Paris or London. The Hamburg *Mode Journal*, published 1828-1830, described its contents as "a collection of the newest and most tasteful fashions appearing in Paris, London and Vienna."<sup>85</sup> The *Mode Journal*

later changed its title to the *Petit courir des dames – Neueste Pariser Damen-Moden*, thus demonstrating the general supremacy of Paris.

Vienna, however, dominated the Habsburg Empire. Non-German patriots in the Habsburg Empire, whose national struggle was a struggle against German influence, understood that fashions came from Paris; nevertheless Czech and Hungarian sartorial nationalists often condemned fashion as a Viennese import, much as Germans resisted the influence of Paris. When courting gentlemen in Prague abandoned the indigenous *čamara* for the frock coat, a Czech fashion magazine criticized this “German delight” as a loss of love to the homeland and the nation.”<sup>86</sup> *Humoristické listy* [Humorous Pages] complained about the influence of German “*kulturtrégři*” [from German *Kulturträger*, “carriers of culture”] on the national spirit:

They have dressed us in their uniform, and today they want to have everything that is ours: our country, our land, our children, our girls and boys, our body and soul. Enough, fools! We are ourselves! Away with everything gloomy, all frock coats and top hats, away with lickspittle dandies, idiots with dressed hair and powdered flappers, away with capuchin hoods, all fashionable mumbo-jumbo [...] we only want to keep ourselves and our freedom!<sup>87</sup>

*Humoristické listy* could hardly call for Czech political independence, in 1866, but the rejection of fashion served as a proxy rejection of all German influence in the country.

Czech attacks on the frock coat, however, illustrate an important point: fashionable clothes themselves did not express national loyalty. While *Humoristické listy* condemned fashionable frock coats as German, German critics of the frock coat, notably Ludwig Foglar, stigmatized the garment as French.<sup>88</sup> Czech sartorial nationalists experienced the products of the fashion system as a German influence because they entered the Czech lands through German intermediaries. A similar mechanism probably explains why Celts saw fashion as the work of London. In practice, the frock coat was trans-national. Men wearing frock coats, whether in Europe or beyond, did not express their nationality, but were instead demonstrating that they were sophisticated, modern, fashionable, respectable, etc.

Hungarian sartorial patriots, like their Czech colleagues, also struggled to bring Hungarian fashion out of the Viennese orbit. When Józef Gvadány

criticized foreign fashions in his 1793 “Egy Falusi nótárius budai utazása [The Village Notary’s Journey to Buda],” the foppish nobleman proclaims absurd clothes not the latest Parisian fashion, but the latest fashion from Vienna:

For this is now the fashion, and every noble youth  
of any birth or breeding is dressed the same in truth  
both here and in Vienna you’ll see the same forsooth!  
Well, out of my way, you nitwit! of manners so uncouth!

The notary protagonist condemns “English dress” as suitable only for Englishmen and then rebukes the dandy as follows:

I’d have you know, Your Grace, don’t take it too unkind –  
that this whole world o’er no finer dress you’ll find  
Than our Magyar costume. And he of Magyar line  
Who does not wear it on him must be of unsound mind.<sup>89</sup>

In 1797, Hungarian nobleman Gregor Berzeviczy similarly complained that “we mostly get our luxury wares, jewelry, lace from Vienna, where the gold and silver from Hungary and Transylvania flows.”<sup>90</sup> Over a century later, Gyula Sebestyén’s 1906 *Dunátúli gyűjtés* [Transdanubian collection] spoke with horror about

*Sáska istan ostora –  
Hát a krinolin-szokna!*

the lash of the Saxon woman’s God –  
In other words, the crinoline-skirt!<sup>91</sup>

Hungarian fashion only escaped the Viennese orbit when the Habsburg empire collapsed.

As it happens, the Hungarian national movement against Habsburg Austria placed unusual importance on national clothing, because the Hungarian nobility actually possessed a genuinely popular national costume.<sup>92</sup> The existence of a national costume made frugalism unusually attractive in Hungary. Nevertheless, English traveler Arthur Patterson reported that fashionism had struck deep roots in Hungarian culture by the 1860s:

To subscribe to a journal of fashions, written in the Hungarian language, is spoken of as an act of patriotism. All this seems to us [in Britain] very absurd, but from the standpoint of the Hungarians themselves it is quite intelligible. The most mindless and frivolous of women, even if she have neither husband nor child, has still some influence in society.<sup>93</sup>

The geographical proximity to Vienna nevertheless meant, as Krisztina Szűr found in her study of women's fashion in Austria-Hungary, that the "noble and great bourgeois women of Budapest preferred to shop in Vienna than Paris."<sup>94</sup> Indeed, Hungarian fashionism focused so strongly on opposing the Austrian influence that Imre Vahot, the editor of the *Budapesti Divatlap* [Budapest Fashion Journal], even praised "the new Parisian fashion" as a source of inspiration that "flows from the source of the republican spirit that radically changes all circumstances, pours out as a refreshing stream onto the fertile soil of intellect and pure morality and which will bring about radical reform and improvements."<sup>95</sup> For Vahot, Paris was not as a threat, but a possible counterweight to Vienna.

Hungarian sartorial nationalists, of course, sang a different tune during the First World War, when Hungary was at war with France and allied to Austria and Germany: the *Divatsalon* ["Fashion Salon"] declared that "Now we see Budapest, Vienna and Berlin as our centers."<sup>96</sup> The Czechs, on the other hand, experienced the war as their liberation, and gratefully embraced French fashion: Czech fashion historian Eva Uchalová found that in this period the words *France* and *Paris* "became the guarantee of quality and elegance,"<sup>97</sup> while the Czech magazine *Gentleman: Revue moderního muže* [Gentleman: Review of the Modern Man], reporting on "what is worn abroad" in 1925, discussed America and England.<sup>98</sup>

Hungarian and German sartorial patriots struggled against different foreign influences, but the structure and evolution of their arguments had much in common. The fashion system originated in France, and when its products penetrated German-speaking countries, they provoked a Francophobe nationalist response. The same products in Hungary, however, were imported from Vienna, and were thus ascribed a German character. Indeed, the pattern may have been further repeated within Hungary. Minority nationalities in Hungary first saw the products of the fashion system being worn by ethnic Hungarian nobles. Patterson reported in 1869 that "the Hungarian gentry, at any rate in the capital, have to a great extent adopted 'German' i.e. European dress," while Wallachians,



Serbs, and Bulgarians manufactured cloth by hand. "This circumstance," Patterson continued, "explains why the costumes of the Magyar peasantry are less interesting than those of the 'nationalities': the Magyars are, in fact, more civilized, and therefore less picturesque."<sup>99</sup>

Patterson was not unique in equating mass-produced fashions with "civilization," nor in contrasting civilized fashions with the "picturesque." In 1855, when the French fashion magazine *Journal des tailleurs* lamented that the Scottish servants of Queen Victoria no longer wore kilts, they equated the spread of the silk top hat and trouser with "becoming civilized":

It was pleasant to think of Turks in their dolmans with golden suns embroidered on the backs, Scots garbed in their indispensable garment, Tyrolians wearing hats trimmed with eagle feathers, and Spaniards solemnly dressed in cape and sombrero. But Turkey is becoming civilized, Scotland has abandoned the kilt for the common trouser, Tyrol has adopted the silk top hat, and Spain imitates our fashions with the most scrupulous exactness. Thus, everyone you see seems to have lived always on the rue de Rivoli...<sup>100</sup>

Cecil Street, traveling in interwar Czechoslovakia, may have lamented the disappearance of exotic "national dress, entirely different from the conventional western apparel that one sees on the streets," but nevertheless saw its disappearance as evidence of progress: "The gradual disuse of the dress, spreading from the west to the east, is a measure of the march of civilization."<sup>101</sup>

In the Eastern half of Europe, where patriots tended to juxtapose "civilization" against the "Asiatic," the spread of fashion was equated with an idealized "European civilization," and the products of the fashion system described as "European." As Said might have predicted, Europeans defended their claim to represent genuine civilization by ridiculing any attempt to adopt "Western" clothes as ineffective. Vasily Rozanov's 1900 article "Zheltiy chelovek v peredelke [The Yellow Man Made Over]," ridiculed Japanese converts to Christianity living in Russia, claiming that a person who changes costume is "always to some extent a lackey of the one into whose costume he changed."<sup>102</sup> Charles Boner, an Englishman traveling in Hungary, lamented that "the charms of the crinoline seem to be everywhere irresistible."<sup>103</sup> He also disapproved of Serbs in mass-produced clothing: "their Frank uniform becomes them much less than their own

native costume.”<sup>104</sup> Boner however praised a Turkish regiment drilling in an exotic costume, because “nothing could be more picturesque.”<sup>105</sup>

Turks, indeed, came in for particular abuse if they dared to wear “Frankish” costume. When the Sultan introduced what Bayle St. John described as “a kind of Frankish costume,” St. John found himself

disposed to think that this change has gone a great way toward destroying the nationality of the Turks, and revealing their nakedness to the world. It was thought that with the European dress these barbarians would assume the activity and energy of the Giaours – perhaps, also, their instruction and their civilization. The maxim that the coat makes the man, was pushed to its utmost extreme: the result, however, did not answer the expectation.<sup>106</sup>

Walter Thornbury similarly reviled Turks wearing “a feeble, miserable admixture of European and Asiatic dress, flapping, buttonless waistcoat, and trousers of dirty grey plaid silk.”<sup>107</sup> Siegfried Kapper wrote that “European dress ... utterly disfigures the Turk: the picturesque costume is necessary to the graceful motion.”<sup>108</sup> In 1855 an anonymous American traveler described Turks that had “the rigid appearance of a collection of stuffed specimens of Parisians,” and concluded that “the Turk has sunk from the height of barbarous magnificence to the lowest round of European civilization.”<sup>109</sup>

Praise for “picturesque” dress, therefore, was a strategy for ensuring that uncivilized peoples remained inferior. This has a certain parallel with attempts to prevent parvenus from consuming elite fashions. In 1808, the *Beau Monde* even railed against “the absurdity of *imitative* fashion, and *affectation of rank*,”<sup>110</sup> and *Blackwood’s Edinburgh Magazine* took an even harsher line:

Fool, mind thy own business, and stick to thy shop or thy station, whatever it may be; to which while thou stickest, though must be respectable, but which when thou wouldst quit, desperately to seize the hem of our lordship’s garment, thou becommest the laughing stock of us and our class, and we cannot choose but despise thee thoroughly.<sup>111</sup>

Blackwood’s Magazine also derived superiority of the aristocrat from biological difference: “The *physique* of the true fashionable is peculiar and characteristic. From the toe of his boot to the crown of his hat, there is that

unostentatious, undefinable something about him distinctive of his social position.”<sup>112</sup> This analogy, helps explains why, as Thomas Abler found in his study of “hinterland soldiers and military dress,” all European empires dressed soldiers from colonized ethnic groups in uniforms based on folk costume: a picturesque uniform kept them in a subordinate position.<sup>113</sup>

This consistent association between fashion and “civilization” proclaimed European moral superiority; as Michael Levin observed, “the whole point of the term [‘civilization’], at least from the eighteenth century onwards, was bound up with the Western view of itself as in advance of the rest of the world; that it had developed and the others hadn’t.”<sup>114</sup> When travelers from France or Britain characterized the societies they visited as picturesque and backwards, they thus implicitly defined their own country, or sometimes a group of similar societies collectively described as “the West,” as modern, progressive and civilized. Elizabeth Hurlock’s 1929 *Psychology of Dress* even made this link explicit: “As Western ideas are accepted, Western fashions are also.”<sup>115</sup> The claim to possess or understand fashionable dress, particularly when described as “Western” dress, thus fits into a wider discourse first described in Edward Said’s influential study of Orientalism: societies claiming to be rational, modern and civilized expressed their right to dominate their sensuous, backwards, picturesque colonies.<sup>116</sup>

Several patriots stuck on the “picturesque/backwards” half of this dichotomy both attempted to reject such discourse. One of Patterson’s informants explained the spread of fashionable clothing in Hungary by proclaiming that “Civilization is getting too strong for us.”<sup>117</sup> Sonda Matieu, writing in the Romanian fashion magazine *Domnița* [Lady], argued that “the time for excessive illusions about countries more civilized than our own has passed.”<sup>118</sup> In 1936 *Die deutsche Landfrau* [The German Farmer Woman] urged national women not only to sew folk dresses, but to manufacture the fabric at home, because fashionable clothes were “products of a senile, hybrid civilization.”<sup>119</sup> If wearing “civilized” fashions meant accepting global dominance of Paris and London, then some authors were prepared to reject “civilization.” Few European patriots, however, could resist the temptation to stigmatize their neighbors as barbarous. The same patriots from Germany to Turkey who fumed as their neighbors to the immediate west claimed to be more “civilized” were quick to attack their neighbors to the immediate east as backwards.<sup>120</sup>

At first glance, the mediated spread of fashion from its origin in Paris (and London) to Vienna, thence to Budapest, and so on, replicates what Attila Melegh has called the “civilizational slope.”<sup>121</sup> Paris, the center of “civilization,” exported its fashions to Germany, which consequently suffered a corresponding inferiority complex. But when Vienna emerged as a regional center and exported fashionable products to its own colonies, it could pose as a center of civilization. Czechs and Hungarians found themselves in turn cast in the role of backwards barbarians. The Hungarian nobility in turn posed as modern civilization when speaking to the Hungarian peasantry. This “civilizational slope” model, however, does not extend indefinitely Eastwards. The fashion system reached the East-Central European Czechs and Hungarians via the central European Germans, but East European Russians, Romanians and Turks imported fashionable products by sea, and thus experienced the cultural influence of Paris and London directly.

The symmetry breaks down somewhere in the Slavic Balkans. Adrian-Silvan Ionescu reports that Romanians who wore “European clothes” were originally called “drunken Germans,” since Saxon merchants first brought the styles to the Romanian principalities,<sup>122</sup> but Francophilia soon brought Romanian patriots into direct contact with Paris. Rebecca West reports that during the late 1930s, Macedonian women in Skopje read the German fashion magazine *Die Dame*,<sup>123</sup> and mass-produced clothing in among Ottoman South-Slavs was sometimes known as “German dress” (or “Russian dress”). Yet tailors producing clothes in the new style were known as “French style tailors,” suggesting that the such clothes were widely experienced as a French influence.<sup>124</sup>

Observers of East-Central Europe often interpreted the civilizational slope in terms of a binary geographical division between “East and West.” The spread of the fashion system produced similar results without being located on the East-West axis. John Milford, after sympathetically describing Norway’s national costume, found

it is pleasing to see this picturesque and peculiar form of apparel, when we reflect upon the fatal inroads *la mode de Paris* is making throughout Europe, by obliterating all distinctive dress, destroying nationality, and reducing mankind to one hideous uniformity of round hats and long-tailed coats, a combination of form so diametrically opposed to the beautiful, that nothing but the perverse ingenuity of a Frenchman could have designed it, and nothing but the tyranny of fashion could have rendered it endurable.<sup>125</sup>

Michael Honan wrote that “the Catalonese have borrowed French fashions, and, not knowing how to turn them to account as a Parisian would, they become clumsy imitations of an elegant original.”<sup>126</sup> Samuel Widdrington wrote of Spain that “the most frivolous importations, in dress and manners, are daily taking place, and their assemblies are vapid copies of Paris and London.”<sup>127</sup> Travelers made similar comments about peasant costumes throughout Europe.<sup>128</sup> The discourse Said memorably described as “Orientalist” did not divide Europe into Western and Eastern halves, since the binary oppositions civilized/barbarian, developed/backwards and modern/picturesque did not always corresponded to the West/East binary. The civilizational slope generated by the self glorification of Paris and London did indeed map onto the East-West dichotomy in the Balkans, but Scandinavia, Italy, Iberia, and the Celtic fringe underwent analogous symbolic peripheralization.

This observation suggests what might be called a “Copernican” symbolic geography, in which some societies circle others like planets orbiting a star, though peripheral cultures may find themselves orbiting local centers, much as moons circle a planet. Paris was the central star of this fashion universe, though London became a near rival during the nineteenth century. Both in Europe, and in the Americas and beyond, other sartorial cultures orbited these central stars. Regional centers such as Vienna, however, exerted their own gravitational pull over other their peripheral neighbors. Czechs and Hungarians may have felt the pull of Vienna more strongly than that of distinct Paris and London, yet these moons circling the Viennese planet still orbited around a Parisian sun.

## NOTES

- <sup>1</sup> For thirteen normative dichotomies distinguishing “good and bad nationalisms,” including “civic vs. ethnic,” “political vs. cultural,” “liberal vs. illiberal,” and “*Staatsnation* vs. *Kulturnation*,” see Philip Spencer, Howard Wollman, *Nationalism: A Critical Introduction* (London: Sage, 2002), 96.
- <sup>2</sup> For a good overview of sumptuary laws, see Alan Hunt, “The Governance of Consumption: Sumptuary Laws and Shifting Forms of Regulation,” in: David Clarke, et al., *The Consumption Reader* (London: Routledge, 2003), 62-69.
- <sup>3</sup> Max Boehn summarizes: “elites fought throughout the middle ages against the luxury and wastefulness of their servants, a battle which in the first instance concerned the maintenance of outwardly visible caste boundaries [...] it was always futile.” Max v. Boehn, *Die Mode: Menschen und Moden im 18. Jahrhundert*. (Munich: Bruckmann, 1963), 196. Eisenbart also speaks of “how useless it was for sumptuary orders to stand in the way of fashion.” Liselotte Eisenbart, *Kleiderordnungen der deutschen Städte zwischen 1350 und 1700* (Göttingen: Musterschmidt Verlag, 1962), 102.
- <sup>4</sup> Eisenbart, *Kleiderordnungen der deutschen Städte*, 33.
- <sup>5</sup> See François Poponnier, Pierrine Mane, *Dress in the Middle Ages*, translated by Caroline Beamish (New Haven, London: Yale University Press, 1997), 83-84.
- <sup>6</sup> See Roman Sandgruber. *Die Anfänge der Konsumgesellschaft: Konsumgüterverbrauch, Lebensstandard und Alltagsgüter in Österreich in 18. und 19. Jahrhundert* (Munich: R Oldenbourg, 1982), 296-97.
- <sup>7</sup> Several scholars have emphasized the role of the arts to the rule of Louis XIV. See Robert Isherwood, *Music in the Service of the King: France in the Seventeenth Century* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1973); Jean-Marie Apostolidès, *Le Roi-machine: spectacle at politique au temps de Louis XIV* (Paris: Minuit, 1997), Peter Burke, *The Fabrication of Louis XIV* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1992); Jeffrey Ravel, *Public Theater and French Political Culture, 1680-1791* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1999).
- <sup>8</sup> Antoine Furetière, *Dictionnaire universel* (Geneva: Slatkine, 1970 [Rotterdam:1690]); cited from Jennifer Michell Jones, *Sexing la Mode: Gender, Fashion and Commercial Culture in Old Regime France* (Oxford, New York: Berg, 2004), 2.
- <sup>9</sup> Charles Louis Montesquieu, *Lettres Persanes de Montesquieu* (Paris: Pourrat, 1831 [1721]), 242. English translation by John Davidson (London: Gibbings, 1899); available as an e-book, see URL <<http://www.wm.edu/history/rbsche/plp/letter100.html>>. See also the discussion in Ulrich Schultz-Buschhaus, “Literarische Thematisierung des Begriffs ‘Mode’,” lecture delivered at Potsdam University, WWW document, URL <<http://gams.uni-graz.at:8080/fedora/get/o:usb-068-243/bdef:TEI/get/>>, accessed 24 April 2006.

- 10 See Daniel Roche, *The Culture of Clothing: Dress and Fashion in the 'Ancien Régime'*, translated by Jean Birrell (Cambridge: University Press, 1994 [1989]); Sarah Maza, *Servants and Masters in Eighteenth Century France* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1985).
- 11 See Jolanta Pekacz, "The Salonnieres and the Philosophes in Old Regime France: The Authority of Aesthetic Judgment," *Journal of the History of Ideas*, vol. 60, no. 2 (April 1990), 277-97; Eva Avigador, *Coquettes et précieuses* (Paris: A.G. Ninzet, 1982).
- 12 See Domna Stanton, *The Aristocrat as Art: A Study of the Honnête Homme and the Dandy in Seventeenth and Nineteenth Century French Literature* (New York: Colombia University Press, 1980); John Prevost, *Le Dandysme en France (1817-1839)* (Geneva: Droz, 1957); Patrik Favardin and Boueire Lourent, *Le Dandysme* (Lyon: La Manufacture, 1988); Ellen Moers, *The Dandy* (New York: Viking Press, 1960).
- 13 Jennifer Jones, "Repackaging Rousseau," *French Historical Studies*, vol. 18, no. 4 (Autumn, 1994), 949.
- 14 For an analysis of fashion as a marker of status, see Pierre Bordieu, *Distinction: A Social Critique of the Judgment of Taste*, translated by Richard Nice (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1984 [1979]).
- 15 Jean-Jacques Rousseau, *Considerations on the Government of Poland*, completed but not published in 1772. Available as an E-book from the Constitution Society, <<http://www.constitution.org/jjr/poland.htm>>, accessed 29 March 2007.
- 16 "Briefauszüge über Italien im Jahre 1804," *Journal des Luxus und der Moden*, vol. 21 (6 January 1806), 21.
- 17 "Die Holländerinnen," *Allgemeine Moden-Zeitung*, no 63, (5 August 1808), 502.
- 18 Woodbine Parish, *Buenos Ayres and the Provinces of the Rio de la Plata* (London: John Murray, 1839), 32.
- 19 Hawes even asked rhetorically "Is God French?" Elizabeth Hawes, *Fashion is Spinach*, (New York: H. Wolff, 1938), 1.
- 20 The German occupation of Paris, combined with the rise of ready-to-wear clothing, both helped fashion industries in the United States to challenge Parisian supremacy. On the impact of American ready-to-wear production, see Linda Welters, "The Americanization of Fashion," in: *Twentieth Century American Fashion* (Oxford: Berg, 2005); Norma Rantisi, *International Journal of Urban and Regional Research*, vol. 28, no. 1 (2004) 86-106. For an economic study comparing the fashion industries of New York and Paris, see Nancy Green, *Ready-To-Wear and Ready-To-Work: A Century of Industry and Immigrants in Paris and New York* (Durham: Duke University Press, 1997). Dominique Veillon, however, has downplayed the importance of the Second World War. Alluding to a display of fashion dolls, she argued that "those who had believed that the war would put a full stop to French creation

- were wrong. Paris had triumphed again." See *Fashion under the Occupation* (Oxford, New York: Berg, 2002), 144. [*La mode sous l'Occupation* (Paris: Payot, 1999)].
- 21 James Jackson Jarves, *Parisian Sights and French Principles* (New York: Harper and Brothers, 1855), 215.
- 22 "Foreign Estimates of England," *Blackwood's Edinburgh Magazine*, vol. 74, no. 455 (September 1853), 295.
- 23 Carol Belfanti and Fabio Guisberti, "Clothing and Social Inequality in Early Modern Europe," *Continuity and Change*, vol. 15 (2000), 359-65. For a case study of the Danish case, see Jespersen, "Court and Nobility in Early Modern Denmark," *Scandinavian Journal of History* (2002). On Germany, see Daniel Purdy, *The Tyranny of Elegance: Consumer Cosmopolitanism in the Era of Goethe* (Baltimore and London: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1998) esp. 91-118; Roman Sandgruber, *Die Anfänge der Konsumgesellschaft: Konsumgüterverbrauch, Lebensstandard und Alltagskultur in Österreich in 18. und 19. Jahrhundert* (Munich: R Oldenbourg, 1982). On England, see Neil McKendrick, et. al., *The Birth of a Consumer Society: the Commercialization of Eighteenth-Century England* (London: Europa, 1982); Beverly Lemire, "Second-hand Beaux and 'Red-armed Belles': Conflict and the Creation of Fashions in England, c. 1660-1800," *Continuity and Change*, vol. 15 (2000), 391-417.
- 24 See Matthew Hilton, "The Legacy of Luxury: Moralities of Consumption since the Nineteenth Century," *Journal of Consumer Culture*, vol. 4, no. 1 (2004), 101-23.
- 25 Sarah Maza, "Luxury, Morality and Social Change: Why there was no Middle-Class consciousness in Prerevolutionary France," *Journal of Modern History*, vol. 69, no. 2 (June 1997), 199-229.
- 26 See Werner Sombart, *Liebe, Luxus und Kapitalismus: über die Entstehung der modernen Welt aus dem Geist der Verschwendung* (Berlin: Wagenbach, 1984 [Munich: Taschenbuchverlag, 1967]); Beverly Lemire, *Dress Culture and Commerce* (London: Palgrave, 1997).
- 27 Betty Sendtner, née Wolf. "Ueber deutsche Nationaltracht." [1814] in Schmit, *Journal des Luxus und der Moden*, vol. 3; Justus Möser, "Antwort auf verschiedene Vorschläge wegen einer Kleiderordnung," and "Die Vortheile einer allgemeinen Landesuniform, declamirt von einem Bürger," both available in *Sämmtliche Werke / Patriotische Phantasien*, vols. 1, 2 edited by B. R. Abecken (Berlin: Nicolaischen Buchhandlung, 1842-43). See also Daniel Purdy, *The Tyranny of Elegance: Consumer Cosmopolitanism in the Era of Goethe* (Baltimore and London: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1998).
- 28 On Gustav III's uniform, see Erik Lindorm, *Ny svensk Historia Gustaviansk, 1771-1810* (Stockholm: Wahlström and Widstrand, 1945), 146; H. Arnold Barton, "Gustav III of Sweden and the Enlightenment," *Eighteenth Century*



- Studies*, vol. 6, no. 1 (Autumn 1972) 1-34; Mary Wilton, *The Book of Costume: or, Annals of Fashion; from the Earliest Period to the Present time* (London: Henry Colburn, 1846), 349-50.
- <sup>29</sup> Mathew Carey [as "Sylvius"] "Letter IV" *American Museum* (August 1787), 118. See also Michael Zakim, "Sartorial Ideologies: from Homespun to Ready-Made," *American Historical Review*, vol. 106, no. 1 (December, 2001), 1553-86.
- <sup>30</sup> Other include proposals are Marquis de Vilette, *Lettres choisies*, (Paris: Montargis, 1790); Claude-François-Xavier Mercier, *Comment m'habilleraie-je? Reflexions politiques et philosophiques sur l'habillement Français, et sur la nécessité d'un costume national* (Paris: Temple des Arts, 1793). For commentary on the sartorial politics of the Revolution, see Phillipe Perrot, *Fashioning the Bourgeoisie: A History of Clothing in the Nineteenth Century*, (Princeton: University Press, 1994); Jennifer Harris, "The Red Cap of Liberty: A Study of Dress Worn by French Revolutionary Parisians, 1789-94." *Eighteenth Century Studies*, vol. 14, no. 3 (Spring 1981), 283-312; Jennifer Heuer, "Hats on for the Nation! Women, Servants, Soldiers and the 'Sign of the French'," *French History*, vol. 16, no. 1 (2002), 28-52.
- <sup>31</sup> See Ernst Moritz Arndt, *Sitte, Mode und Kleidertracht* (Frankfurt am Rhein: Bernhard Körner, 1814), "Ueber die teutsche Frauentracht, (eingesandt)," *Rheinische Merkur*, (5 September 1814); "W. von Ch." "Was Sitte, was Mode sey, oder, Teutscher Frauen Volkstracht, erfordert für Gesundheit, Wohlstand, Zucht und Schönheit ein wehmüthig ernstes Wort," *Journal des Luxus und der Moden*, vol. 30 (June, 1815), 334; "Über deutsche Volkstracht," *Allgemeine Deutsche Frauen-Zeitung*, vol. 1, no. 13 (14 February 1816), 52; "Wohlgemeinter Vorschlag statt einer allgemeinen deutschen Nationaltracht eine Kleidung für bejahrte Personen einzuführen," *Allgemeine deutsche Frauenzeitung*, no. 22 (6 March 1816), 88; Caroline Pichler, "Ueber eine Nationalkleidung für Teutsche Frauen," *Journal des Luxus und der Moden*, vol. 30 (February 1815), 67-82; Johann Carl Friederich Jarik, "An die zarten deutschen Frauen," *Allgemeine Deutsche Frauen-Zeitung*, vol. 1, no. 25 (27 March 1816), 97-98. For an analysis of these various proposals, see Eva Maria Schneider, *Herkunft und Verbreitungsformen der „Deutschen Nationaltracht der Befreiungskriege“ als Ausdruck politischer Gesinnung* (Bonn: Dissertation, 2002), 2 volumes, available online at <[http://hss.ulb.uni-bonn.de/diss\\_online/phil\\_fak/2002/schneider\\_eva\\_maria/0083\\_1.pdf](http://hss.ulb.uni-bonn.de/diss_online/phil_fak/2002/schneider_eva_maria/0083_1.pdf)>.
- <sup>32</sup> See Anonymous, *My Daughter's Book, containing a selection of approved readings in literature, science and art, adapted to the Formation of the Character of a Woman* (London: Baldwin and Cradock, 1834), 67-68.
- <sup>33</sup> John Ruskin, *Modern Painters* (New York: John Wiley, 1860), 345.
- <sup>34</sup> See for example the conversation about Greek folk costumes in Edmond About, *Greece and Greeks of the Present Day* (Edinburgh: Thomas Constable,

- 1860), 110; and "Výstavka slovenských ľudových výšiviek a čipiek v Hradci Králové," *Živena: zábavno-poučný časopis, orgán spolkov živeny a lipy*, vol. 4, no. 5 (1913), 154. For a sophisticated study of folk costumes in Bavaria, see Regina Bendix and Dorothy Noyes, "Moral Integrity in Costumed Identity: Negotiating 'National Costume' in Nineteenth-Century Bavaria," in: "Dressing the Social Body," *Journal of American Folklore*, vol. 111, no. 440 (Spring 1998), 107-224.
- 35 Mary Wilton, *The Book of Costume: or, Annals of Fashion; from the Earliest Period to the Present time* (London: Henry Colburn, 1846), 24. Similar arguments can also be found at Anne Aikin-Barbauld, "Fashion: A Vision." In: Lucy Aikin, ed., *The Works of Anna Lætitia Barbauld* (New York, Carvill, Bliss and White, 1826), 2:318; "Wiener Moden," *Wiener Sonntagsblätter*, vol. 7, no. 25 (1848), 478.
- 36 Aikin-Barbauld, "Fashion: A Vision," 2:318.
- 37 "K." *Best Dressed Man: A Gossip on Manners and Modes* (London: J.W. Doré, 1892), 64.
- 38 See Eugenia Paulicelli, *Fashion under Fascism: Beyond the Black Shirt* (Oxford: Berg, 2004); Irene Guenther, *Nazi Chic? Fashioning Women in the Third Reich* (New York: Berg, 2004), particularly chapter 6, pp. 167-202; Gloria Sultano, 'Wie geistiges Kokain': *Mode unterm Hakenkreuz* (Vienna: Verlag für Gesellschaftskritik, 1995).
- 39 Johann J. Zedler, "Mode" *Universal-Lexicon* (Halle, Leipzig: Johann Heinrich Zeider, 1732), 701.
- 40 Johann J. Zedler, *Universal-Lexicon* (Halle, Leipzig: Johann Heinrich Zeider, 1732), 704.
- 41 H.P. Sturz, "Über die Nationaltracht," *Deutsches Museum* vol. 2, (1778), 98.
- 42 Joseph Sonnenfels, "Über die Liebe des Vaterlands," *Gesammelte Schrifte* (Vienna: Baumeisterischen Schriften, 1785 [1771]), 7:35.
- 43 Anon, "Moden aus Frankreich," *Berlinische Monatschrift* vol. 4, no. 1 (April 1786), 379.
- 44 See *Journal [des Luxus und] der Moden*, "Ist eine teutsche Nationalkleidung einzufuehren nützlich und möglich?" (February 1896), 72-84. I originally studied this text from Werner Schmit, *Journal des Luxus und der Moden*, vol. 1. Leipzig: Edition Leipzig, 1969, part of a four-volume series reprinting selections from the Journal. Daniel Purdy apparently worked from the same volume and had no better luck naming the author.
- 45 See "Aufforderung an Teutschland," *Journal des Luxus und der Moden* (January 1793), cited from Werner Schmit, ed. *Journal des Luxus und der Moden* (Leipzig: Edition Leipzig, 1969), 1:87.
- 46 "Über die Wichtigkeit der Landes-Industrie-Institut für Teutschland," *Journal des Luxus und der Moden* (August 1793), 409, 417. The essay continued in the September 1793 edition.

- 47 "Modenbericht aus Berlin in März 1815," *Journal des Luxus und der Moden*,  
vol. 30 (April 1815), 250.
- 48 Z, "Was soll eine gute deutsche Frau nicht thun?" in *Der Humorist*, vol. 12,  
no. 83 (6 April 1848), 335.
- 49 "Modenbericht," *Tagesbericht für die Modenwelt*, supplement to *Allgemeine*  
*Modezeitung*, no. 15 (1848), 29.
- 50 "Modenbericht," *Tagesbericht für die Modenwelt*, no. 15 (1848), 30.
- 51 The *Wiener Abendzeitung*, for instance, praised manufacturers Theyer and  
Syré for manufacturing "elegant letter stationary" with the tricolor, but seemed  
mostly bemused to report that the jeweler Türk had manufactured German  
tricolor finger-rings. See "Die deutsche Farben," *Wiener Abendzeitung*, no.  
23 (21 April 1848), 94; "Deutsche Ringe" *Wiener Abendzeitung*, no. 14 (11  
April 1848), 58.
- 52 "Modenbericht" *Tagesbericht für die Modenwelt*, no. 18 (1848), 36.
- 53 Stern, *Mode und Kultur*, 96.
- 54 Adolf Vetter, "Reform der Mode," *Donauland – Illustrierte Monatschrift*, vol.  
1, no. 1. (March-August, 1917). 84, 83.
- 55 "Boykott französischer Modewaren," *Blätter des Verbands der deutschen*  
*Modeindustrie*, vol. 2 no. 1 (February 1923), 52-53. Cited from Anton Kaes,  
*The Weimar Republic Sourcebook* (Berkeley: University of California Press,  
1994), 658.
- 56 Oscar Wilde, ed., *Woman's World* (New York: Source Book Press [London:  
Cassell, 1889]), 287.
- 57 John Evelyn, *Tyrannus, or the Mode* (London: Bedel and Collins, 1661).  
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- 58 The poem is available in Samuel Johnson, ed., *The Works of the English*  
*Poets* (London: H. Hughes, 1729), 245-49. See also the discussion in Jennifer  
Jones, *Sexing La Mode* (Oxford: University Press, 2004), 22.
- 59 Joseph Addison, "Essay 45, Saturday April 21" in: *The Works of Joseph*  
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*Spectator* (21 April, 1711).
- 60 Donna Andrew, ed., "London debates: 1783," *London Debating Societies,*  
*1776-1799* (1994), 151-57. URL: <[http://www.british-history.ac.uk/report.](http://www.british-history.ac.uk/report.asp?compid=38847)  
[asp?compid=38847](http://www.british-history.ac.uk/report.asp?compid=38847)>. Date accessed: 09 April 2007.
- 61 Christian Isobel Johnstone, *Nights of the Round Table: or, Stories of Aunt*  
*Jane and her Friends* (Edinburgh: John Johnstone, 1832), 189-90. Characters  
in the same conversation elsewhere condemn "the scanty drapery which  
France and Italy, for a few mad years, sent us over as *classic*."
- 62 "K." *Best Dressed Man: A Gossip on Manners and Modes* (London: J.W.  
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- 63 "K." *Best Dressed Man: A Gossip on Manners and Modes* (London: J.W. Doré, 1892), 27, 28, 29.
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## MIHAIL NEAMȚU

Born in 1978, in Romania

Ph.D. in systematic theology, King's College London

Research Fellow, Woodrow Wilson Center, Washington DC, May-August, 2009

Research Fellow, Russell Kirk Center, Michigan, January-February, 2009

Visiting Fellow of the Notre Dame Center for Ethics and Culture,  
September-December, 2008

Affiliate Researcher of the Center for the History of Religions,  
University of Bucharest, 2002-2006

Member of the American Academy of Religion (since 2007)

Member of the Romanian Society for Phenomenology (since 2000)

Romanian Association for History of Religions (2001-2008)

Russell Kirk Center, Fall Fellowship, 2008

Renovabis Stiftung (Germany) Grant, 2002-2005

Ratiu Foundation (London), Bursary, 2001-2004

Society for Sacred Mission (UK) & Durham University Scholarship, 2001  
Open Society Institute (Bucharest), Grant, 2000  
Outstanding Junior Research Award, University of Cluj-Napoca, Romania,  
1998

Author of several scholarly studies, essays and articles

**Books:**

*Povara libertății. Antiteze, paradigme și biografii moderne*  
(*The Burden of Freedom*), Bucharest, Polirom, 2009  
*Verbul ca fotografie. Disidențe culturale și comentarii politice*  
(*The Word as Photography*), Bucharest, Curtea Veche, 2009  
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*Gramatica Ortodoxiei. Tradiția după modernitate (The Grammar of Orthodoxy:  
Tradition after Modernity)*, Jassy, Polirom, 2007 - National Award by  
Cuvântul Magazine for the best 2007 Romanian book  
*Bufnița din dărâmături. Insomnii teologice în România post-comunistă*  
(*The Owl among the Ruins: Religion and Society in Post-Communist Romania*)  
2<sup>nd</sup> revised and expanded edition, Jassy, Polirom, 2008

# SECULARISATION AND ORTHODOXY IN MODERN ROMANIA, WITH A SPECIAL REFERENCE TO THE PRACTICE OF FASTING

## 1. Thesis Statement

Before the eye of the cultural anthropologists even begins to assess the outcome of modern secularisation at the grassroots level, as it is indicated by the aesthetics of the body, eating habits, cuisine industry and other such elements embedded within the social fabric of the Romanian society, one needs to understand well the intellectual and political trajectory of the dominant religion in the footsteps of the Napoleonic reforms implemented during the 19<sup>th</sup> century. This paper attempts to look first at the ways in which the advent of the secular ethos in the Romanian principalities seriously challenged the traditional understanding of one of the most distinctive religious practices for Orthodox Christianity, namely the art of fasting.

I set off to argue that during the late 19<sup>th</sup> and early 20<sup>th</sup> century, the Orthodox theologians in Moldavia, Wallachia and Transylvania witnessed not only the gradual alienation of the urban elite from the discipline of the ecclesiastical canons, but also the relative absence of any conceptual and narrative framework supporting the religious practices of *vulgus*. Fasting, in particular, became a collectivist practice more subjected to social censorship, than assigned to its original criteria of theological intelligibility. On the one hand, urban orthodoxy became obsolete because of an independent reason uninformed by faith, echoing the Kantian legacy in the post-Enlightenment culture of Western Europe. On the other hand, rural orthopraxy was mixed with non-Christian beliefs and very close to being divorced from any internal coherence of the theological orthodoxy praised by the ancient Church.

Seeing that the cultural conservatism and religious fervour of the Christian flocks could be defended as relevant for the urban orthodoxy of 20<sup>th</sup> century Romania, Rev. Dumitru Stăniloae (1903-1993) initiated the joint process of philosophical and theological reflection upon the meaning of orthodoxy and orthopraxy altogether. He wanted to purify folk opinions from any pagan reminiscences, while persuading the Romanian intelligentsia that Christianity can never be reduced to empty rituals and boring repetitions of an immobile creed. By translating the volumes included in the *Philokalia* series, he hoped not only to reject the Kantian dualism of mind-and-body, but also to rekindle the urban interest for the unknown depths of Christian religion, which in his eyes could not separate fasting from feasting, education from simplicity, faith from reason.

As a side note, I argue that there is no surprise in that this work emerges for the first time within the cultural matrix of Transylvania. Dumitru Stăniloae spoke to an audience which knew well the effects of secularisation. The reinterpreted the Christian practice of feasting and fasting in relationship to theological constitution the human mind and body, revealed by the vast liturgical choreography of the Orthodox worship. Historians of ideas and cultural anthropologists cannot neglect these important aspects when it comes to their analysis of the modern aesthetics of the body.

## **2. Religion and Culture in Walachia and Moldavia by late 19<sup>th</sup> Century**

The intellectual history of modern Romania does not include a very generous chapter on Christian theology, discussing its relationship with the philosophical principles of modern thought, as they were first outlined in Western Europe. The Islamic domination of Eastern Christendom bequeathed Sultanism, practiced by 'an administration and a military force' put in the service of 'the master,' whose 'domination' operated 'primarily on the basis of discretion.'<sup>1</sup> All over the Balkan area, Turkish rule allowed only slow and shallow reforms to take place in what the system of governance, education, and law were concerned.<sup>2</sup> The Anglo-Saxon principles of *Magna Charta*, or the British emphasis on individual rights and properties, were never seen as normative, whether in Moldova, Walachia, or even Transylvania.<sup>3</sup> The influence of the Tsarist Russia was

strongly felt especially in Moldova, where it took decades to replace the autocratic rule with a more participatory system of political representation, at the centre of which the freedom of the individual, whether peasant, civil servant or intellectual, to be rescued from the temptations of State arbitrary power.<sup>4</sup>

Keith Hitchins describes the general predicament of the Orthodox clergy in the following terms:

Significant differences of class, education, and power divided the metropolitans, bishops, and their bureaucracies from a numerous parish clergy. The majority of the higher clergy were recruited from the *boier* class and from among Greek prelates from outside the principalities. They shared certain moral and philosophical assumptions that were characteristic of the Orthodox world of the day. As we have seen, they also sat together on the same government bodies and often pursued the same political and economic goals.<sup>5</sup>

This meant that the ecclesiastical apparatus paralleled the gap between the urban elite and the peasantry. The educated people had little interest in the religious practices of Orthodox people, among which one counts pilgrimages, devotion for the holy relics, strict fasting rules on Wednesday and Friday, and other such forms of bodily self-discipline. In the words of the same American historian,

The peasantry supplied by far the greatest number of priests, and only rarely did a member of the middle class or the lesser *boiers* pursue this vocation. The priesthood, in a sense, formed a closed corporation, since the office was often passed on from father to son, especially in the village.<sup>6</sup>

The State's financial support for the Orthodox bishops prevented the latter category from addressing many of the disturbing issues which tormented the political establishment. The implementation of civic and agrarian reforms was incessantly postponed. In the wake of the 1859 union of Walachia and Moldavia, the process of modernization began then to show its first fruits, in both positive and disruptive terms. Religion came under the renewed attack of the '1848 Generation' of intellectuals, who liked their popular speeches to be permeated by the French revolutionary ethos and its rampant anti-clericalism, and utopian vision of human progress. The Scottish approach to the Enlightenment, with its balanced

view on the role of religion in the public sphere, came to be known only very late by the Romanian intellectuals, and it was never implemented in institutional terms. Equally, the Romanian statesmen did not sympathise with the specifically North-American appropriation of Christian ideas into the democratic mechanism of governance. The status quo favoured a relationship of servitude between the Church and the national State.

In the meantime, the societal habits stayed put, especially in the rural areas. Popular piety was isolated from the attention of public intellectuals. In the emerging cities of European calibre, the revolutionary ideals of took over the old religious pursuit of heaven. Ion Heliade Rădulescu (1802-1872) spoke of social justice while Nicolae Bălcescu (1818-1952), not shy to invoke the divine Providence fought the battle for national emancipation, along with Alecu Russo (1819-1859), C.A. Rosetti (1816-1885) or Ion Ionescu de la Brad (1818-1891). Members of the Transylvanian elite, such as Simion Bărnuțiu (1808-1864), emphasised the emancipating role of reason, under the influence of Immanuel Kant (1724-1804). Aron Pumnul (1918-1886) saw in Voltaire (1694-1778) 'the patriarch of philosophers and the begetter of the ideas about liberty, equality and fraternity.' The same general enthusiasm for the French understanding of the Enlightenment inspired other figures, among whom one counts Andrei Mureșanu (1816-1863) and others.<sup>7</sup>

In short, the Romanian intelligentsia started to experience a slow process of alienation in relationship with the customs of Eastern Orthodoxy, which were still prevalent among the peasantry.<sup>8</sup> When one of the first Romanian politicians, Prince Alexandru John-Cuza (1859-1862), decided to break away from the paternalist tradition of Sultanism, his move ended up in a quasi-unilateral declaration of war against the ecclesiastical institutions. Cuza tried to empower the 'common man' with more property rights, and to implement gradually a pluralistic view on law and education. In December 1864, the Prince's land and taxation reforms brought about great anxiety inside the Church establishment, which lost more than two thirds of its former properties.<sup>9</sup> A disenfranchised Church felt immediately threatened by these radical measures, which smacked of Jacobinism.<sup>10</sup> The great hierarchs defended their interests by employing an anti-Western rhetoric, not always short of apocalyptic overtones.

This phenomenon resembled the modern Russian history, where successive waves of centralised secularisation took place during the 18<sup>th</sup> and the 19<sup>th</sup> centuries. When Moldavia and Walachia were still

happy to live under the umbrella of *Byzance après Byzance* (as Nicolae Iorga aptly put it<sup>11</sup>), Queen Catherine II and Peter the Great set off to usurp the autonomy of the Russian Orthodox Church, with immediate consequences for whole of the Russian society.<sup>12</sup> The ecclesiastical schools, such as Moghila Academy from Kiev, suffered greatly from these transformations.<sup>13</sup> The reforms in Russia had long-lasting effects upon the Romanian elite, too, and this is largely documented for the entire length of the 19<sup>th</sup> century.<sup>14</sup>

Once the old branch of Saint Sava's Academy (founded in 1694 by Prince Constantin Brâncoveanu) was turned into the first modern University of Bucharest,<sup>15</sup> the traditional concept of theology (which relied on the liturgical experience of the sacred, rather than on the conceptual training) came under fire, while the relationship between the Church and the State was put at test. It is true that with the implementation of the first modern Constitution (1866), and the enthronisation of Prince Charles of Hohenzollern (1866-1914) as King of Romania (1881), the Orthodox Church seized the opportunity to gain her autocephaly status (1885). This meant first of all that, from a juridical point of view, she could function in total independence from the Patriarchate of Constantinople.<sup>16</sup> The Romanian society witnessed then the political transfer from Sultanism to parliamentary monarchy. The times for 'the selfish domination of a small class of boiers and high churchmen over the mass of rural population'<sup>17</sup> were forever gone.

On all possible levels, new strategies of collaboration between the Church and the State had to be devised, so that that the encounter between theology and culture, between the ecclesiastical activities and the representatives of modern culture would still take place. The task of translating the religious symbols and practices of Eastern Orthodoxy into the idiom of modernity was more difficult than that of rendering old texts written in Greek or Church Slavonic into the vernacular. On the longer term, this lack of interaction with the institutions of modernity resulted into the gradual oblivion of thematic richness of the traditional religious practices. Orthopraxy tended thus to become an opaque set of routine procedures, hardly explained, and even less internalised at the level of discursive intelligence by the urban class. In addition, the latter group included non-Orthodox Christians, such as the Calvinists, Lutheran, Unitarian and Roman-Catholics believers from Transylvania, together with the Jewish population more widespread in Moldavia and Walachia. The

Orthodox Church did hardly target this audience during her missionary activities, which explains the gradual merging of the ethnic identity with the religious vocation.

### **3. Transylvania: ambivalent attitudes towards modernity**

By mid 19<sup>th</sup> century, the same situation was to be found in Transylvania. On the one hand, prominent Orthodox Christians, among whom one counts bishops such as Andrei Țaguna (1809-1870) and affluent business-men such as Emanuel Gojdu (1802-1870), repeatedly declared their allegiance to the Austro-Hungarian Empire, without cherishing the Moldavian or Walachian nostalgia for the 'lost paradise' of Byzantium. This was an explicit recognition of the positive aspects of modern constitutionalism and free-market ideas. The adherence to the 19<sup>th</sup> century project of national autonomy, educational progress and economic welfare was due to another social ethos, less permeated by the anti-Western stance encouraged in other parts of the Orthodox world. A particular suspicion towards the imperial establishment was, to some extent, justified.

Some of the extreme secular ideals promoted in Transylvania go back to the end of the 18<sup>th</sup> century, when the Austrian armies led by General Adolf von Bukow, tried either to destroy or to damage many Orthodox monasteries, such as Râmeți (1762) or Sâmbata (1785). Many Orthodox did not forget the measures taken in 1781 by the 'Holy Roman Emperor' Joseph II (1741-1791), who was the eldest son of Maria Theresa of Austria (1717-1780). Joseph II called for the suppression of all contemplative monasteries and Catholic orders from the Habsburg lands. This order impinged upon the Orthodox monasteries, too, since they were all considered to be 'utterly and completely useless.'<sup>18</sup> The Austrian monarch agreed with the dissolution of more than 700 monasteries at the Western frontier of the Walachia and Moldova. This historical phenomenon, along with the 'natural selection' of the Roman Catholic, the Greek-Catholic, and the Protestant traditions as the only European voices of Christianity,<sup>19</sup> wounded the religious sensitivity of the Orthodox flocks in Transylvania.

Not all political, cultural and social values coming from the West were taken for granted. It is true that by the end of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, there was a significant flow of cash into the market economy of the Transylvanian



cities.<sup>20</sup> This led to a rapid urbanisation of the rural landscape, and to an ambivalent renovation of the societal rites of passage. The strong opposition to the secular homogenisation was led by religious leaders, rural conservatives and the supporters of old folk traditions. On the other hand, there was a certain understanding of the need to adapt the traditional *rites de passages* to the new conditions of life, marked by economic transactions across different social borders. Priestly sermons, local magazines, journal chronicles, travellers' diaries, some pieces of private correspondence – all these documents reflect the subtle, or radical transformation of the traditional understanding of religious practices, such as the feasting and fasting. Different texts record the loosening up of certain dietary rules ascribed for different periods of the liturgical year. They are, indeed, paralleled by the appearance of new codes of dressing even for the clergymen (e.g., shaven beards, and priests not wearing their cassock in public). The modern standards of urban life, erected to achieve labour efficiency and economic profit, changed the ancient perception of the sacred time and space. The old-narratives connected to liturgical practices became increasingly marginal (such as the Psalter, which was traditionally put in the service of fasting during the Great Lent).

In many communities of Transylvania, especially, the church ceased to be the *axis mundi* of the symbolic geography of ordinary people.<sup>21</sup> Crucifixes stopped marking the crossroads of the new towns and cities, while many religious festivals became almost forgotten. Food was not anymore sanctified in prayer by the sign of the cross. The unity between the micro- and the macro-cosmos became blurred, with the special status ascribed to the nature (regarded as apt to become an incarnational vehicle) disappearing almost completely. The natural equilibrium of ecology, previously insured by the intermingling of the basic elements of nature (air, fire, earth, water), seemed now endangered. With the advent of modern technology, the bread ceased to carry out its traditional symbolism or to display metonymically a theological significance. According to the *pars pro toto* rule, the Eucharist was traditionally regarded as the image of the world, offered to God in thanksgiving and then received back as an oblatory gift.

This set of secular perceptions endorsed the individualistic approach to life. It eventually distorted the poetic link between the body and the word. The archaic sense of belonging to a 'cosmic Christianity' faded away. By implementing a functionalist approach to food, the new

definitions of hygiene changed the understanding of the human body, and suffering. An oblique attachment to scepticism among the intellectuals, the intensification of industrialisation processes, and the rather dramatic changes operated in the calendar (with the transfer from the Julian, to the Gregorian calculation of time) seemed to endanger the traditional authority of Christian piety. After the slow erosion of the Byzantine memory during the Turkish occupation, traditional Orthodox Christians witnessed the necessity of ecumenical practices at the grassroots level, triggered, in part, by mixed marriages between urban people. The phenomenon of secularisation was implacable.

Christianity, whether Catholic, Orthodox, or Protestant, began to be practiced mostly as civic religion. The religious payoff of the economic success led, inevitably, to the collective relaxation of the ancient Christian adherence to asceticism. The Orthodox Church gained more freedom of expression, and yet she felt compelled to accept a number of liturgical, architectural, iconographic and musical adaptations to the Westernised version of Christian piety. Only a few pastoral initiatives managed to bridge the gap between the religious expectations of the Orthodox people in Transylvania and the political games played by the State officials, dressed up in secular gowns.<sup>22</sup>

Born and bred in Transylvania, Metropolitan Andrei Şaguna endorsed the imperial respect for political pluralism and cultural diversity, in which he saw an implacable trait of the modern times. He defended capitalism and the principle of representation, while seeing in the institution of the bishopric something similar to the office of a senator in the parliament. In brief, Şaguna supported not only the modernisation of the society, but also the transformation of the Church structures from within. The Christian orthodoxy and orthopraxy depended very much upon the capacity of the Church to comprehend the historical makeover brought about by the modern age. This meant that the Christian communities from the rural areas had to be taught the overarching meaning encompassing their usual practices, while the urban class needed to be instructed about the practical rules of evangelical discipleship.<sup>23</sup> This pedagogical task was, however, only partially accomplished. From the very beginning, in Wallachia and Moldavia the all-encompassing vision of universal Christianity, which embraced many ethnic identities, was almost abandoned. The Jews, the Gypsies, the Germans, or the Hungarians living on the Romanian territories were never approached with a specifically Christian message.

By the end of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, the ecclesiastical leaders from the Romanian kingdom were busy in cancelling out the former Turkish influences upon the mores of the nation, and the Western ideas promoted by secular intelligentsia.<sup>24</sup> Before 1918, the Orthodox bishops from Transylvania could have never hoped to obtain the privileged status for the 'national Church,' which, in the event, the first two Constitutions of modern Romania (first in 1866, then in 1923) were ready to acknowledge. These legal documents explicitly stated that the Orthodox Church was 'the dominant religion of the Romanian State' (§21). The Church had powerful arguments to argue in favour of a solid recognition on behalf of the State. From the times of Stephen the Great, Moldavia teemed with monasteries, which played an important role in the maintenance of social cohesion and cultural unity. Yet, this secular recognition of the Orthodox Church as the dominant religion in Romania did not trigger a reflection upon the sources of modernity, and the meaning of the tradition, within the ecclesiastical seminaries. The latter were often seen as mere 'priest factories,' as the celebrated Romanian novelist Ion Creangă (1837-1889) once put it.<sup>25</sup> In 1840, the spiritual fervour handed over by the disciples of St Paisius Velichkovsky (1722-1794) from Neamț Monastery was seemingly forgotten, since the young monk Neofit Scriban (1803-1884) from 'Three Hierarchs Monastery' in Jassy could give a sermon in which, quite overtly, he used ideas about education taken from Voltaire. Once dispossessed of its properties and officially compensated by the very same State with the status of a civil religion, the Orthodox Church was able to think through only timid strategies for keeping intact her sacred traditions, and yet for encouraging the urban believers to resist the experience of secularization.

#### **4. Passionate Orthopraxy: Divorcing Faith from Reason**

Often, rampant poverty among the farmers coexisted with luxuriant fortunes owned by the monasteries (some of which were dedicated to their spiritual patrons from Mount Athos). The health of the simple peasants was often vulnerable to diseases. The mortality rate for births was high in the villages. Despite these material shortcomings, the Orthodox Church benefitted from an undisputed spiritual prestige. Some members of the high clergy would try to change the social landscape of the Romanian

principalities by reinforcing the ascetic rules of the ancient Church. This project did not always prove successful. In the early 18<sup>th</sup> century, Antim Ivireanu disparaged the lazy boyars, who mocked the fasting rules, and went for the easy life. But asceticism, more attractive to the monastic communities of hesychasts such as St Paisius Velichkovsky, was hardly palatable for the educated Westerners. In Transylvania, the famous Inochentie Micu (1692-1768) abandoned the early monastic life with bitter feelings, while remembering the 'everlasting fasting days, offering only peas, beans or boiled lentils, cooked without oil.'<sup>26</sup> When, at the beginning of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, Christine Reinhardt (after marriage: von Wimpffen), who was the wife of a German diplomat, visited Moldavia, she witnessed the unflagging devotion of the Orthodox Christians and the indigent education of the priests. She noticed that there was a high number of fasting days in the liturgical calendar, apart from the 'very sever Great Lent.'<sup>27</sup> In her letters to her mother, Christine Reinhardt also commented on the poor quality of the food available for the peasants, who tasted only very seldom meat and dairy products.<sup>28</sup>

Another foreign traveller to Wallachia was Felice Caronni (1748-1815), an archaeologist by profession. He endorsed the sceptical view of Prince Dimitrie Cantemir (1673-1723) regarding the ecclesiastical usage of Old Church Slavonic for the religious services.<sup>29</sup> This decision resulted into an enormous oblivion of the doctrinal, ethical and mystical character of the Orthodox tradition. Formalism, in Caronni's opinion, plagued even the most virtuous practices. The absence of any form of instruction or catechesis was also responsible for the prevalent simony and pharisaic behaviour among the clerics and for the laity's adhesion to only the exterior aspects of religion, on the verge of idolatry.<sup>30</sup> An excessive number of holidays and, thus, a faint work ethic, the emphasis on ritualism (seen in the habit of crossing oneself repeatedly, the endless number of public prostrations and kissing of hands), some superstitions regarding the magic power of oaths and curses, along with the popular belief in ghosts (in Romanian: *strigoî*), create the picture of a mixed bag of the popular religion.

To be sure, Caronni was a Roman-Catholic member of the Barnabite Order (founded in 1535), who cannot be entirely credited for his biased account. Yet, he had a point. Christianity was often reduced to a certain number of rules, and the practice of fasting was not sufficient by and in itself. Not a few pagan practices remained attractive to the rural population.

With the exceptions of a few educated monastics, many orthodox Christians from the Romanian lands lacked the anchoring into the narratives of the patristic tradition. This fact is confirmed by the British diplomat William Wilkinson (†1822), who spent four years in the Romanian provinces, taking systematic notes about the juridical, political, cultural and religious system of values shaping the countries. His remarks about the lack of religious instruction cannot take us by surprise.<sup>31</sup> Wilkinson seems to be impressed by the fervour preserved in the practice of fasting, which was regarded by most people as expiatory.

For all the Orthodox population, whether from Transylvania, Walachia and Moldavia, the advent of literacy was slow, even among the clergy.<sup>32</sup> By the late 19<sup>th</sup> century, the usage of the vernacular language came to be implemented in the church services, but the literary experts complained about the strong sense of indebtedness towards Slavonic and Greek languages, which the new ecclesiastical idiom seemed to display.<sup>33</sup> The shortage of good translations from the Church Fathers did not help the clergy and the learned laymen to get closer to the roots of their own Orthodox tradition.<sup>34</sup> Religious practices were still observed, in huge numbers, though the commerce with the narratives of the Orthodox traditions was poor.<sup>35</sup> To our help comes the account of the Transylvanian historian David Prodan (1902-1991), who was born in Cioara village (now called Săliște) from Alba county. Here are some of his recollections about a fundamental religious practice in the Orthodox tradition:

We went through severe fasting, that would not admit eggs or milk. [...] Sovereign among the dishes were the beans, first, and then the cabbage, and then the potatoes. [...] The fasting was unavoidable, despite the mumblings of the children. To trespass the rule would mean to run the risk of committing a great sin, opening thus the doors of hell with all its torments.<sup>36</sup>

Most Christians had to choose between either orthodoxy without practice, and orthopraxy without full-fledged reflection. Asceticism stops being ‘understood as the internalisation of tradition,’ called to be seen as ‘the performance of the memory of tradition.’<sup>37</sup> Within the matrix of Eastern Christendom, we know that

[The] ascetical practice of fasting was closely associated with the Eucharist and the rhythms of the liturgy. In an echo of Jewish practice, the *Didache* calls for two fast days each week. As with the weekly holy day, there was a shift: because Jews fasted on Monday and Thursday, Christians were to fast on Wednesday and Friday (*Didache* 8.2). The Friday fast was associated with the crucifixion of Jesus, and became a standard feature of Christian practice, as did fasting before receiving the Eucharist. Fasting was always linked to prayer, as in Jewish practice, by making one aware of the weakness and dependence on God. It was also a form of self-denial for the sake of intense prayer for others, echoing Jesus' self-sacrifice, and could become a practical act of mercy by giving away the money that would have been spent on food.<sup>38</sup>

This kind of awareness was present only among the religious elite. In most of the other parts of the society, oblivion or ignorance remained prevalent. The Christian response to this paradox of modernity, namely the one by which people are introduced into the culture of memory, and yet tempted to focus merely on the present, came only through a radical appropriation of the religious identity via both institutional channels (including the *translatio studii*, with the help of Western scholarship, libraries and Universities), and through personal decisions, as in the case of Dumitru Stăniloae (1903-1993). The latter's name must be mentioned due to his life-long determination to overcome the mutual misunderstanding between orthodoxy and orthopraxy in the Romanian society. It was Dumitru Stăniloae who tried to stop the transformation of praxis into ritualism, and the rendering of the Christian narrative into a mere myth, of no experiential value.

## **5. The Obsolete Orthodoxy: Divorcing Reason from Faith**

This synthesis emerged rather slowly. Throughout the whole 19<sup>th</sup> century, the Church boosted her prophetic energy with the help of several hierarchs of high spiritual and intellectual standing. The list would include an eager translator and polymath such as St Grigorie Dascălul (1765-1834), a bold moralist like Archimandrite Eufrosin Poteca (1788-1858), the pedagogue and diplomat Andrei Șaguna (1809-1873), a competent historian such as the bishop Melchisedec Ștefănescu (1823-1892), a committed bibliophile in the person of Dionisie Romano (1806-1873),

a hagiographer like Gherasim Timuș (1849-1911), or a systematic theologian with a keen interest for the history of religions such as Irineu Mihălcescu (1874-1948).<sup>39</sup> Notwithstanding these figures, the impact of theological culture upon the public discourse of the Romanian elites was only shallow.

Despite the plurality of confessional orientations that characterised modern Romania, none of the heated intellectual debates (*Kulturkämpfe*) at the end of the 19th century religion was more than decorative. There was almost no author capable to connect the major themes running through the classical works of philosophy and literature from the Western canon to the theological reflection, liturgical splendour, mystical genius, and social relevance of Eastern Orthodoxy. The Romanians were slow to translate authors such as Vladimir Solovyov (1854-1900) or Sergei Bulgakov (1871-1944), who emphasized precisely the importance of this conversation across the cultural borders.

Besides the opacity of the secular sphere towards the Orthodox world, one cannot ignore the intellectual torpor developed within the ecclesiastical circles, almost too ready to extract their legitimacy in exclusively demotic terms. For many decades following the advent of institutional modernisation, the 'national Church' officials remained confident that the popular piety would never disappear, and that the minimal support of the State would thus never be withdrawn. Culture and the academia were areas of reflection and practice which, for many Orthodox hierarchs, did not require pressing answers. Some labelled learning as 'mere vanity show,' with no direct consequences for the illiterate masses of Christians. No theologian seemed to be alarmed by the spectres of nihilism in the way in which F.M. Dostoevsky (1821-1881) in Russia, or Alexandros Papadiamandis (1851-1911) in Greece were ready to scrutinise modernity, each in his own way.

The implacable arrival of the parliamentary system could not replace the secret nostalgia for Byzantium relished by the Orthodox high clergy. The great majority of the Church theologians seemed unwilling to accept the metaphysical possibility, and the historical reality of religious pluralism. The typically Hegelian problem regarding the peaceful survival of different moralities inside the borders of an open society (*bürgerliche Gesellschaft*) was hardly addressed in an almost completely rural country (with 90% of the population made of peasants).<sup>40</sup> It was easier rather to envisage modernity as the enemy of Christianity, with no political alternative, apart

from the agrarian bracketing of history and the liturgical celebration of the 'heavenly citizenship.' Only with the revival of patristic studies in the 20<sup>th</sup> century, the official curricula of Orthodox theology started to meet both the Western standards for scholarly excellence, and the popular demands for spiritual rejuvenation.

Popular Orthodoxy displayed infinite resources for liturgical asceticism, while being sluggish to respond to the multifaceted challenges of the modern age. Religious writers were unable to adopt an ironic distance towards their own passion (in the manner of Kierkegaard, say). The self-effacing type of speech, proper to many new authors, was hardly practiced. Historical triumphalism, instead, and the easy appraisal of pastoral authority made their way into the ecclesial policies. Meanwhile, the sons and daughters of the European Enlightenment were in charge for building, almost from scratch, the secular structures of the modern state. Under these circumstances, the neo-Byzantine nostalgia could provide the Romanians and the members of the Orthodox Church with a better of image of themselves.<sup>41</sup> With the advent of the monarchy, many plunged into the amniotic paradise of the lost Empire, from which heretics and heathens were nearly always absent, and the reality of sin unlikely, if not impossible.<sup>42</sup> Sentimental feats of narcissism promised the healing of long-lasting wounds inflicted by historical traumas.

The rapid sequence of modernising events left little space for deep reflections about the purpose and substance of an alternative culture. Church theologians were taken aback by the sweeping phenomena of secularisation, and tried to maintain the authority of the Christian message by adopting the local rhetoric of patriotism. Orthodoxy ceased to be preached to people other than the ethnic Romanians. The Church hierarchy was able to adapt to the present ethos, but could not easily identify the critical stance of modernity, mostly invisible on the streets of Bucharest and Jassy.<sup>43</sup> The 'transcendental subject' of the new *Zeitgeist* remained blurred behind its numerous empirical projections. This very fact explains why reactive polemics against the West took the place of that calm and needful theological hermeneutics, capable to trace the hidden roots of European modernity.



## 6. The Dilemmas of Academic Theology

With an impoverished body of peasants, and deprived of intellectual tools capable to assess the source and meaning of modernity, the Orthodox Church still offered her patronage to the modern Universities of Romania. This was a sign that the former ghetto-like status, so costly for the Christian communities under the Turkish yoke, had to be abandoned. New courses in theology, along the other disciplines of humanities, such as law, natural sciences, and philosophy, were being taught in the hope that the Romanian intelligentsia would at last start its dialogue with the Christian tradition. However, the spiritual outcome and the cultural results of this move remained doubtful. Higher-education in modern Romania followed the German model, which allowed the faculty of theology to sit next to the philosophy department, at the very top of the humanities pyramid. The project of implementing Christian teaching at the University level was of course ambitious, but dramatically short-lived. Theology courses were offered in Jassy only for a limited period (1860-1864), being then moved to Cernăuți, while the University of Bucharest, having opened one department in 1890, which was not very convincing either. The number of religious books, journals or libraries with impact upon the public forum was insignificant. The asymmetry between Church's agenda and the cultural debates was striking. The staff of the theological academies had neither deep roots in the monastic tradition, nor many strong commitments to the secular understanding of *Wissenschaft*.<sup>44</sup> The tension between, respectively, personal charisma, which insured for centuries the vibrant truth of Orthodox tradition, and institutional routine, which was specific for the modern European project, became obvious right at the heart of this new type of academic theology.

The Romanian history of academic theology parallels, to some extent, the German evolution, whereby the Kantian model of knowledge led to a segregated version of human understanding.<sup>45</sup> The first edition of *Kritik der reinen Vernunft* (1781), in the section devoted to transcendental analytics, Kant establishes the mathematical types of judgments (both synthetic and a priori) as the universal paradigm for any metaphysical claim for truth. Consequently, the Creed of the Christian Church was excluded from any possible account related to knowledge proper. The division between 'heart' and 'intellect' (or 'reason') was endorsed by the Pietistic background of the Kantian philosophy, with the effect of neutralising the

fundamental propositions of the Christian doctrine. Theology offered no knowledge, except for its moral discourse, which needed too a conceptual foundation.<sup>46</sup> Theologians had to become either scholars, and thus look down upon their object of study, or to provide ethical expertise in the public forum.

With Kant, human reason trained by the University disciplines of humanities got rid of all traditional claims, which theology used to make with respect to the metaphysical realities. The gap between religious practice and sacred narratives became an ultimate mark of the Kantian project. The Scriptures had to be bracketed, or simply dismissed, there where secular reason could not comprehend the significance of a certain theological dogma, or liturgical practice. Classical distinctions, such as the difference between heresy and orthodoxy, became irrelevant. There was no truth to be discovered at the end of any theological explorations. Experiential theology (inspired by sacramental practises and prayer), scriptural reasoning guiding biblical exegesis, or Church dogmas were all considered futile for the true object of philosophical knowledge: the human subject and the created being (that is, nature).

The privatisation of faith meant that the goodness of religion had to be tested exclusively in the sphere of autonomous ethics. The metaphysical tenets of religion, together with its ritual modes of expression, were thus cast into the void of utter irrelevance.<sup>47</sup> Since the empirical basis of academic theology did not pass the test of universality (and neither did music or painting), Kant thought it should be overtly rebuked from the select club of sciences. The Romanian adoption of the Kantian model of European University, which was very different from the German one, led to the institutional divorce between 'secular reason' (embraced by intelligentsia) and 'theological discourse' paralleling 'religious practises' (still followed by the Christian 'common man'). The divorce between the public space open to secular discourse and the private sphere accommodating persona piety meant that theologians had to be scholars, first, and not witnesses of a living tradition.

This epistemological dualism reflected an anthropological European scepticism between heart and mind, body and soul, private and public. The 'noumenal' sphere of knowledge and understanding was opposed to the phenomenal sphere, where the enquiries of human reason could lead to general conclusions of irrefutable truth-value. Among those, philologists ranked the first. Religion without theology, this was the inevitable

outcome of the Kantian understanding of knowledge, implemented by the Romanian University too. In this respect, Christian theology had to saved only through a commitment to historical erudition, or throughout the benign, and politically useful, moral education of the society. This is how, despite Nietzsche's lament over the death of Christianity, scholars such as Albrecht Ritschl (1822-1889) and Adolf von Harnack (1851-1930) managed to dictate the 20<sup>th</sup> century agenda for much of the 'academic theology' that was going on in Europe. In what Romanian philosophers were concerned, different personalities adhered to the Kantian system of values: Titu Maiorescu (1940-1917), Ion Petrovici (1882-1972), Nicolae Bagdasar (1896-1971). They paid no attention to what Orthodox theology had to say about the content of Byzantine piety.

In this context, the risk of ideological dichotomies loomed large over the debate between the blind partisans of an anti-Christian modernization and the opaque apologists of a structurally anti-modern Orthodoxy. Few religious fellows were able to challenge a vision of Orthodoxy seen as an impersonal religious custom and assert that it should be viewed instead as a personally undertaken and socially lived faith. Even fewer scholars pleaded for a historically contextualized and conceptually framed understanding of Orthodoxy. There had not been many alliances between conservative modernists, who believed that all that needed not be changed should not have been changed, and optimistic Christians, who did not question, like Gnostic modernists, the good order of divine creation.<sup>48</sup> In order protect the pre-modern traditions, as well as to suppress any theocratic illusions, such a coalition needed take the form of an institutional project. The latter came only with great delay.

The acknowledgment of Christianity's public dimension did not only require investment into missionary work and philanthropy. It required the fostering of education and to the revitalisation of the dialogue between the virtues of reason and the gifts of faith. The options between the encyclopaedic curiosities of modern scholars and the prayerful serenity of the saints had to be explored further. *Illo tempore*, Orthodoxy was known to have granted the passion for knowledge a divine rest in the garden of wonders, in which it was provided with the gift of peace. The challenge of secularisation requested that such oasis of wisdom and grace would not eschew the logic of competition, for the sake of a fictional regress into the past. The emergence of secular ideologies in the public space, many of which were indebted to the Cartesian, if not Kantian body-and-mind

dualism, could not have been disputed without the federal vocation of theological intelligence. It was not only the separate effort of biblical or patristics scholars that mattered in this debate, but the synthesis of scholarly comprehension and spiritual insight, which in the event made all the difference.

## **7. The Theological Synthesis of Dumitru Stăniloae**

From the considerations made above it has become clear that during the 19<sup>th</sup> century there were few successful attempts to restart the conversation between the religious masses, which was fond of external orthopraxy, and the intellectual elite, which became gradually disenchanted with the theological depths of Christian orthodoxy. Many scholars in the field of liturgics, canonical law, ecclesiastical art and Church history produced an impressive wealth of knowledge. At the beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, Orthodox theology began to appropriate her ancient traditions not merely in archival ways. A philosophical type of inquiry into the premises, and effects of modernity, along with a theological exposition of the traditional rationales for certain religious practices, was what Rev. Dumitru Stăniloae (1903-1993) wanted to bring into play. From an early age, he proved capable of taking up the critical suggestions made by different modern thinkers, or generalist historians, only to offer instead a new Orthodox performance in the art of Christian apologetics.

With the help of existentialist philosophers such as Martin Heidegger and Ludwig Binswanger, Stăniloae questioned Immanuel Kant's understanding of human subjectivity. The modern anthropology which annihilated the traditional divisions between categories, such as the 'sacred' and the 'profane,' came under renewed attack. Stăniloae rejected Kant's understanding of human consciousness, for which the notion of purity was merely moral, and the role of bodily disciplined faintly perceived. In his early study of the works of St Gregory Palamas (1296-1359), Stăniloae insisted that the practice of asceticism, which included fasting, vigils, and the noetic prayer (called at times, the prayer of the heart) was indeed necessary in the human process of self-understanding, as well as for the experience of divine grace. Stăniloae was not the only Orthodox theologians in Eastern Europe alarmed by the widespread acclaim of the Kantian *Weltanschauung* in the West. Around the same time in

Russia, Pavel Florensky (1882-1937) deplored the situation in poignantly expressionist terms.

The idea of the holy body... Fasts serve this idea, and for the same inner reason that it rejects fasting, the intelligentsia is ashamed of eating. Members of the intelligentsia are sincere in this, and the horror is that they are sincere. They can neither eat, nor (especially) partake. They do not even know the meaning of the word 'partake,' or the meaning of holy food. They do not partake of God's gift; they do not even 'eat' plain food. Rather, they 'gobble up' chemical substances. Only a naked, animal 'physiological function' is performed, a function which is excruciatingly shameful. And members of the intelligentsia are repelled by, are ashamed of, this 'function.' They are ashamed but they do it. This is why a member of the intelligentsia eats cynically, and why he marries cynically, defiantly, injuring his own sense of shame and that of others. The soul experiences not calm and peace but agitation and heaviness, the first sign of a soul without grace, ungrateful to life, rejecting God's priceless gift, and proudly wishing to re-create all of being the way it wants.<sup>49</sup>

Modernity, thus read, was incapable to see the positive role of asceticism, and the mystical roots of feasting from the religious viewpoint. Both the abstention from food, and the act of sharing a meal in terms of personal hospitality or liturgical drama, became an increasingly foreign practice for the urban intelligentsia. In the words of Rubem Alves, one simply forgot to what extent,

A dinner party is a magical ritual. Its purpose is to realize the dream of the alchemist: the universal transsubstantiation of things. It starts with the magical powers of digestion. Onions, peppers, beans, potatoes, tomatoes, bread, beef, chicken, fish, lobsters, oysters, sweets, cheese, wine, beer... They are all different entities. They have all different names. They have all different properties. And yet, through the alchemic operations of the body they lose their identity. They cease to be what they were. They are assimilated. They become like the body (from the Latin *assimilare*, to be made like; *ad*, to, and *similis*, like). They are incorporated: they become one with the body (Latin *corpus*, body). A meal is a triumph of the body over food. All differences become sameness.<sup>50</sup>

The boycott of a secular understanding of human body, and its relationship to the sacred, required the recapturing of the vital sources

of traditional Orthodoxy, which included the metaphysical insight and practical wisdom comprised in the patristics writings, the Eucharistic liturgy, and monasticism. This was the theological manifesto to which the young Transylvanian Dumitru Stăniloae adhered in the 1930s.

Born in 1903, he witnesses early on the gradual transformation of the religious patterns he knew as the offspring of a pious family from Vlădeni village, county Braşov.<sup>51</sup> He went for the primary school to Braşov, and, in 1922, he started to receive his first theological training at the University of Cernăuţi. In 1927, he graduated with a thesis on 'Infant Baptism in the Early Church tradition.' Shortly afterwards, Stăniloae he embarked on post-graduate research in Athens (1927), Munich (1928), Berlin and Paris (1929) and, in the event, Istanbul (1930). On this occasion, he discovered the monastic documents about the Byzantine hesychasm, which again emphasised the role of asceticism, made of fasting, and purity of heart, for the attainment of Christian perfection. Thus, he became of the first Romanian professors of theology to draw the attention to the very rich sources of Eastern Orthodoxy.

Due to his extraordinary literary prowess, Stăniloae published hundreds of articles and several books, blending the practical insights of Christian philosophy, with the metaphysical horizon of a robust theological reflection.<sup>52</sup> Stăniloae's interest for the monastic spirituality led him to embark upon the monumental project of translating *The Philokalia*.<sup>53</sup> The first volume appeared in 1946, and the last in 1991.<sup>54</sup> This famous compilation of texts on prayer and contemplation, comprising the wisdom of the Greek Fathers from the fourth up to the fourteenth century, was issued in Romanian in not less than twelve volumes. In contrast, the English edition, following the initial design of St Nicodemos the Hagiorite (1749-1809) and St Macarios of Corinth (1731-1805), has only five volumes (the latter to be published soon). Regarded by Stăniloae himself as the best achievement of his theological career, the Romanian edition of *The Philokalia* had and still has a significant impact on the development of monastic life in Romania, shortly after WWII<sup>55</sup>, and following the political revolution of 1989. Until this day, *The Philokalia* remains a best seller on the religious book market.

Evidence for his personal attachment to the monastic movement is Dumitru Stăniloae's relation with the founders of the 'The Burning Bush' Conferences at Antim Monastery from Bucharest.<sup>56</sup> Stăniloae's interim involvement cannot be compared with the strong commitment of

other influential figures of the Romanian intelligentsia, such as the poet Sandu Tudor (1896 - 1963) or Dr. Vasile Voiculescu (1884-1963). It is nonetheless significant that Stăniloae's desire to unearth the treasures of early Christianity, was paralleled by this ecclesial focus on the encounter between intellectuals, and Orthodox Christian monastics, such as hieromonk Ioan Kulîghin and Rev. Benedict Ghiuș (1904-1990). The Christian theologians in Romania began to oppose a liturgical understanding of human existence to the Kantian anthropology, based on the 'mind' versus 'body' dualism. This required a sophisticated account of the ascetic practices of prayer and fasting, and of other religious rites that constituted the invisible fabric of Orthodox spirituality. In 1947, Stăniloae compiled a course in which he expressed his views on the relationship between sacred narratives and sanctifying practices within the Eastern Churches tradition, focusing especially on the monastic texts later included by *The Philokalia*.<sup>57</sup>

## 8. Food for Thought, and Thought about Food

In this way, Dumitru Stăniloae offered a new grid of interpretation for the widespread religious customs pertaining to the Orthodox identity. There was a great need, Stăniloae thought, not only for opposing dialectically the modern views on man, but also for offering the theological rationales of many liturgical practices that, even among the faithful Christians, came to be misunderstood.

Stăniloae was prone to romanticise his past, when he spoke of his parents' village as about a sort of 'ecclesial republic'.<sup>58</sup> He was inebriated with the idea of peasantry being the true heir of Orthodox Christianity. Mircea Eliade (1907-1986) was not far from the same convictions, when he stated that, '[the] Romanians have preserved, deepened and valued the Christian vision on cosmos, as it was expressed in the first centuries of Christianity. Thus, the conservatism and archaic character of Romanian folklore protected a heritage that belonged to Christianity, but which historical processes of various sort wanted to destroy'.<sup>59</sup> An almost complete lack of instruction in social and economic history contributed this widespread literary idealisation of the 'perennial village.' Literary figures as different as Lucian Blaga (1895-1961), Octavian Goga (1881-1938) were all prone to imagine that, against the 'terrors' of modern history,

the 'archaic ontology' of the Romanian peasant unfolded peacefully its stories in the remote villages of the Carpathians.<sup>60</sup>

In such puritan dreams, Stăniloae never contemplated the vulnerable character of the religious structures in the country side, and even less the urban character of the early Christian communities which fascinated him so much. In the meantime, Stăniloae emphasised the need to construe the theological resistance against secular modernity in terms that combine both intellectual endeavour and the practical appropriation of the long-forgotten Christian traditions. While seeing secularisation is a typically Western phenomenon, with dissolving effects for the traditional fabric of rural Christianity, Dumitru Stăniloae used the tools provided by modern technology (from printing and photocopying to museum archives) in order to explore, and to launch for the educated readership the challenge of the patristic writings.

As a Transylvanian, Stăniloae must have been aware of the traumatizing effects which the violent disruption of the peasant life must have had from the 1920s onwards. The economic instability of the interwar period convinced many Orthodox-Christians to leave Romania and go to the United States, in the hope of finding better conditions of living. At their return, many adopted the neo-Protestant understanding of Christian faith, being thus prone to ignore the ancestral symbolism of many religious ceremonies, such as the Eucharist, the rule of fasting, or the burial service, all of which represented the backbone of traditional Orthodoxy. The idea that 'bread' was intrinsically sacred, for example, was inconceivable for those who refuted the argument of the tradition, for the benefit of biblical literalism. Also, the Greek-Catholic church began to have a more relaxed understanding of fasting<sup>61</sup>, allowing in the event dairy products to be consumed on Wednesday and Friday, when the Orthodox practise allowed only strictly vegetarian (that is, vegan) food.<sup>62</sup> Different churches had different attitudes towards food-rites and their symbolism, allowing a greater or smaller degree of flexibility in terms of cuisine innovation.<sup>63</sup>

When he embarked on translating *The Philokalia*, Dumitru Stăniloae must have been aware of all these changes. Multifarious tastes started to appear to surface, and old recipes were lost. Soaked into various liberal trends, the notion of food-rite itself came under attack. Above all, the very notion of celebration, with 'frugality' or 'abstinence' as its correspondent terms, came to be threatened. If the social dimension of food stemmed initially from a religious understanding of food and cuisine,



seen as religious gestures and sacred opportunities, Stăniloae wanted to offer a theological understanding of the earliest Christian practices, which included the rule fasting between the thresholds of 'strictness' and 'dispensation', respectively.

## 9. Conclusions

This paper offers a novel reading of the modern phenomenon of secularisation in Romania from the intellectual history's perspective. The first part of the argument outlines, in somewhat broader terms, the cultural rift between secular intelligentsia and the religious behaviour of the 'common man.' One of the possible explanations for this historical process is the Romanian import of French ideas about the Enlightenment, together with the implementation of the Kantian model of knowledge within the framework of Romanian University. The dualism of the mind and body, and the denial of any metaphysical relevance for the religious narratives and practises, was hugely influential in the development of academic theology. It endorsed the great divide between 'the secular city' and the 'pious village,' originating in the late the 19<sup>th</sup> century and the early decades of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. The theological purport of many religious practices of the Orthodox Christians became opaque to the believers themselves, and utterly incomprehensible to many educated people, as well.

At the same time, the self-understanding of religious men and women seemed to be victim, too, of subtler forms of secularisation. The latter encouraged the oblivion of the great narratives that used to give meaning to most of the practises within the Christian tradition. Very strict rules of fasting, for instance, were still observed, despite the widespread absence of the biblical or patristic interpretation of their meaning. Facing both the threat of 'peasant-like ritualism' at the grassroots level, and the menace of 'highbrow ignorance,' the young theologian Dumitru Stăniloae embarked upon the difficult task of restoring the unity between religious practices (such as feasting, or fasting) and the sacred narratives containing their perennial purport. The second part of the paper deals with Dumitru Stăniloae's reconstruction of Orthodox Christianity, with the explicit purpose of bridging the gap between 'secular intelligentsia' and, allegedly, the less modern Christians from the countryside.

## NOTES

- <sup>1</sup> M. Weber, *Economy & Society* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1978), p. 232.
- <sup>2</sup> Al. Duțu, *Coordonate ale culturii românești în secolul al XVIII-lea. 1700-1821* (Bucharest: 1968).
- <sup>3</sup> V. Georgescu, *Political Ideas and the Enlightenment in the Romanian Principalities, 1750-1831* (Boulder-New York, 1971).
- <sup>4</sup> D. Berindei, 'La constitution des Etats nationaux aux Balcans et les grandes puissances au XIXe siècle,' in S. Terzić (ed.), *Encounter or Conflict of Civilizations in the Balkans?* (Belgrade: Historical Institute of the Serbian Academy, 1998), p. 101-106.
- <sup>5</sup> Keith Hitchins, *The Romanians* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1996), p. 66-67.
- <sup>6</sup> Keith Hitchins, *op. cit.*, p. 67.
- <sup>7</sup> On the historical premises of this movement, see Pompiliu Teodor, *Interferențe iluministe europene* (Cluj-Napoca: Dacia Publishing House, 1984).
- <sup>8</sup> This alienation can be better understood in the light of their early exposure to the Western universities, as it is documented by Lucian Năstase, 'Le rôle des études à l'étranger dans la carrière des professeurs d'université roumains (1878-1944)', in Victor Karady and Marius Kulczykowski (eds.), *L'Enseignement des élites en Europe centrale* (Krakow: Université Jagellonne, Institut d'histoire, 1999), p. 149-158.
- <sup>9</sup> N. Adăniloae and D. Berindei, *Reforma agrară din 1864* (Bucharest, 1967).
- <sup>10</sup> Gheorghe Platon, 'La société roumaine et les idées de la Révolution' in Al. Zub (ed.), *La Révolution française et les Roumains*, Collection *Les Roumains dans l'histoire universelle* (Jassy : Universitatea Al. I. Cuza, 1989).
- <sup>11</sup> Nicolae Iorga, *Byzance après Byzance* (Bucharest, 1972). It should be noted that for the reputed historian, the theological legacy of Byzantium was utterly tedious, if not almost nonsensical.
- <sup>12</sup> For this history, I rely on the account of Martin Malia, *Russia under Western Eyes: From the Bronze Horseman to the Lenin Mausoleum* (Cambridge: Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 1999).
- <sup>13</sup> Georges Florovsky, 'The Ways of Russian Theology' in *The Collected Works of Georges Florovsky*, Vol. IV, *Aspects of Church History* (Belmont, MA: Nordland, 1987).
- <sup>14</sup> Pompiliu Eliade, *De l'influence française sur l'esprit public en Roumanie. Les origines. Etude sur l'état de la société roumaine, à l'époque des règnes phanariotes* (Paris: Ernest Leroux, 1898), p. 183, has the following things to say about the Russian influence : 'si les Phanariotes donnèrent les premières leçons de français à l'aristocratie moldo-valaque, ce furent certainement

- les Russes qui leur enseignèrent à le bien prononcer.’ This view was reiterated by the works of Eugen Lovinescu (1881-1943) and G. Călinescu (1889-1965).
- 15 J. Livescu, ‘Die Entstehung der rumänischen Universitäten im Zusammenhang der europäischen Kulturbeziehungen (1850-1870),’ in R.G. Plaschka and K. Mack (eds.), *Wegenetz europäischen Geistes: Wissenschaftszentren und geistige Wechselbeziehungen zwischen Mittel- und Südosteuropa vom Ende des 18. Jahrhunderts bis zum Ersten Weltkrieg* (Vienna: Verlag für Geschichte und Politik, 1983), p. 21-35.
  - 16 Claudiu Cotan, *Ortodoxia și mișcările de emancipare națională din sud-estul Europei în secolul al XIX – lea* (Bucharest: Ed. Bizantină, 2004).
  - 17 Keith Hitchins, *Rumania 1866-1947* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1994), p. 69.
  - 18 On the general history of Orthodox Transylvanians during the 18<sup>th</sup> century, see Silviu Dragomir, *Istoria dezrobirii religioase a românilor din Ardeal în secolul XVIII*, vol. I-II (Sibiu, 1929).
  - 19 Earl A. Pope, ‘Protestantism in Romania,’ in Sabrina Petra Ramet (ed.), *Protestantism and Politics in Eastern Europe and Russia: The Communist and Post-Communist Eras* (Durham and London: 1992), p. 157-208.
  - 20 In contrast to the Ottoman economy, the Habsburg Empire offered more opportunities for business and welfare. For details, see C.G. Giurăscu, *Transylvania in the History of Romania* (London: Garnstone Press, 1969), p. 63 sq. For a general history see C. Murgescu, *Mersul ideilor economice la români*, 2 vol., 2nd edition (Bucharest, 1994).
  - 21 This phenomenon is documented by the literary productions of two great novelists of the time: Ioan Slavici (1848-1925) and Liviu Rebreanu (1885-1944), who both describe the lives of the Transylvanian peasants. In their account, the religious dimension of the village life is very dim.
  - 22 Keith Hitchins, *Orthodoxy and Nationality: Andrei Șaguna and the Romans of Transylvania 1846-1873* (Cambridge, 1977).
  - 23 Paul Brusanowski, *Învățământul confesional ortodox din Transilvania între anii 1848-1918: între exigențele statului centralizat și principiile autonomiei bisericești* (Cluj-Napoca: Presa Universitară Clujeană, 2005).
  - 24 For an excellent historical account of the gradual slip into nationalism, see Lucian N. Leuștean, ‘The Political Control of Orthodoxy in the Construction of the Romanian State,’ 1859-1918, *European History Quarterly*, vol. 37 (2007), no. 1, p. 61-80.
  - 25 Ion Creangă referred to Fălticeni Seminary, which he started to attend in 1854. Lucian Năstase, about the number of students reading theology, who visited the Western universities. For a conventional history of the Orthodox theological education in Romania, see Mircea Păcurariu, ‘Istoria învățământului teologic în Biserica Ortodoxă Română’, *Biserica Ortodoxă Română*, nos. 9-10 (1981): 979-1017.

- 26 apud Nicolae Iorga, *Istoria bisericii românești și a vieții religioase a românilor* (Bucharest: Neamul Românesc, 1908), p. 202-203.
- 27 *Une femme de diplomate. Lettres de madame Reinhard à sa mère, 1798-1815*, traduites de l'allemand et publiées pour la Société d'histoire contemporaine, par la baronne de Wimpffen, née Reinhardt, sa petite fille, Paris, A. Picard et fils, 1900, p. 212 sq. Similar accounts are to be found in the Austrian travelers' writings, commented by Nicolae Dobrescu, *Istoria Bisericii Române din Oltenia în timpul ocupațiunii austriace (1716-1739)* (Bucharest: Ed. Academiei Române, 1906), especially p. 50. More accounts on this theme are made available by the rich volume edited by Paul Cernovodeanu et al., *Călători străini despre Țările române în secolul al XIX-lea*, new series, vol. 1 (1801-1821) (Bucharest: Editura Academiei, 2004).
- 28 For a list of dishes eaten during the fasting days, see Gheorghe Crăiniceanu, *Igiena țaranului roman: locuința, încălțăminte și îmbrăcăminte. Alimentațiunea în diferite regiuni ale țării și în diferite timpuri ale anului* (Bucharest: Academia Română, 1895), p. 195 sq. Another rubric of research is the history of the Orthodox Church in Bessarabia, for which see Zamfir C. Arbure, *Basarabia în secolul XIX* (Bucharest, 1898).
- 29 Dimitrie Cantemir, *Descriptio Moldaviae* (Bucharest : Editura Academiei, 1973), p. 371.
- 30 Felice Caronni, *Mie osservazioni locali, regionali, antiquarie sui Valachi specialmente e Zingari transilvane* (Milano, 1812), p. 15.
- 31 William Wilkinson, *An Account of the Principalities of Wallachia and Moldavia with various political observations relating to them* (London, 1820), p. 130 (about the lack of instruction), and p. 152 (about the superstitions).
- 32 Wilkinson, *op. cit.*, p. 168.
- 33 Ioan Bianu, *Despre introducerea limbii românești în biserica românilor* (Bucharest, 1904).
- 34 See, for example, Andrei Șaguna, *Correspondența* [Correspondence] (Cluj-Napoca: Presa Universitară Clujeană, 2005), p. 156: 'A translation of the book "On Priesthood" by St John Chrysostom would greatly help our clergy and laymen.'
- 35 D. Drăghicescu, *Din psihologia poporului român. Introducere* (Bucharest: Albatros Publishers, 1996), p. 288 discuss the 'wholly pragmatic' and 'merely social' character of the religious behaviour among the Romanian peasants. Before Drăghicescu, Pompiliu Eliade deplored the collective ignorance imposed by the clerical tyranny. For a more recent account, convergent with Drăghicescu, see Doru Radoslav, *Sentimentul religios la români. O perspectivă istorică* (sec. XVII-XX) (Cluj-Napoca: Dacia Publishing House, 1997).
- 36 See, for instance, the recollections of the Transylvanian historian David Prodan, *Memorii* (Bucharest: Editura Enciclopedică, 1993), p. 12-13.

- <sup>37</sup> It is only natural that the breaking away with the tradition led to the abandonment of fasting practices. See Gavin Flood, *The Ascetic Self* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2004), p. ix.
- <sup>38</sup> Columba Stewart, 'Christian Spirituality during the Roman Empire (100-600),' in Arthur D. Hoder (ed.), *Blackwell Companion to Christian Spirituality* (Oxford: Blackwell, 2001), p. 73-89, here p. 78. For a thorough exposition, see E. Vacaudard, 'Carême,' *Dictionnaire d'Archéologie Chrétienne et de Liturgie*, vol. 2 (Paris, 1910), col. 2139-58; R. Pierret, 'Carême,' *Dictionnaire de Spiritualité*, vol. 2.1 (Paris, 1937), col. 136-140 (for a historical account); P. Deseille, 'Carême,' *Dictionnaire de Spiritualité*, vol. 8 (Paris, 1974), col. 1164-79. Other patristic references, see Pachomius, *Instr.* 1.22 (ed. Veilleux, 21): 'If you are in the desert, do battle with prayers, fasting, and mortification;' Fasting is related to the practice of memory, as many monastic writings indicate. The ascetic emulates the biblical models of fasting as a sign of repentance, or as penitential rite (Zacharias 7, 3-5; 8, 19; Jonah 3, 4-10; Daniel 9, 3-19; Joel 1, 13-14; 2, 12-13 and 15-17); fasting supporting prayer (Ps 69, 11; Judges 20, 26; II Chronicles 20, 3); fasting as preparatory method before the encounter with God (Exodus 34, 29; I Kings 19, 7-8), as with Moses and Elijah who fasted for forty days; for the prophets, fasting needs to be done as part of the noble pursuit of justice; Christ has fasted for forty days before he embarked upon his evangelising mission (Matthew 4, 2), echoing thus the works of Moses in Sinai. Finally, fasting needs to be connected to munificence and prayer (Matthew 6, 1-8), by which the Jews understood also psalmody. For other patristic references, see John Cassian, *Inst.* 3.9-10; Sozomenus, *Ecclesiastical History* 7.19.7; Socrates, *Ecclesiastical History* 5.22; John Damascene, *De sacris ieuniis* (PG 105, 64-77).
- <sup>39</sup> For some quick references, see Mircea Păcurariu, *Dicționarul teologilor români* (Bucharest: Editura Enciclopedică, 2002).
- <sup>40</sup> My reading of Hegel follows the interpretation offered by Terry Pinkard, *Hegel's Phenomenology. The Sociality of Reason* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996).
- <sup>41</sup> Stephen Fischer-Galati, 'Autocracy, Orthodoxy, nationality in the twentieth century: the Romanian case,' *East European Quarterly*, vol. 18, no. 1 (March 1984), p. 25-34.
- <sup>42</sup> Such neo-Byzantine leanings occur with some frequency in the works of Nichifor Crainic, who was inspired by the Slavophiles. See, for example, Nichifor Crainic, *Puncte cardinale în haos* (Bucharest: 1936).
- <sup>43</sup> I have offered the outline of this analysis in Mihail Neamțu, *Gramatica Ortodoxiei. Tradiția după modernitate* (Bucharest: Polirom, 2007), p. 3-25.
- <sup>44</sup> Here, the Romanian history parallels the Russian example. On the upfront position of the monastic tradition in the Orthodox theology, see Vladimir

- Kotelnikov, 'The primacy of monastic spirituality,' in Giuseppe Alberigo and Oscar Beozzo (eds.), *The Holy Russian Church and Western Christianity* (London: SCM Press, 1996), p. 21-32.
- 45 England, which had not experienced the fever of French anticlericalism, promoted a different view on the public dimension of the University. Eloquently theorised by Cardinal John Henry Newman (1801-1890), the British University stood for many centuries against the ideological monism of European Enlightenment. Religious praxis and reflection was never kept out the central pursuit of truth. Being much closer to the parliamentary model, the academic domain represented the privileged site for strong, but collegial, debates among various 'parties'. Consequently, theology kept rhetoric, history, and philosophy as active partners for dialogue (as illustrated by the Oxford Tractarian movement between 1833 and 1841).
- 46 So Immanuel Kant, *Grounding for the Metaphysics of Morals*, ET by James W. Ellington, 3<sup>rd</sup> ed. (Indianapolis: Hackett).
- 47 M. Kuehn, *Kant. A Biography* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2001), p. 371, 'Only moral service will make us pleasing to a moral God. Prayer, liturgy, pilgrimages, and confessions are worthless.'
- 48 On modernity as essentially Gnostic, see the writings of Eric Voegelin, *Modernity without Restraint*, vol. 5, *Collected Works of Eric Voegelin* (Columbia, 2000).
- 49 Pavel Florensky, *The Pillar and Ground of Truth* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1997), p. 213.
- 50 Rubem A. Alves, *The Poet, the Warrior, The Prophet* (London: SCM Press, 1990), p. 11.
- 51 For the biography of the Romanian theologian, I rely on M. Păcurariu, *Dicționarul teologilor români* (Bucharest: Editura Enciclopedică, 2002), 455 ff. For a more personal account, see Lidia Stăniloae, „*Lumina faptei din lumina cuvântului*”: împreună cu tatăl meu, Dumitru Stăniloae (Bucharest: Humanitas, 2000). For the late Stăniloae, see also Sorin Dumitrescu, *Șapte dimineți cu Părintele Stăniloae* (Bucharest: Anastasia, 1992<sup>1</sup>, 2003<sup>2</sup>). Literary snippets are available in the following books: Petre Pandrea, *Amintirile mandarinului valah* (Bucharest: Albatros, 2001), *passim*; Al. Paleologu, *Despre lucrurile cu adevărat importante* (Jassy: Polirom, 1998<sup>2</sup>), p. 102 ff. M. Lovinescu, *Jurnal 1981-1984* (Bucharest: Ed. Humanitas, 2003), the entry: 10 octombrie 1981; Sanda Stolojan, *Nori peste balcoane* (Bucharest: Ed. Humanitas, 1996), p. 41 ff, and p. 111.
- 52 D. Stăniloae, *Iisus Hristos și restaurarea omului* (Sibiu: 1943, reprinted at Craiova: Omniscop Publishers, 1993).
- 53 Summing up more than five thousand pages, Stăniloae's edition of *The Philokalia* includes many more patristic writings than the first Greek edition. Here are the *supplementa* coined by Stăniloae. Vol. I (1946<sup>1</sup>): Evagrius, *On prayer*; Mark the Ascetic, *On Baptism*; Vol. II (1947): Maximus the Confessor,

*On the ascetic life; the scolias to Chapters on love; Quaestiones et dubia; Vol. III (1948): Quaestiones ad Thalassium, instead of Various chapters; Vol. IV-V are identical with the Greek version; Vol. VI (1977): Ethical discourses 1 and 5 by St Symeon the New Theologian; plus On paradise by St Nikitas Stithatos; Vol. VII (1977): Gregory Palamas, The Triads II. 2-3; On the godly and deifying participation; Vol. VIII (1979): A study by D. Stăniloae on the history of Romanian hesychasm, and some texts on prayer written by various Romanian saints (Vasile from Poiana Mărului, Calinic from Cernica, and a certain Iosif from Văratec (19<sup>th</sup> century); Vol. IX (1980): The Ladder of St John Climacus, Abba Dorotheos, Instructions i-xiv; Letters 1-2; Vol. X (1981): St Isaac the Syrian, The Ascetic Writings (Greek version). Vol. XI (1990): The writings of Abba Barsanuphius and John; Vol. XII (1991): The Writings of Abba Isaiah the Solitary. The inclusion of the works of St Maximus Confessor is a clear sign of Stăniloae's desire to challenge Romanian intelligentsia, and prove the metaphysical texture of Orthodox Christianity, which was far from being reducible to collective ritualism.*

- 54 Maciej Bielawski, 'Dumitru Stăniloae and his Philokalia' in Lucian Turcescu (ed.), *Dumitru Stăniloae: Tradition and Modernity in Theology* (Jassy: Center for Romanian Studies, 2002), p. 25-52. For the impact of *Philokalia* on Stăniloae's thought, see Maciej Bielawski, *The Philocalical Vision of the World in the Theology of Dumitru Stăniloae* (Bydgoszcz, Poland: Homini, 1997).
- 55 See André Scrima, 'L'avènement philocalique dans l'orthodoxie roumaine,' *Istina*, vol. 5 (1958), p. 295-328; and p. 443-374.
- 56 For some insights into the yet not fully documented, but tragic episode of the history of the Romanian Orthodox Church, see André Scrima, *Timpu! Rugului Aprins. Maestrul spiritual în tradiția răsăriteană*, foreword by Andrei Pleșu (Bucharest: Editura Humanitas, 1996), rendered in Italian translation as André Scrima, *Padre spirituale* (Bose: Edizioni Qiqajon, 2001); Antonie Plămădeală, *Rugul Aprins* (Sibiu: Editura Mitropoliei Ardealului, 2002), who writes also as a personal witness; and, with greater caution, M. Rădulescu, *Rugul Aprins. Arestare. Condamnare. Achitare* (Bucharest: Agapis, 2003).
- 57 Dumitru Stăniloae, *Spiritualitatea ortodoxă. Ascetica și mistica* (Bucharest: Ed. Institutului Biblic și de Misiune al Bisericii Ortodoxe Române, 1981<sup>1</sup>, 1992<sup>2</sup>) – a book translated into English under the title: *Orthodox Spirituality* (St Tikhon's Seminary Press, 2002), and having its first draft version dating already from 1947.
- 58 Marc-Antoine Costa de Beauregard and Dumitru Stăniloae, 'Ose comprendre que Je t'aime,' (Paris: 1983), p. 16.
- 59 Mircea Eliade, 'Destinul culturii românești' (1953), *Împotriva deznădejdii* (Bucharest: Humanitas, 1992), p. 173 (my translation).
- 60 Sorin Antohi, 'Romania and the Balkans: From Geocultural Bovarism to Ethnic Ontology,' *Tr@nsit-VirtuellesForum*, vol. 21 (2002), online version.

- <sup>61</sup> Dissertatio de ieiuniis graecae orientalis Ecclesiae, 1782. Raphaelis de Martinis (ed.), *Iuris pontificii de propaganda fide.: Pars prima, complectens bullas, brevia acta s.s.* (Rome: 1890), p. 70: 'vel, si ad abstinentiam huiusmodi tam ex praecepto quam ex consuetudine Ecclesiae Graecorum, ut nobis exponitur, tenerentur, cum iis eadem auctoritate dispensare dignaremur, ut piscibus, oleo et vino, in dictis quartis et sextis feriis, et in quadragesima.'
- <sup>62</sup> Council in Trullo (692 AD), canon 55, forbids the practice of fasting on Saturday.
- <sup>63</sup> Veronika Grimm, *From Feasting to Fasting, the Evolution of a Sin* (New York, Routledge, 1996).





## SIMINA RADU-BUCURENCI

Born in 1980, in Bucharest

Ph.D. candidate in Comparative History of Central, Southeastern and Eastern Europe, Central European University, Budapest.

Dissertation: *Late Communism in Romania Through Documentary Images of Everyday Life*

Researcher, Romanian Peasant Museum, Bucharest

Researcher in the project *Remembering Communism: Methodological and Practical Issues of Approaching the Recent Past in Eastern Europe*,  
Institut für Slavistik der Universität Leipzig

Editorial Assistant, *East Central Europe/L'Europe du Centre-Est*.  
*Eine wissenschaftliche Zeitschrift*

Doctoral and MA full scholarship from Central European University, Budapest  
Doctoral fellowship from Volkswagen Stiftung

Participation in international conferences both in Romania and abroad



## BEYOND HUNGER. PERCEPTIONS OF AND REACTIONS TO SHORTAGES IN 1980S ROMANIA

The 1980s in Romania are largely remembered as a period of scarcity and shortages of every kind: from food to books, from electricity to colors. And it is not only that they are remembered this way but scholarly analyses also lean into the direction of remembering, capturing the anecdotic, the laughable or horrible<sup>1</sup> instead of trying to put forward coherent theoretical frameworks that might lead to a comprehensive and normalizing view on Romanian Communism.<sup>2</sup>

Everyday life during Communism is not yet a proper historical topic. The historian is only among the many voices to talk about the Communist past which remained a matter of personal and public memory, of intellectual debate engaged among people whose only expertise comes from having lived through it. This makes the subject highly sensitive and sometimes suffocated by taken for granted concepts and theories. Most of them originate in the dissent discourse and operate with binary oppositions such as oppression versus resistance, official versus unofficial, public versus private, and ultimately truth versus lie.<sup>3</sup> These concepts were not only restricted to the intellectual sphere, but also to the most mundane aspects of everyday life: from telling a joke to the illegal purchasing of a pig for Christmas, more and more actions are considered, in nowadays accounts of the period, subversive.<sup>4</sup> One of the reasons for this inflexibility of arguments when historicizing the Communist past is the political standing behind these accounts. Most of them are anti-Communist pamphlets written in a time when the acknowledgment of the “crimes of Communism” was still far from sight.<sup>5</sup>

This article will enquire into the everyday life of the Romanians in the 1980s using the queue (the omnipresent food line) as its starting point of enquiry into reactions and perceptions of shortages. I count among the reactions to shortages the long-debated “solidarity” among citizens of Socialist states; I argue that the queue can be described as a form of community activity whose organization was left almost entirely in the hands of the community itself. Officially non-existent, the queue provided an opportunity for Romanian citizens to exercise their organizational and communitarian skills. This is of course a reading that emphasizes “the bright side” of queuing; a more complex description of the phenomenon will be provided in the body of the article.

The second part of the article is concerned with perceptions of shortages. An account of the answers to the question ‘*Why are we queuing?*’ will be presented at both official and unofficial levels. Analyzing the unofficial answers (extracted from oral history sources) I will argue that they were mainly a reworking of the state propaganda, successfully internalized by its citizens.

The main arguments of this article, i.e. the existing agency of Romanian citizens even in harshest times and a level of belief in state propaganda higher than previously remarked upon, support a broader conviction that the binary oppositions derived from dissent discourse are no longer useful theoretical tools in accounting for the reality of everyday life in Socialist states.

### **The research: methodology and sources**

My research<sup>6</sup> consisted of interviewing members of a community formed by the inhabitants of a block of flats from Bucharest. The district (Tineretului) is a central one and its inhabitants are proudly thinking of it as a neighbourhood of mainly intellectuals (i.e. people with higher education).<sup>7</sup> The interviews focused on experiences of queuing, according to a set of questions (see Appendix 1) that nevertheless had the status of guidelines and were not restrictive for the interviews. One of my purposes was also to see what personal connections do memories of queuing arise and how each interviewee embeds these narratives in his/her own life-story.

Some brief comments about the memory issues involved should be made at this point. First, my sources, the interviews, speak of the 1980s from the distance of more than 15 years. These are not first-hand testimonies, contemporary stories about life in the 1980s. They are **memories** of the 1980s and the distance that separates the moment of the telling from the moment of the happening is not only temporal but also, and maybe more important, cultural. It is the distance that separates two worlds. The world of the 80s with all its written and unwritten rules, with its sophisticated ways of coping with the system has collapsed in 1989. Thus, what my interviewees are recalling is practically another world, but another world that is part of their lives and still influences their present life. It is a world that they try to integrate into contemporary realities, to explain and understand not only for themselves but also for a whole generation that doesn't understand it anymore since it was never theirs.

Working with oral history sources is both challenging and disturbing for a historian always on guard on source criticism and authenticity. The fragility of this kind of sources led to very sophisticated theoretical developments on the nature and uses of oral history. The first choice faced by the oral historian is that between description using information derived from oral sources and interpretation. As Paul Thompson puts it, "All testimonies normally carry with them a triple potential: to explore and to develop new interpretations, to establish or confirm an interpretation of the past patterns or change, and to express what it felt like."<sup>8</sup>

Each choice has its dangers. I believe that oral sources, presented to the readers as such, are still very powerful. Sometimes much more insight can be gained into "what it felt like" by reading edited interviews on a particular topic than by reading hundreds of pages of clever analysis on the same topic. This first choice was largely taken up by Romanian oral historians, as few as they may be. However, the historian's task will always be interpretation and here the potential of oral history is also great. Paul Thompson names two basic forms of interpretation, "the narrative analysis" and the "reconstructive cross-analysis." The narrative analysis focuses on the interview as a text, on its language, themes, repetitions and silences. Its aim is not to establish the relevance of the oral text for the broader social context but to reconstruct a personal world or experience. In the reconstructive cross-analysis, which is most common among oral historians, "the oral evidence is treated as a quarry from which to construct an argument about patterns of behavior or events in

the past.”<sup>9</sup> This second approach is used even by those historians who do not define themselves as oral historians but use oral evidence as a part of their research. Sometimes, especially illuminating and challenging life-stories emerge during the fieldwork and special attention is granted within the wider analysis to these life-stories using the methodology of the narrative analysis. It is in this in-depth approach that the special value of oral history can best be seen. It is here that the “different credibility of oral sources,” as Alessandro Portelli calls it, emerges. “Oral sources are credible but with a *different* credibility. The importance of oral testimony may lie not in its adherence to fact, but rather in its departure from it, as imagination, symbolism, and desire emerge. Therefore, there are no ‘false’ oral sources.”<sup>10</sup> Narrative analysis brings the historian to Allan Megill’s question on the cognitive value of the narrative. And, hopefully, also to his conclusion. “Narrative has a cognitive value of its own, in that sense that the coherence of narrative is the coherence of a possible world.”<sup>11</sup> Thus, the historian, and especially the oral historian, is always searching for another “possible world” whose truth comes only from its internal coherence. It is what Chris Lorenz calls “internal realism”.<sup>12</sup>

Oral history is at its best if one tries to follow Daniel Barbu’s invitation in analyzing the Communist regimes:

The history of Romanian Communism must be seen less as a whole global and totalizing history of the Party, the industrialization, the collectivization, the repression, of doctrinaire and ideological elaborations but rather as a chain explosion with immediate effect of concrete, multiple, incoherent, intersected and conflicting histories of real people, of specific interests, of individual careers. Summing it all, a history of the way Romanians have ‘coped’ (*s-au descurcat*), better or worse, but each for himself and for those near him.<sup>13</sup>

### ***A. The queue. A test case for discussing solidarity in 1980s Romania***

While talking about the 1980s, most of my interviewees would spontaneously bring into the conversation the subject of queuing, an activity and a site that they considered essential for the period. I will first reconstruct from their memories the scenario according to which the queue functioned, including the ‘plot’ and the characters that most queues were

relying on. I will then analyze the special solidarity, the networks created around queuing, in spite of it and in spite of it.

Leon Mann considers that the underlining principle of queuing is “distributive justice” that he defines as the belief that:

There is a direct correspondence between inputs (time spent waiting) and outcomes (preferential service). Generally, if a person is willing to invest large amounts of time and suffering in an activity, people who believe there should be an appropriate fit between effort and reward will respect his right to priority.<sup>14</sup>

He also describes the queue as an “embryonic social system” that reflects the broader social organization. If one was to apply both his theories to the Romanian queue of the 1980s, the resulting image becomes contradictory. For, if the queue reflects the society at large, then any notion of “distributive justice” cannot be applied since it contradicts the broader reality. My hypothesis is that the queue does reflect the society’s organization, thus including all the privileges that some groups of people had and all the bypasses that other people employed.

I will try to provide in the next pages a description of the Romanian queue of the 1980s, its functioning, its characters and its unwritten rules. One informer considers the Romanian queue to be a special type of queue. “I often stood in queues, but the Romanian one was corrupted by other rules than an ordinary line.”<sup>15</sup> He does not explain what “an ordinary line” is, but it is probably connected to the notion of “distributive justice” that Mann proposes. That is, an ordinary line means respecting the right to priority, in the order of arrival, of the people who spent equal amounts of time waiting next to each other.

### **A1. The two times of the queue**

There are several aspects of the Romanian queue that make it distinct from the standard image defined above. First, most of the queues in the 80s formed before the desired product actually arrived. By a complicated system of spreading information within a community and also much presuppositions, people formed long queues before closed shops. The queues for milk, which was more or less supplied daily, started at 4 or 5 in the morning, even though the shop only opened at 7 or 8. If a special

product were supposed to come the next day, the first members of the queue would be there from the previous evening, spending their night on the spot. The life of a queue can be thus split into two phases: the first phase in which the queue only grows by addition of new members and there is actually no movement towards purchasing the commodity and the second phase when the products are actually put on sale. The first instance is more related to waiting than the second instance since there is no physical movement towards the beginning of the queue and there is also no certainty whether or not and at what time the products would arrive. As testimonies show, this is the more relaxed part of the queuing process. Order is looser and people find time to discuss and socialize. When products actually arrive and the selling begins, the atmosphere suddenly becomes tenser. The passage from one situation to another is remembered as a short moment of chaos when anything can happen. People start squeezing into each other, pushing towards the interior of the shop.

And then there was this well-known thrill in the crowd: somebody announced that the meat car might have parked in the back. And it seemed like everybody became more focused and occupied their place more firmly. ... Then the children were taken out of the line, we had to wait somewhere aside because when the doors of the butcher's or shop opened, everybody started pushing in an awful manner, they would step on each other's feet, and the children risked being squashed unaware.<sup>16</sup>

This is the moment when queuing becomes an active process, involving physical strength and determination. It is no more about waiting, but about fighting, as this man remembers:

Whenever I had planned to buy meat, I woke up round one or two a.m., and I was there at half past two or three a.m.; ... so we waited there in the hall, and, at the right time, those inside pushed the gates open and ran. But, the crazy thing was that they did not have the time to actually open the gates, they just drew the bolt. The moment people heard the clacking of the bolt, the throng started through the gate. If you were among the first, and had the bad luck to have an old lady that stumble and fall in front of you, it was a disaster. And let me tell you how things went, doing these things many times I developed a strategy. Whenever I queued, I noticed who was next to me, and I always behaved almost like a stag or a deer. I gathered some speed and I pushed on one side, yet I immediately withdrew



and thrust myself on the other side, and in this way I made three, four zigzagged steps to get among the first.<sup>17</sup>

Nancy Ries characterizes stories like this as “tales of heroic shopping.”<sup>18</sup> However, they are not characteristic for queuing stories in the Romanian 1980s. The narration of the queuing process, in the Romanian case, mostly relies on the waiting component as a painful and humiliating experience. In these narratives, *queuing* and *waiting* are usually used as synonyms, which testifies to the major importance of the time, seen as wasted time, in the queuing process. This is one of the interesting points that Mann makes in his analysis of Australian football ticket lines. The queuing system reflects the surrounding society in as much as it dwells on “the importance of time as a value in Western society.”<sup>19</sup>

The imposition of waiting, as Barry Schwartz explains it,<sup>20</sup> is a manifestation of power, thus leading to feelings of humiliation. “The queues for meat were the most humiliating, one could have *wasted* a night and a day, and when one got to the door or to the counter, it was finished. So many times I came back home with an empty bag after hours and hours of *waiting*!”<sup>21</sup> This testimony includes the key words like *waiting* and *wasted time* and also another important aspect of these queues: one could not be sure that after having invested a large amount of time, the desired commodity would be in his/her possession. This is because these queues also included some virtual members, people that were not physically present but whose existence should always be taken into consideration.

The most numerous group of virtual members were those who would have their place “kept” by other members of the queue. This practice could double the number of the people who were actually present in the queue. As one interviewee states: “When I was about to get to the counter, almost every time, two or three persons stepped before me, saying that they had been there before and they had asked the old people, who queued almost every day, to reserve a place for them, and thus, there was not enough for me anymore.”<sup>22</sup>

Another group of virtual members were the ones with whom the seller had a special relationship. He/she would always keep a small part of the stock for his personal arrangements, products later to be exchanged for other products/services. Even if these people did not actually join the

queue, they represented nevertheless a decrease of the stock that the members of the 'real' queue were counting on.

And there were also some with a privileged status who would go directly to the counter and buy the products without having to queue. It could be the local policeman who proudly recalls how he would get in the shop apparently to reestablish order and then get out with his bag full or other 'authorities' that no one dared to submit to the "distributive justice" of the queue.

## **A2. Solidarity within the queue and against it**

Solidarity is one of those concepts whose meaning seems "obvious" and thus in need of no more definition. However, there are at least two major understandings of the word, which are quite distinct: the philosophical and sociological one. The 'human solidarity', a philosophical and ethical concept, mainly Kantian, is based on the recognition of humanity in fellow human beings and the duty one should feel towards that human quality. This understanding of solidarity has been challenged on account of universalistic claims even from within the discipline of moral philosophy.<sup>23</sup> However, this concept, even in its current restricted understanding is quite useless as a historical variable. The level of 'human solidarity' of a past society eludes any analysis, precisely because it is very personal and should be judged rather on intentions than on outcomes.

Social solidarity, on the other hand, a concept used by sociologists ever since Durkheim, might prove to be helpful. "The classical form of solidarity refers to the cooperation of concerned people with the goal of improvement of their own fate."<sup>24</sup> The basic difference between the sociological understanding of the term and the philosophical/ethical one is that the former does not downplay the personal interest solidarity is based upon. Those who claim the Communist regime destroyed the feeling of solidarity among Romanian citizens mainly refer to the moral/philosophical understanding of the term. However, the existence of this kind of solidarity, at any time and in any place in human history is much debated today and would be indeed impossible to prove.

Returning to the subject of queuing and reacting to shortage, my claim is that solidarity is one of the reactions shortages triggered. I will argue for a solidarity of the queue, manifest in its organization, left entirely in the hands of the queuers who assumed responsibility for achieving the

common goal: buying the desired products. There is also a solidarity expressed in the informal networks meant to decrease the amount of queuing in one's life. So far in my research, I have not encountered a single informer who would admit to relying only on merchandise bought from state shops. Everybody had other sources of food products. Some were so well "organized" that they did not even have to queue: "To put it bluntly, between 1980 and 1989, I never stood in a queue to buy meat from shops."<sup>25</sup> The purpose was not only to have a full refrigerator; the higher accomplishment was not having to queue for that.

One of the paradoxes of this shortage period is that, even though the shops were empty, people were convinced that there was sufficient food in the country. The basis of this belief was that nobody was actually dying of hunger; having a refrigerator or a storage room full of food products was a common occurrence in that period. Thus, the problem seemed to be more a shortcoming in the distribution of these products than a real lack of basic foodstuff.<sup>26</sup> It is in this context that small networks of people in a position of obtaining different commodities or providing different services were created. Some of these networks actually replaced activities that should have been conducted by the state, especially the distribution system. This is why these networks and the secondary economy developed were necessary for the survival of the system. As two Polish sociologists observed, "the basic difference between the informal economy in the West and in the socialist countries is the fact that in the West, informal economic activities are marginal, while in a socialist planned economy, they are a fundamental part of the activity of state-owned enterprises."<sup>27</sup> As these activities were mainly illegal, the kind of solidarity that they encompass refers back to the etymological meaning of the term. "The term "solidarity" has its roots in the Roman law of obligations. Here the unlimited liability of each individual member within a family or other community to pay common debts was characterized as *obligatio in solidum*."<sup>28</sup>

A couple remembers how they would pay somebody in the countryside to raise a pig for them.<sup>29</sup> In 1989, it was in a village of Sibiu county, in the center of the country, where they "raised" their pig and the Revolution "caught" them on their way to bring the pig to Bucharest. They successfully got hold of the pig but they could not also reach Constanța, at the seaside, where they were supposed to collect some wine. Earlier in the 80s, they knew somebody who had an illegal slaughtering place in his own house. Every Thursday he would slaughter a cow. Mr. B.P. would come and take

his fifty kilos share. There was no negotiation; it was fifty kilos or nothing. So, Mr. B.P. also had to organize a network of his own to distribute the extra meat. In other periods, his neighbor, Mr. S.P., who was a member of one of the national sports team and had access to the special food store for sportsmen, would provide aliments for him. All of these arrangements did not spare the family of having to queue from time to time, but the amount of wasted time and humiliation was seriously diminished.

Mrs. D.V. is married to a TV repairman. "He had lots of clients; he had bread-salesmen and food store-salesmen so we had some relations..."<sup>30</sup> But these relations only helped with flour (each year she had to gather 100 kilos of flour to send to her parents in the countryside who had difficulties finding bread in the winter), corn flour or sugar. For meat they still had to queue. Queuing for meat was also organized in a small community formed by her work colleagues. She was an accountant in a health institute.

One of my colleagues who came from the neighborhood, when she came in the morning, stopped at the meat-store, kept a place there, came to the institute, signed the register, we gathered two or three women, went there to register to the queue, too and then we took shifts. One of us stayed one hour, she came back, then... At three o'clock when the program was finished, we all went there. And by five, five and a half the meat truck came.

Q: So these queues started in the morning...

From morning to evening. And of course, there were lots of people who did the same thing. If I went there and I had 20 or 30 persons ahead of me, by five o'clock it was double, they kept coming from work and so on. And I would also telephone him [her husband] and say, I am at the meat-store. And then he appeared at six, seven and we stayed there, they started giving... And he would take, too and this meant that for that month we were assured. So once a month we made this effort but this meant that we arrived home at half past nine, ten in the evening.

As explained earlier, these queues did not always respect the "distributive justice" system. There were people who attempted to join the queue from the middle or access the salesman with whom they had a special arrangement. And as these queues, officially, did not exist, there was no organized supervision of the functioning of the queue. Except the one people organized themselves. "The queues were very rarely ordered, they surged periodically so an ad-hoc police was in charge of maintaining the order. One or more men would place themselves near the counter

or office and prevented the ones who wanted to rapidly get in front of everybody else.”<sup>31</sup>

This ad-hoc police would not only supervise the queue, but also the salesman from keeping too much of the stock for himself. “At a store, they had brought beer. Immediate queue and extraordinary scandal. They did not bring large quantities and this generated a lot of problems.... A few representatives of the queue insisted in witnessing the whole thing until the beer sold out.”<sup>32</sup> These people, the “representatives of the queue” stayed longer after they managed to buy their share of the products only to ensure that all the stock was sold to the population. It was not easy to be a queue-representative; it took a lot of time, knowledge of the functioning of the queue and the ability to exercise one’s authority.

I am convinced there were some queue-supervisors. People that had learned how queuing goes (*cum se face coada*) and they were keeping the discipline. So, if the queue supervisor happened to be at the beginning of the queue and he sacrificed himself, it was a very ordered queue. So this guy came in the evening, around eleven, put his little chair there, brought a book, a something, a neighbor to talk to. He slept during the day and stayed the night there. And everybody who passed by there talked to him, he would let them go from time to time. There was a list, of course.<sup>33</sup>

To be able to take part in so elaborate activities, one needed a lot of time. Not everybody could afford, in as much as time is concerned, to spend twelve hours or more in front of a shop. As this system was time-, and not money-, consuming, people who had more time at their disposal became more important in the household economy. And these were the elders, the already retired grandparents, and the children. Besides providing for their own family, some elders found in queuing an alternative activity that could earn them some extra money. Instead of staying at home, they stayed in queues transforming the wait into a money-earning activity. If time is a value, then it can also be sold.

There were especially the retired people, they stayed in the line, like I tell you, a whole day, took two kilos of meat to give them to somebody who couldn’t stay and take some money so... instead of 37 [lei] that he gave for it, he would sell it with 50. He won some extra money like this. It wasn’t only the gypsies who speculated. There were also some other categories of people who had the time to stay.<sup>34</sup>

The children also had an important role to play in an economic system more complicated than it appears at a first glance. Even before the rations were introduced, a system of unofficial rations functioned in order to ensure that the stock brought at a certain moment in the shop would be divided among as many people as possible. Usually, the quantity, two kilos of meat, one chicken, one kilo of oranges per person, was established by common agreement between the salesman and the “representatives of the queue.” This “ration” was a function of the quantity of products that were brought to the shop, however since the quantities supplied were usually the same, these unofficial rations had the tendency to become fixed as the later introduced official rations. When recalling the ration system of the 1980s, people have troubles distinguishing between the two types of rations, testifying thus to the strong establishment of these unofficial rations.

Q: Do you remember if there were rations in the 80s?

Yes, of course, there were. They introduced them. Rations for meat. Well, even the other products, flour, corn flour, these, you couldn't buy more than two kilos, this was the ration, two kilos of flour. And you kept going from one food store to another, when they brought, because it wasn't there always it wasn't on the shelves. Oil was “rationalized” too, two kilos of oil. And when it was brought you queued for it. You went to this food store and took two kilos, then to the other and took two kilos.<sup>35</sup>

When the official rations were introduced, one was assigned to one food store in the neighborhood and was not allowed to buy the products on ration from any other store. What Mrs. D.V. is referring to is the system of unofficial rations when you could actually go to several stores and buy small quantities of flour, oil or sugar in order to increase your stock. Or, you could stay in the same line, if it was not that large, several times. Or, you could bring your children along since the quantity was sold per person. There are testimonies of parents queuing with their very young children, two or three year old, in order to buy a larger quantity. Sometimes, children were also ‘borrowed’ from one person to another within the queue.

Kathy Burrell examined the problem of queuing in the 1980s Poland, also relying on oral history material. She documents a situation that I have not encountered in the Romanian case. It is the story of a Polish woman who recalls that she did not have to queue since “it is a tradition that old

persons and the mothers with the small children or babies are put first. So if there was something and I would take [my daughter] in my arms, then I could skip the queue, and people were putting me at the front.”<sup>36</sup>

The Romanian queue of the 1980s is saturated with old people and children queuing. Children were sometimes assigned the role of informing their parents about new deliveries in the neighborhood stores.

Many times, instead of playing in the parks by our blocks of flats, we had to play near the stores because the car with products could arrive any time. When this thing happened, we would run to our houses and let our parents know, mainly mothers. As most of us lived in blocks of flats, it was easier to shout from down there that the car had arrived and thus we announced all the neighbors. In maximum five minutes, everybody was there, their bags in their hands, ready to run towards the respective store, where we got there before them and “saved a place for them in the line”. The problem is that it did not matter whether there were children, old men; everybody was dashing, as if blind, for fear they might be left without that product.<sup>37</sup>

### **A3. Solidarities and communities of queuers**

These children as it becomes evident from the example above and the practice of ‘borrowing’ them among queuers were also used in the functioning of a community working together in facilitating access to food. This community could be formed by the inhabitants of a block of flats, colleagues of the same work place or members of the same family, in a very extended meaning of family. Everyone was a part of one or more of these networks. The exchange and reciprocal help went from spreading information about up-coming deliveries to keeping a place in the queues and to facilitating access to informal, usually also illegal, sources of commodities.

The debate about the meaning and extent to which solidarity functioned in these societies is still on going. One of the most influential theories states that within these societies, different types of solidarity were among the first victims of the regime. David Kideckel claims it strongly as the basis of his study *The Solitude of Collectivism. Romanian Villagers to the Revolution and Beyond*. “The title of this book reflects on one of the basic contradictions of life in many socialist communities: the socialist system, though ostensibly designed to create new persons motivated by

the needs of groups and society as a whole, in fact created people who were of necessity self-centered, distrustful and apathetic to the very core of their beings."<sup>38</sup> This perspective does not only belong to Kideckel. It is widespread among scholars of socialist and post-socialist societies, among which the phenomenon is also held responsible for the apathy and lack of civil society in post-1989 Eastern Europe. It is an opinion that needs, in my view, a reevaluation.

Daniel Barbu, a political scientist, attempted to do this in an article published under the coordination of Lucian Boia in *The Myths of Romanian Communism*. The article breaks the apparent unity of the contributors by boldly suggesting from the beginning that an analysis of the communist period is as much subjected to myth making as the communist regime itself. "I wonder if the analysis that, for decades, is focused on the system of symbolic representations and ideological imaginary of the totalitarian regimes of the Soviet type has not itself generated a new series of myths."<sup>39</sup> Looking at the problem of the supposed solidarity promoted by the regime and the lack of solidarity observed by the analysts, Barbu proposes a third way, a "dependent individualism born under totalitarianism"<sup>40</sup> which would account both for the situations within the socialist states and after their collapse. Regarding the common image of an imposed regime over a helpless society, he notes that the degree of acceptance by Romanian society greatly surpassed the degree of its resistance. Also the lack of power of the society cannot be argued for if one understands power as Foucault does, not only as political power. Barbu claims that "to cope with the regime," "to manage" (*a te descurca*), a frequent word when people refer back to those years, "is only another way to name participating at power, access to the normal functioning of it."<sup>41</sup> What Barbu is arguing against is an image of Romanian Communism as "an anonymous and impersonal ghost that drove unexpectedly on a population forced to improvise its resistance."<sup>42</sup>

As I have explained in this article, establishing a community of common interests was an essential, necessary feature of everyday life in communist Romania. Other researchers have noted the special solidarity that queuing entailed. "Albeit much hated and ridiculed, the queue outside the shop produced forms of sociality that might be coded to demonstrate the existence of values and close-knit solidarity in spite of the alienating effects of socialism."<sup>43</sup> This type of solidarity is usually dismissed as only being based on the short or long-term project of obtaining food or other commodities. However, using the sociological understanding of solidarity



which relies precisely on “the cooperation of concerned people with the goal of improvement of their own fate,” the argument becomes a nonsense. As Tita Chiper remembers the 1980s, “In the time of rationing, they would move ‘the community of the block’ (*spiritul scării*) to the queue, reciprocally informing on the products that were to arrive, keeping the place in the queue for each other, discovering a solidarity that functioned perfectly against the ‘intruders.’”<sup>44</sup> It is, thus, a solidarity directed against the others (and what type of solidarity is not?) in the everyday contest of coping more easily with the system.

These types of smaller scale solidarities within the socialist system, even when constructed for personal gain, should not be disregarded. The ephemeral solidarity of the queuers reflects the contradictions of the society at large. People interacted with each other with a degree of caution and self-surveillance that they employed in other circumstances as well. Thus, there are testimonies of queues as that type of ancient peasant evening gatherings (*șezătoare*) where people would tell stories, discuss politics, in a word - socialize. “For the rest, I liked very much to queue, especially with my grandfather, who would stand in the line telling stories to other old men, boasting about all sorts of youth adventures.... There was a real contest of wonderfully embellished stories.”<sup>45</sup> Or, other memories:

At the queue there was big cheerfulness. Yes, whistling, curses, jokes. Everybody was talking.

Q: So you were not afraid of the people you didn't know.

No, no. Then, as now, there were people who were against you. But there was no restriction. Who has the courage to talk, talks anywhere. And then, in a collectivity like this where you see that that one is talking, the other one is talking... Especially since the discontent was general. How was I not to talk?<sup>46</sup>

On the other hand, there were people who thought that it was better not to get involved in these kind of discussions. “The people around, especially since most of them were retired, talked only about troubles and scarcity and ...generally, it was much better not to listen. It happened to me once, while I was standing in a queue for butter, to witness how a man in front of me started to swear: ‘the hell with Ceaușescu and everything, and...’ I do not know what else. Suddenly two men came to him and took him away.”<sup>47</sup>

Without disregarding the contradictory testimonies on this issue, the queue was both a space that reflected the rules and restrictions of the broader society, and also a space where a greater degree of individual freedom could be experienced. There are not many examples in the everyday life of those years when people really had the urge and willingness to organize themselves, to organize a distribution system underlined by some assumptions of “distributive justice.”

### ***B. Why are we queuing?***

Václav Havel put forward one of the most acclaimed theories of life in Socialist countries: *living within truth* versus *living within a lie* was for him the daily dilemma of the Socialist citizen. Havel, a playwright, the leader of the Czech dissent movement and the first president of the Czech Republic wrote the story of the grocery man in his widely influential essay *The Power of the Powerless*.

His character, the grocery man is fictional but he presents him as representative for the common man in the Czech Socialist Republic, part of the Czechoslovak Federation. The reader doesn't find out much about the greengrocer. Only that, on official holydays, he “places in his window, among onions and carrots, the slogan: ‘Workers of the World, Unite!’”<sup>48</sup> Why does he do it?, Havel asks. It is not that he believes in the slogan, not that he actually ever thought about what it means that all the workers of the world should unite. Rather, the sign he puts in the window actually reads: “I, the greengrocer XY, live here and I know what I must do. I behave in the manner expected of me. I can be depended upon and I am beyond reproach. I am obedient and therefore I have the right to be left in peace.”<sup>49</sup>

Dwelling on this example, Havel explains how these post-totalitarian systems, as he calls them, derive their strength from widely accepted lies.

“Individuals need not believe all these mystifications, but they must behave as though they did, or they must at least tolerate them in silence, or get along well with those who work with them. For this reason however, they must *live within a lie*. They need not accept the lie. It is enough for them to have accepted their life with it and in it. For by this very fact, individuals confirm the system, fulfil the system, make the system, *are* the system.”<sup>50</sup>

Along with his theory of living „within a lie“ and his plea for living „within the truth“, Havel develops in the same essay the concept of post-totalitarianism. The Czech society of the 1970s that he describes is no longer a dictatorship in its classical form. This means that it is no longer based on military power, but on something subtler: ideology. As Havel understands it: “the primary excusatory function of ideology, therefore, is to provide people, both as victims and pillars of the post-totalitarian system, with the illusion that the system is in harmony with the human order and the order of the universe.”<sup>51</sup>

As I understand it, this function of ideology, and therefore of propaganda<sup>52</sup> goes way beyond truth and fakery. The slogan in the window is not there because it is true or fake; it is there because this is how it should be, because “the system is in harmony with the human order and the order of the universe.” There is no question here of whether that human order, or even less, the order of the universe is right or wrong. It simply is and it should be obeyed by virtue of its mere existence. However, this is my reading of Havel’s story, since he insists that truth and fakery are still valid concepts even within this systems; that people actually knew what was right and wrong, true or fake and simply chose the latter.

I argue in the following pages that the border between official and private discourse is not as sharp as Havel, and many were his followers would claim. By looking at the answers people gave me when asked why did they think they had to queue, I argue that most of them are forms of internalized official discourse. And one of the reasons for this phenomenon is the fact that, sometimes, official discourse was true, or at least plausible.

One of the most frequent answers is related to the goal of paying foreign debts. The final goal was to achieve the total independence of Romania, not only political, but also economic. The absurdity of such an economic policy, in the context of the emerging global market, needs no further explanations. However, in a country with so weak connections to the other countries, the development of world economy was not so widely understood as it is nowadays. The issue of the independence of the country was closely related to an upsurge in nationalism that the government successfully promoted. This is why the project of paying all the debts of the country was sometimes positively assumed; it was seen as a goal worth sacrificing personal comfort for.

There was no food because it was in small quantities, because they were giving a lot for export and it was this period when we were paying the debts that the Romanian state had. And these were paid from what? From the earnings of the populations, they had no other source.

Q: Why do you think they insisted so much on paying the foreign debts? Why they wanted to pay them? I don't know. I suppose Ceaușescu had a purpose. If he would have lived to do it, what do I know...? It got into his head that he has to pay them. And he finally did. And? It was no use since the ones who came after them made them all over again.<sup>53</sup>

There were hardly any official explanations for the shortages. Journals and the two-hour TV broadcast presented the on-going increase in living standards, productivity and enthusiasm in Romania. An interview with Nicolae Ceaușescu, published in *Newsweek* in August 1989, presents a totally distorted image:

N.C.: I believe we are among the first countries when it comes to consumption per capita. And we are exporters of food and clothing. But this is not done at the expense of consumption. It is based on productivity. We don't have problems regarding the consumption of food.

Q: When do you think some of the empty shelves will be full?

N.C.: We don't have empty shelves. On the contrary, we have lots of stock in our shops. It's possible that we started having negligence in the shops and we don't want to put extra stock in the shops. You can go in any shop and you can buy anything including products that you find in the United States, because we export some of those to the United States.<sup>54</sup>

This is more or less what the Romanians were hearing every day, with the notable exception that no one really dared to ask when will some of the empty shelves be full. There were, however, two events that were meant to put the shortages in a more favorable light. One incentive was the *Program for scientific alimentation of the population* (*Programul de alimentație științifică a populației*). The idea of "scientific alimentation," basically meaning reducing the number of calories per capita, appeared as early as 1982, thoroughly explained in an issue of *Scânteia* daily newspaper on July 14. The idea became a program, approved by the Grand National Assembly, only in 1984 and it was published in *Scânteia* on June 30.

It was not clear how the new program would to be implemented. How can state control the number of calories that a citizen is eating? The answer was simple: by providing less. The purpose was to change the obvious conclusion, "We are eating less and worse" into "We are eating more healthy." Even though the program did not meet the approval of the population it was nevertheless 'implemented.' First by providing less food in the shops, rationalizing some products and then by building those huge cantinas, nick-named the Hunger Circuses,<sup>55</sup> that were supposed to feed entire neighborhoods thus making home-cooking and food-shopping useless. Fortunately, the building of the Hunger Circuses began in the late 1980s, so they never actually functioned. The unfinished building sites can still be seen in Bucharest, although some of them were completed and transformed into shopping malls - which is actually not very far from their initial purpose.

The idea of controlling in such a direct manner the meals of the population is only an exacerbation of the 'dictatorship over needs.' In a socialist economy, the state holds a monopoly on the distribution of food products, however to seek to establish a daily menu, the same menu, for the entire capital of Romania was a new idea, even for a socialist country. As one of my interviewees put it:

You go there [to the Hunger Circus], you take your three little boxes, you go home, you heat them and you eat them. The bad thing is that behind this project there was a terrible idea. Since everything can be found like this, there is no need anymore for markets, for raw products. So by this system, **he** would manage to control even what you ate. So **he** would tell you what you eat Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday. This idea with the fish, one day only with fish, would have become reality. Plain reality.<sup>56</sup>

When speaking about the 1980s, the interviewees either use 'he' or 'they' for state decisions or measures that had disastrous effects. 'He' is obviously referring to Ceaușescu, but to establish who are 'they' is more difficult. It does not designate members of the Communist Party, for they use it also. Most probably, it refers to the leadership of the Party, the nomenclature. Today, 'they' are also mentioned in conversations about the current unfortunate situation, economical or social, in Romania. Some people maintain that 'they' are the same.

*The Program for scientific alimentation of the population* is thus closely linked with the Hunger Circuses growing overnight in different parts of Bucharest. Neither of them were the cause of the shortages; they were merely a response, a justification for the obvious lack of basic products. The same interviewee thinks that the program was realized, but only on a theoretical level, in calculating the amount of food that was necessary to maintain the subsistence level of the population:

This program was only achieved at a global level. That is, some calculations were made. How many Romanians are we? 22 millions. How big is the cereal production? How many calories must a Romanian consume? 3,000. Well, 22 million to multiply by 3,000 it means I don't know how many gicacalories. Let's see, we keep in the country that much grains, that much rice, that much meat, that many eggs and that's it! Everything else goes for export!<sup>57</sup>

The other idea that the propaganda disseminated regarding the shortages is that they are the result of some people actually hoarding food in order to resell it at a higher price. Actually, a law against hoarding was issued in October 1981. Hoarding was defined as having more than one month's supply of oil, sugar, flour, corn flour, rice, coffee and other food product. The announcement on the radio, broadcasted on October 9, also warned the Romanians that they should return excess food to the stores for refund at official prices by October 12.<sup>58</sup>

Contrary to the widespread lack of trust in the official discourse, it seems that this justification convinced some. Not as far as to say that this was the cause of the shortages, but that it was an important factor that influenced the crisis.

Meat was brought, you had to queue. And this is where the problem of speculating intervenes. There were some people who were staying there and they were taking. This is why there was not enough for me to buy a piece of meat when I finished my working hours. Because they were systematically taking<sup>59</sup> it and selling it on the black market. But I would still buy it. Even on the black market, I would still buy it.<sup>60</sup>

But I think that it is not only Ceaușescu that led to this thing. I say that we as individuals, as a nation... after a while, when you see that there is no more, you hide it, isn't it? When you see that you can't find anymore in the market as much as you need, you hide it.<sup>61</sup>

There is a difficulty at this point in establishing where is the border between hoarding and speculating. The official discourse made anyone having in his house more than one month's supply of food a potential speculator. Even though everybody was trying to keep their refrigerators as full as possible, it was not for speculating purposes. However, the ambiguity between a hoarder and a speculator persists in fragments of interview like this one:

"So that is when food disappeared, the cheese and so on. And then speculating began, because the Romanian never died of hunger. He always used to say: there's no meat, there's no that, there's no I don't know what. Vasile, can you keep in your refrigerator for two days three kilos of meat? Well, I don't have place. So why don't you have place? It was, it was also this panic."<sup>62</sup>

People used to have refrigerators and storage rooms filled with food products, despite or, better said, exactly because of the shortages. Most of my interviewees confess to this at some point during our talks:

"Now, saying this in brackets, I always said that we eat too well in our house...We eat too well, my wife having a real genius of administrating, saving and valorification, to put it this way."<sup>63</sup>

Having supplies for a long enough period of time, exceeding a few weeks, gave them a feeling of safety that allowed them to accomplish other activities.

"After 1980, our only preoccupation was the lack of food. The food. If we knew that we had butter in the refrigerator or that we had meat, we were very happy... If the storage room was full, then we were calm. We would meet, talk, we would read a lot."<sup>64</sup>

This is the reason why one can encounter frequently, apparently astonishing statements like this one:

"The problem was with the alimentation. Because you had to queue to buy something. And yet, you see, there is this paradox. There wasn't [food], but I had the refrigerator full. Full because of foreseeing. When I would find, I would buy and put it in the refrigerator."<sup>65</sup>

There are two points to be made to clarify the situation. First, the reason why the issue of hoarding seems to be a success idea of state propaganda in those years, is that it was true. People were hoarding food, and not only food. Janos Kornai describes the functioning of a shortage economy<sup>66</sup> (the term belongs to him) as a mixture of bargaining and hoarding. He explains how this functions for enterprises, not only for the people. Hoarding is, however, only a result of the shortages not their cause, and this is where the official discourse was very effective. It managed to pass an effect for a cause. Consciously or not, the authorities relied in this issue on some very ancient popular beliefs related to periods of dearth. They were identified by R.C. Cobb in his study on 18<sup>th</sup>-century France. Among them, "the belief in the existence of vast and preferably underground supplies at home"<sup>67</sup> is exactly what the Romanian propaganda in the 1980s suggested, and partially succeeded to induce as a cause of the food shortages confronting the country.<sup>68</sup>

It must be underlined, in the end, that providing explanations for the shortages was not a habit of the Romanian authorities in those years. They were actually more inclined to deny that an alimentation problem existed, as Ceaușescu does in the above mentioned interview, than to acknowledge and explain the situation. The queues were usually formed behind the stores, especially when the stores were on the big boulevards of the city. The image of people standing in long lines waiting for food was not congruent with the allegedly prosperous Romanian economy.

For this reason, when asked what were the official explanations for the shortages, my interviewees usually answer that there were not any. Or, at most, they remember some of the most absurd ones that stuck in their memory precisely because of their absurdity:

"The first thing that started to disappear was sugar. They blamed it, this was the motivation, on the peasants who were making brandy (*țuică*) in the countryside and sugar is disappearing because it is used there. This is non-sense. They started with an excuse, like this. And then there were no more problems for them to start removing slowly, slowly everything."<sup>69</sup>

Whatever explanation they may have given, the foreign debts, the hoarding, the speculators, I could not help but notice that this was one of the most startling questions they were asked. They usually took a pause, repeated my question in slow motion, Why were there no more



aliments? And then provided me with one of the explanations enumerated above, explanations that mostly come, as I have shown, from the official discourse of those years. My hypothesis in this matter is that they were not really thinking, in the 80s, at possible explanations for the shortages. They were accepting them like everything else: the cutting of electricity, the cold in the apartments or the mandatory participation at political manifestations. This attitude is closely related to the usage of pronouns explained above. It is either 'them' or 'him' who brings these misfortunes upon them, misfortunes that they experience like natural calamities. There is nothing to be done about an earthquake or a flood. Asking why did the aliments start disappearing was a bit like asking why has an earthquake occurred.

This type of attitude was observed by Slavenka Drakulić in one of her essays on Communism in Eastern Europe, and she connects it to the experience of World War II and everything that came afterwards.

One of the things one is constantly reminded in these parts is not to be thoughtless with food. I remember my mother telling me that I had to eat everything in front of me, because to throw away food would be a sin. Perhaps she had God on her mind, perhaps not. She experienced World War II and ever since, like most of the people in Eastern Europe, she behaves as if it never ended. Maybe this is why they are never really surprised that even forty years afterwards there is a lack of sugar, oil, coffee, or flour.<sup>70</sup>

I hope to have shown in this article that some of the main topics in analyzing the Romanian Communist regime are still controversial: resistance and collaboration, living within a lie and constructing one's own truth, constructing solidarities or individualistic pursuits. I argued that even one of the most hated activities of the 1980s, queuing, is retold by former queuers in conflicting memories: some emphasize the solidarity, others the alienation that queuing developed. Most of my interviewers actually testify to both. Instead of sticking to black and white, they prefer to remember the grey. The same applies to their explanations of the shortage situation. The answers to the question *Why did you have to queue?* span from purely official explanations, like the paying of the national debt or hoarding, to unbelievable rumors. This shows, in my opinion, that the former black and white, good and bad image of the Communist regime, originated in the dissent discourse, is no longer academically sustainable and has reached a dead end.

## **Appendix 1. Interview guidelines**

How old were you in 1980?

Where were you working in the 1980's?

Were you married? Who were the members of your family? (It is important to determine how many people the family had to sustain.)

When you think about the 1980's, is there any particular image/event/story that comes to mind?

How did you acquire the necessary food?

What did you queue for?

What did you queue for except food?

Was queuing for food different than queuing for other products?

Who used to queue more often in your family? Were the children also joining the queues?

When did you queue? In the morning, during daytime or night-time?

Some people were asking the others to keep their place in the queue? How did that function?

Were there rules of the queue? Was there anybody establishing an unofficial order?

How much time did a queue last? Were you always standing or did you bring something you would sit on?

How did you explain the fact that you had to queue?

What do you remember about the "Hunger Circus"? How were they to function?

Do you also have some good memories about the queue?

Do you remember when you first had to queue?

Do you still have to queue now?

Do you sometimes talk about the communist period (the 1980's) in your families? What topics do you talk about? In which moments?

How would you characterize your life in the 1980's?

How would you characterize the period as a whole? (This question doubles the question in the beginning. The image that the interviewee provides as a frame at the beginning may be reshaped as memories unfold during the interview.)

## NOTES

- <sup>1</sup> The latest publications in the increasingly fashionable topic of everyday life during Communism fit this description: Paul Cernat, Ion Manolescu, Angelo Mitchievici, Ioan Stanomir, *Explorări în comunismul românesc*, vol 1, 2 [Explorations in romanian communism] (Iași: Polirom, 2004, 2005); Irina Nicolau, Ioana Popescu et al., *Anii '80 si bucureștenii* [The 80s in Bucharest] (București: Paidea, 2003); Tom Sandquist, Ana Maria Zahariade, *Dacia 1300. My Generation* (București: Simetria, 2003); Adrian Neculau, *Viața cotidiană în comunism* [Everyday life during communism] (Iași: Polirom, 2004).
- <sup>2</sup> There is terminological overlap between Communist and Socialist regimes that I do not plan to settle in this article. Romanian academia prefers to call the 1948-1989 regime Communist. Western academia and even Hungarian, Bulgarian, Czech, etc. call it Socialism, actually existing Socialism, real Socialism and so on. I personally prefer the later as it also historically more accurate. Even in the Romanian case, the regime never claimed to have reached the stage of Communism and the country was called Romanian Socialist Republic. However, the ruling party called itself Communist.
- <sup>3</sup> See, for example, Václav Havel, *The Power of the Powerless : Citizens Against the State in Central-Eastern Europe* (London : Hutchinson, 1985). For a critique of using these binary oppositions in assessing the Communist regimes see Alexei Yurchak, *Everything was forever, until it was no more: the last Soviet generation* (Princeton, NJ : Princeton University Press, 2005).
- <sup>4</sup> So much so that even joining the Communist party is sometimes decoded as a "subversive" action.
- <sup>5</sup> I developed this argument in an article written together with Gabriela Cristea, *Raising the Cross. Exorcising Romania's Communist Past in Museums, Memorials and Monuments* to be published with CEU Press, 2007.
- <sup>6</sup> I started this research during my MA studies in History at Central European University, Budapest (2003-2004) and continued it during my Europa Fellowship at the New Europe College, Bucharest (2006-2007). I am also using as sources the archive on everyday life in the 1980s gathered by the Romanian Peasant Museum (a project in which I also participated) and published in *Martor. The Museum of the Romanian Peasant Anthropology Review*, VII (The eighties in Bucharest), 2002 and in Serban Anghelescu, Cosmin Manolache, Anca Manolescu, Vlad Manoliu, Irina Nicolau, Ioana Popescu, Petre Popovat, Simina Radu-Bucurenci, Ana Vinea, *Anii '80 și bucureștenii* (The 80s in Bucharest). Bucharest: Paidea, 2003.
- <sup>7</sup> I interviewed 11 people, 5 women and 6 men, most of them in their 50s and 60s. They all inhabit the same block of flats so they all depended on the same shop (Alimentara) for basic food. During the 1980s they were also queuing together.

- 8 Paul Thompson, *The Voice of the Past. Oral History* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2000), p. 265.
- 9 *Ibid.*, p. 271.
- 10 Alessandro Portelli, "What makes oral history different" in *The Oral History Reader*, eds. Robert Perks and Alistair Thompson (London and New York: Routledge, 1998), p. 68.
- 11 Allan Megill, "Does Narrative Have a Cognitive Value of Its Own?" in Walter Blanke, Friedrich Jaeger and Thomas Sandküller, eds., *Dimensionen der Historik. Geschichtstheorie, Wissenschaftsgeschichte und Geschichtskultur heute*, (Köln: Böhlau, 1998), p. 52.
- 12 Chris Lorenz, "Historical Knowledge and Historical Reality: A Plea for 'Internal Realism'", *History and Theory*, 33, 3, 1994.
- 13 Daniel Barbu, "Destinul colectiv, servitutea involuntară, nefericirea totalitară: trei mituri ale comunismului românesc" (Collective destiny, forced servitude, totalitarian unhappiness: three myths of Romanian Communism) in Lucian Boia, ed., *Miturile comunismului românesc* (The Myths of Romanian Communism) (Bucharest: Nemira, 1998), p. 183.
- 14 Leon Mann, "Queue Culture: The Waiting Line as a Social System," *The American Journal of Sociology*, 75, 3 (Nov. 1969), p. 346.
- 15 Testimony of Dragoș Olea, *Martor. The Museum of the Romanian Peasant Anthropology Review*, 7, 2002 (The eighties in Bucharest), p. 70.
- 16 Testimony of Gabriela Șulea, student, *Martor*, p. 134.
- 17 Testimony of Stancu Daniel, designer, *Martor*, p. 103.
- 18 Nancy Ries, *Russian Talk: Culture and Conversation during Perestroika* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1997), p. 51.
- 19 Mann, "Queue Culture," p. 350.
- 20 "To be kept waiting - especially to be kept waiting an unusually long while - is to be the subject of an assertion that one's own time (and therefore, one's social worth) is less valuable than the time and worth of the one who imposes the wait." Barry Schwartz, "Waiting, Exchange, and Power: The Distribution of Time in Social Systems," *The American Journal of Sociology*, 79, 4 (Jan. 1974), p. 841.
- 21 Testimony of Victor Bărbulescu, electrician, *Martor*, p. 101.
- 22 *Ibid.*
- 23 Richard Rorty, one of the most acclaimed and controversial contemporary philosophers challenges this universalistic view on human solidarity: "My position entails that feelings of solidarity are necessarily a matter of which similarities and dissimilarities strike us as salient, and that such salience is a function of a historically contingent final vocabulary." Richard Rorty, *Contingency, irony and solidarity* (Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 1989), p. 192.

- 24 Hans W. Bierhoff and Beate Küpper, "Social Psychology of Solidarity" in Kurt Bayertz, ed., *Solidarity* (Dordrecht/Boston/London: Kluwer Academic Publishers, 1999), p. 133.
- 25 Testimony of Dragoş Olea, *Martor*, p. 70.
- 26 This feature of Socialist regimes is explained in Ferenc Fehér, Agnes Heller and György Márkus, *Dictatorship over Needs* (Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1983), an attempt to analyze East European societies with the tools provided by Marxist theory. The economies of Socialist countries do not function towards the maximisation of profit, which would imply an effective distribution system. On the contrary, they function towards enforcing the "dictatorship over needs," i.e. that state seeks to control most of the means of production and thus actually need a defective distribution system.
- 27 Elżbieta Firlit, Jerzy Chłopecki, "When Theft is Not Theft" in *The Unplanned Society. Poland During and After Communism* ed. Janine R. Wedel (New York: Columbia University Press, 1992), p. 96.
- 28 Kurt Bayertz, "Four Uses of «Solidarity»" in Kurt Bayertz, ed., *Solidarity*, p. 3.
- 29 A.P., B.P, interview by Simina Radu-Bucurenci, tape recorder, Bucharest, Romania on April 18, 2004.
- 30 D.V., interview by Simina Radu-Bucurenci, tape recorder, Bucharest, Romania on April 19, 2004.
- 31 Testimony of Şerban Anghelescu, ethnologist, *Martor*, p. 131.
- 32 Testimony of Dragoş Olea, *Martor*, p. 133.
- 33 R.C., interview by Simina Radu-Bucurenci, tape recorder, Bucharest, Romania on February 25, 2002.
- 34 D.V., interview by Simina Radu-Bucurenci, tape recorder, Bucharest, Romania on April 19, 2004.
- 35 *Ibid.*
- 36 Burrell, Kathy. "The Political and Social Life of Food in Socialist Poland." *The Anthropology of Eastern Europe Review*, 21, 1, Spring 2003, p. 4.
- 37 Testimony of Ana-Maria Bucium, *Martor*, p. 134.
- 38 David A. Kideckel, *The Solitude of Collectivism. Romanian Villagers to the Revolution and Beyond* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1993), p.xiii.
- 39 Daniel Barbu, "Destinul colectiv..." (Collective destiny...), p. 175.
- 40 *Ibid.*, p. 183.
- 41 *Ibid.*, p. 185.
- 42 *Ibid.*, p. 192.
- 43 David Cromley and Susan E. Reid, "Socialist Spaces. Sites of Everyday Life in the Eastern Bloc" in David Cromley and Susan E. Reid, eds., *Socialist Spaces. Sites of Everyday Life in the Eastern Bloc* (Oxford, New York: Berg, 2002), p. 15.

- 44 Tita Chiper, "Provincia pe verticală" (The counties on the vertical), *Dilema*, 312, 1999.
- 45 Testimony of Gabriela Șulea, student, *Martor*, p. 134.
- 46 D.V., interview by Simina Radu-Bucurenci, tape recorder, Bucharest, Romania on April 19, 2004.
- 47 Testimony of R.R., Romanian language teacher, *Martor*, p. 137.
- 48 Václav Havel, *The Power of the Powerless*, p. 27.
- 49 *Ibid.*, p.28.
- 50 *Ibid.*, p.31.
- 51 *Ibid.*, p. 29.
- 52 My understanding of propaganda seeks again to elude ethical judgments. I agree that "any act of promotion can be propaganda only if and when it becomes part of a deliberate campaign to induce action through influencing attitudes." (Terence Qualter, *Opinion Control in the Democracies*, 1985). However, "whether or not that which is being presented is true or false, it is the way in which it is used (and not its "truthfulness") that determines whether or not is in fact propaganda" (Reeves Nicholas, *The Power of Film Propaganda: Myth or Reality?* London : Cassell, 1999, p. 238).
- 53 E.B., interview by Simina Radu-Bucurenci, tape recorder, Bucharest, Romania on September 10, 2002.
- 54 Nicolae Ceaușescu, interview in *Newsweek*, August 21, 1989, HU OSA 300 - 60 - 1, 3200 Standard of living, General 1980-1989, Open Society Archives, Budapest, Hungary.
- 55 They were built around a huge, circus-like, cupola.
- 56 C.R., interview by Simina Radu-Bucurenci, tape recorder, Bucharest, Romania on February 25, 2002.
- 57 C.R., interview by Simina Radu-Bucurenci, tape recorder, Bucharest, Romania on February 25, 2002.
- 58 HU OSA 300 - 60 - 1, 3200 Standard of living, Hoarding 1981, Open Society Archives, Budapest, Hungary.
- 59 In the 1980s, the verbs *to buy* and *to sell* were replaced by *to take* (a lua) and *to give* (a da). The shops were giving and the customers were taking. The proper question was never "Did you buy meat?" but "Did you take meat?" or, even better, "Did you catch meat?" when there was long queuing involved.
- 60 M.M., interview by Simina Radu-Bucurenci, tape recorder, Bucharest, Romania on April 18, 2004.
- 61 S.P., interview by Simina Radu-Bucurenci, tape recorder, Bucharest, Romania on May 4, 2004.
- 62 E.M., interview by Simina Radu-Bucurenci, tape recorder, Bucharest, Romania on December 3, 2002.

- <sup>63</sup> Z.T., interview by Simina Radu-Bucurenci, tape recorder, Bucharest, Romania on January 7, 2004.
- <sup>64</sup> A.P., interview by Simina Radu-Bucurenci, tape recorder, Bucharest, Romania on April 18, 2004.
- <sup>65</sup> M.M., interview by Simina Radu-Bucurenci, tape recorder, Bucharest, Romania on April 18, 2004.
- <sup>66</sup> János Kornai, *Economics of Shortage* (Amsterdam: North-Holland Publishing Company, 1980).
- <sup>67</sup> R.C. Cobb, *The Police and the People. French Popular Protest. 1789 - 1820* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1970), p. 278.
- <sup>68</sup> The issue of rumours related to shortages is fascinating and indeed under researched. One very telling example comes from an anonymous letter sent to Radio Free Europe: "I find the children yellow and sleepy, because the kindergarden food is scarce and bed. However, the children ask for it, so the party took care and gives each child a small pill to take away the appetite." Letter from "a group of workers and peasants from Romania", August 29<sup>th</sup> 1982, Records Relating to Romanian Opposition and Protest Movement, HU OSA 300 - 60 - 3, Open Society Archives, Budapest, Hungary.
- <sup>69</sup> A.P., interview by Simina Radu-Bucurenci, tape recorder, Bucharest, Romania on April 18, 2004.
- <sup>70</sup> Slavenka Drakulić, *How We Survived Communism and Even Laughed* (London: Vintage, 1992), pp. 14-15.







## RĂZVAN-SEBASTIAN STAN

Born in 1977, in Bucharest

Ph.D. candidate, Babeş-Bolyai University, Cluj-Napoca

Dissertation: *International Labour Migration from Eastern Romania to Italy and Ireland – Root Causes, Networks, and Socio-Economic Consequences on Sending Regions*

Participant in HESP Regional Seminar for Excellence in Teaching, *Teaching Anthropology: Means and Meanings*, September 2003 – present

OSI/FCO Chevening Research Fellow – University of Oxford, Institute of Cultural and Social Anthropology. Centre on Migration Policy and Society, October 2005 – June 2006

Anthropological and Oral History research as participant in a joint comparative project on the history of collectivization in Romania organized by Michigan University and University College London. Research topic: *Resistance to Collectivization in the Shepherd Villages from Mărginimea Sibiului* (Sibiu County, Central-Western Romania), 2004

Participation in the PHARE project *The integration of Romanian Labour in the European Space. From Acquis to Praxis*, coordination of the 1<sup>st</sup> stage on social diagnosis

Main Researcher in the project *Changing interests and identities in European border regions: EU policies, ethnic minorities and socio-political transformation in member states and accession countries*, funded under the Sixth Framework Programme, October 2004 – May 2005

# EXPLORING A SPONTANEOUS PROCESS OF EUROPEAN CULTURAL INTEGRATION – FOOD, TASTE AND CULINARY PRACTICES IN THE CASE OF MIGRANT WORKERS FROM EASTERN ROMANIA

## 1. Introduction

This paper aims to reveal aspects of *European cultural continuity* and *transformation* exploring the *eating habits* and *taste preferences* in the case of international migrant workers from Eastern Romania (Neamț region). It starts from the assumption that food and taste help “reading” complex cultural dynamics and transnational interactions. Second, based on previous findings,<sup>\*</sup> it is assumed that Romanian migrants are active and creative actors of cultural encountering who, already started to integrate in the European cultural and economic space, by themselves, in an ongoing process of learning and adaptation. This process of creative adaptation took place at the level of daily life, including their culinary habits. This less visible and less explored type of integration “from bellow” paralleled the European unification and “pre-accession” process directed at macro-political and economic levels.

This study comparatively explores the taste predilections and the practices of *food distribution* and *preparation* in the case of the Romanian migrants who are working in Italy and Ireland. In dealing with taste preferences and culinary practices of Romanian migrant workers and their families, it is one main hypothesis of this study that both processes

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<sup>\*</sup> As part of my ongoing PhD research, I carried a pilot ethnographic fieldwork both in an Eastern Romanian high-rate migration sending region (2005) and in a receiving community from Ireland. (2006).

of cultural continuity and ongoing creative adaptation could be revealed. This research assumes that strong elements of continuity and constancy with the larger European context could be identified at the more latent layer of taste preferences and eating habits, while diets are in a continuous state of transformation. It aims to reveal and interpret aspects of cultural creativity concerning migrants' culinary practices in the transnational but European context.

To explore the culinary habits of Romanian migrants and socio-symbolic meanings attached to them, this study pays attention to the cultural exchange and interaction that takes place in the two destination countries. The paper starts with an analysis of the main theoretical perspectives and contributions regarding taste predilections and culinary practices. Given the complex and holistic nature of the ethnographic studies on food habits this section favours an anthropological approach. The next part of the paper introduces the research setting and methodology. It follows a description of research findings through a comparative exploration of culinary adaptation abroad, taste preferences, practices of food procurement and the "micro-politics" of cooking in case of migrants who are working in Italy and Ireland.

## **2. Theoretical Perspectives on Food, Taste and Cultural Dynamics**

### **2.1. *The Anthropology of Food***

The attitude to food, table manners, customs of common eating – the morals of food, as we might call it, the things permitted, forbidden, and enjoined – all form a complex and developed ideology of food.

Bronislaw Malinowski, *Hunger and Work in a Savage Tribe* (in Ferzacca, 2004, p. 41).

Anthropology has traditionally been in the forefront of food studies. This is related to its preferred focus on everyday practices in a holistic and contextual manner. From the structural perspective of Claude Levi-Strauss (1965) and the semiotic approach of Mary Douglas (1966), anthropology concerns with culinary practices in diverse societies and what they signify about the complexities of larger cultural dynamics (Ferguson and Zukin, 1995).

In social theory building, food systems helped revealing broad social processes such as political-economic value-creation, symbolic value creation, and the social construction of memory (Mintz and Du Bois, 2002, p. 100). In her study, Sidney Mintz reconstructs global linkages between slave labor in the Caribbean and the English working class by examining the production and consumption of sugar, coffee, tea and chocolate in an early industrial period (Mintz, 1985). David Sutton, on the other hand, contributes to the theory in the field of culinary practices exploring the embodied connection between food and memory, which is culturally specific and cross-culturally variable (Sutton, 2001).

*Culinary ethnography* is defined as “an ethnographic account on various aspects of a culture [which] are manifested through the production, preparation and consumption of food”. Food facilitates both the study of material culture – the food items and the tools used to prepare it – and the symbolic and social meaning attributed to dishes, meals and eating practices (Trankel, 1995 p. 20). In the same tradition of thinking, *foodways* are defined as “the beliefs and behavior surrounding the production, distribution, and consumption of food”(Counihan , 1999, p2).

Food is not only substance providing nutrition but also an important way of communication that carries many kinds of meaning (Counihan and Van Esterik, 1997).

As Arjun Appadurai writes, food is “a highly condensed social fact, [...] a marvelously plastic kind of collective representation” (1981, p. 494). The capacity of food to encode social messages is enriched during the preparation process in its own socio-economic context. According to the quoted author, the “semiotic virtuosity” of cuisine is due to both the daily pressure to produce and cook food that makes it ideal to support the everyday social discourse, and to its capacity to mobilize strong emotions.

Food and eating encode and regulate social relationships. Culinary practices play a key role in human socialization, in developing an awareness of body and self, language acquisition, and personality growth (Ferzacca, p. 56). Food sharing creates and increases solidarity. It is a medium for maintaining social relations both inside and beyond the household. At the same time, food marks social differences, boundaries and contradictions (Counihan and Van Esterik, 1997). Food practices can thus support two types of social relations either characterized by equality, solidarity and intimacy or by hierarchy, distance and segmentation. It

can reveal both homogeneity and heterogeneity of human relationships (Appadurai. 1981, pp. 496-508).

Finally, food and culinary habits support processes of identity creation, whether that identity be class, gender-based, ethnic or national. Food provides boundary markers between “Us” and “the Other”. These identity dynamics are especially explored in ethnicity studies. In addition, food serves to the strengthening of personal identity including its gender dimension. In her study about “Food and Body”, Carole Counihan (1999) relates culinary practices with concerns about gender roles and power relations. She illustrates how men and women from a Sardinian town define themselves differently through their foodways and how industrialization transformed their social relations.

## ***2.2. Culinary Practices, Taste and Memory Processes***

Culinary practices and taste preferences are intimately related with memory processes and bring insights on layers of individual and collective history. In his study about the relationship between culinary habits and memory, David Sutton emphasizes the perspective of “memory as performance” in order to interpret the practices and meanings around the collection, cooking and eating of food. In supporting this perspective on memory, Turner’s view of culture as performance is preferred to Geertz’s culture as text. Sutton also draws on Connerton’s term “habit memory” for his embodied view of memory. According to Connerton,

“An image of the past, even in a form of a master narrative, is conveyed and sustained by ritual performances. [...] Participants must not be simply cognitively competent to execute the performance; they must be habituated to those performances. This habituation is to be found [...] in the bodily substrate of performance” (Connerton in Sutton, 2001, p. 12).

Unlike textual or verbal memories, the memories of these “incorporating practices” can be found “sedimented in the body” and encode the lived signification of food and eating (Connerton in Sutton, 2001). This approach comes closer to what Casey (1987) refers as “habitual body memory” – an “active immanence of the past in the body that informs present bodily actions in an efficacious, orienting, and regular manner” (Casey in

Ferzacca, 2004, p. 57). Sutton brings an interesting analysis that illustrates this perspective on memory in connection with cooking practices. In his view, “cooking is best learned [through] an embodied apprenticeship, in which what is remembered is not a set of rules, but images, tastes, smells and experiences” (Sutton, 2001, p 135).

To explore the issues of historical cultural continuity and change of culinary habits and tastes, this paper also draws on Bourdieu theoretical contributions. In his perspective, taste is seen as an acquired disposition to “differentiate” and “appreciate”, a product of history reproduced by education (Bourdieu, 1984). Central in his theoretical construction is the related concept of *habitus* seen as “embodied history”. *Habitus* “ensures the active presence of past experiences, which, deposited in each individual in the form of schemes of perception, thought and action, tend to guarantee the constancy of practices over time, more reliable than all the formal rules and explicit norms.” (Bourdieu, 2005, pp. 54-56)

Based on his empirical research on class and taste preferences in France, Bourdieu shows structural oppositions that are found in tastes and “eating habits”. In his view,

“the antithesis between quantity and quality, substance and form, correspond to the opposition – linked to different distances from necessity – between taste of necessity, which favors the most ‘filling’ and most economical foods, and the taste of liberty – of luxury – which shifts the emphasis to the manner (of presenting, serving, eating etc.) and tends to use stylized form to deny function.” (1984, p. 6)

Relevant for the understanding of the relationship between food and memory is role of learning and education. As Counihan writes, feeding is one of the most important practices for child socialization and personality development (1999, p. 17). Tastes are mostly rooted in childhood and at a lifetime of learning. Both family and school institutions play an important role in changing or keeping food preferences from one generation to another. Related to the topic this study, it is one hypothesis that migrants’ children, born and socialized in different environments, could bring a new diversity of culinary tastes to their families.

### **2.3. Global Tendencies in Food Dynamics: “Fast”/“Slow” Food Movements**

Whether the connection between food and memory offers a grasp of culinary meanings and an intimate access to an embodied layer of individual and collective history, it is also relevant to place the analysis at global level looking at the larger tendencies and “gastro-politics” (Appadurai, 1981). Interesting insights about these tendencies are offered by an exploration of the tension between *fast food* and *slow food* movements.

*Fast Food* could be seen as a global tendency, an expression of the growing industrialization and standardization of food production and consumption. It also suggests speed and homogenisation of taste. Fast food is frequently seen, particularly in Mediterranean countries as France and Italy, as a distinctively “American” commodity, aesthetic and way of life and experience that risk to threaten “culinary patrimony” and to break with traditional food habits and conceptions (Fantasia, 1995; Miele and Murdoch, 2002).

However, several researchers question the direct association between an “American” homogenizing influence and fast food phenomenon in European countries. According to Claude Fischler, fast food is rather an expression of the global circulation of culinary culture. The popularity of Coca Cola and hamburgers in France is the effect of the same process of “alimentary cosmopolitanism” and “transcultural fusion” that makes French croissants and Italian pizza well known and widely consumed in United States. In a closer perspective, Jack Goody sees the internationalisation of taste and the industrialization of food as inevitable global processes (Fantasia, 1995, p 202).

Fast food is not only linked to its attached “cultural ethos”, but also to larger structural conditions. For instance, in his study about “fast food in France”, Rick Fantasia mentions the following factors that led to change in culinary habits in France: the growing number of women in the paid force, the expansion of the working day without extended meal break, increased urban traffic congestion, and the weakening of family ties with less emphasis of family mealtimes. However this trend toward fast food is clearly more extended in Great Britain. As Lang and Careher mention in their study about culinary skills transition, “the trend is toward lone dining, even when people don’t live alone, and fast food habits. Britons



have the ‘fastest’ food habits in Europe and ‘eating on the hoof’ is a growing feature, with entire industries servicing the trend [...]” (Lang and Careher, 2001, p. 5).

*Slow Food* movement developed in reaction to industrialized and facile consumption patterns (Leitch in Mintz and Du Bois, 2002, p. 104). It may also be seen as a way of resisting the commodification of our personal, private relationships (Hendrickson and Heffernan, 2002, p. 348). Historically, Slow Food movement was established in 1986 in Italy by a group of writers and chefs emerging out of the local food cultures and regional cuisines. It started as a reaction against the potential impact of “Americanized” Fast Food on local food habits and related production practices. As Renato Sardo, the director of Slow Food International, noticed,

There was a lot of public debate at that time about standardization, the McDonaldisation, if you will, of the world. [...] On one hand there were the gastronomes, whose focus was fixed entirely on the pleasure of food. The other tradition was a Marxist one, which was about the methods of food production and their social and historical implication. (Sardo in Miele and Murdoch, 2002, p. 317).

Similar to the case of Fast Food phenomenon we may identify two dimensions of the Slow Food movement, one cultural – related to the representations and practices of consumption – and another one structural – connected with practices of production. The “philosophy of slowness” extends to ingredients, style of cooking and hospitality during meals. Regional cuisines and typical products are seen as a “cultural heritage”, important features of local cultural distinctiveness. Typical products have an aesthetic dimension, are a result of human crafts, and are embedded in the surrounding local and regional environments. In addition, the movement also responds to the pressure of local food producers and distributors. Particularly in the Italian case, traditional eateries are closely connected and dependent on local food production systems. In this context Slow Food was seen as a support and promotion of local food cultures (Miele and Murdoch, pp. 307-325).

Both Fast and Slow Food phenomena can be seen as polar tendencies reflecting current food production and consumption practices and beliefs. The exploration of these movements is rather useful as an analytic tool.

Another option is to pay attention to “gastronomic syncretism” that could be seen as an alternative to Fast/ Slow food duality (Belasco in Nanau, 2007) and can reflect larger tendencies to “cultural syncretism”. Migration and transnational cultural dynamics are rich fields for such an exploration.

#### ***2.4. Globalization, Transnational Migration and Food/Cultural Syncretism***

According to Richard Wilk, “Food and cooking can be an avenue toward understanding complex issues of cultural change and transnational cultural flow” (1999, p 244). They can reveal complex relationship between local and global culture, between immigrant or ethnic groups, on one hand, and the dominant one, on the other hand. Cultural practices of eating and food preferences can offer insights on patterns of cultural adaptation, identification, diversity or integration. Transformation in individual or collective culinary practices may also reflect changes in broader cultural dynamics.

Contrary to the assumptions of older modernization and assimilation theories that predicted a growing Westernization and homogenization of the world’s cultures, current transnational processes reveal a continuous production of cultural diversity and an increase in syncretistic practices. This fact is supported by social theorists who explain how individual agency is enabled in spite of global pressures and who explore related practices of cultural creativity and resistance. For Giddens, “the fundamental question of social theory [...] is to explicate how the limitations of individual ‘presence’ are transcended by the ‘stretching’ of social relations across time and space” (1984, p. 35). This current “stretching” and spanning of social relations across time and space that characterize processes of globalization and transnationalization led to a wider range of options for the people involved.

Ulf Hannerz argues against the notion of “global village” and “homogenization” of culture. He focuses on the constant motivation of people to creatively and selectively reinterpret larger cultural influences, a process he called “creolization”. Terms as “hybridity”, “creolization” and “transnational syncretism” reflect a continued production of new diversity. One recurrent theme in transnational research studies is that of “resistance”. Local people respond through confrontation, evasion,

subversive interpretations to influences appearing from outside that seem massively powerful. Another related topic is that of “cultural creativity” which is often explored in reaction to the theoretical perspective that equals globalization with global cultural homogenization (Hannerz, 1998, p. 238).

International migrants are key actors in the transnational cultural dynamics and flows including those related to food preferences and eating practices. According to Caroline Brettell (2000), migrants operate in “social fields” which transgress geographical and political borders “making home and host society a single arena action”. As Hannerz writes, migrants and those who remained home can stay in a rather close touch through visits and return trips from home, through telephone calls and regular exchange of consumer goods. All these connected people on move “form a coherent, although spatially dispersed social field” (1998, p. 240).

Anthropologists have commonly studied people on the move – migrants, refugees, and colonizers – as agents of culinary continuity and change (Mintz and Du Bois, 2002, 105). As a spatially and culturally transitional stage, the migration process brings possibilities of adaptation at or cultural negotiation of new habits, behaviors and experiences. Moreover, migrants keep their ties to a homeland through their preservation of and participation in traditional customs and rituals of consumption. They can prove to be “entirely passionate about such matters as the eating habits of the motherland” (Parama, 2002). A logic of *diglosia* (Ferguson) may function among immigrants communities trying to integrate into a dominant culture while keeping elements of their own original culture. For instance, in the case of Maghrebians in Paris, this logic works through a systematic opposition between cooking, eating practices and food items that helps to trace the boundaries of the migrant group (Bahloul, 1995, p. 494). The role of food practices in the maintenance of identity is also explored in the case of Greek migrants who have left their “homeland” behind, both in moments of revitalization or in times of prospective remembrance. Food offers entry points into the “blended temporalities of experience” (Sutton, 2001, p. 159).

Finally, migrants’ diet and foodways need to be explored and interpreted within a transnational framework where ingredients, techniques and options are no longer limited to the cultural context of the country of origin, or of the country of immigration. Actually migrants’ cultural practices include a bit of everything: traditional and modern, local and

global. These cultural practices also reflect the dynamics of the migrants' "fluid" or "creolized" cultural identities (Hall, 1992). As Richard Wilk quoted, "what is much less well understood is how such a stable pillar of identity can be so fluid and changeable, how seemingly insurmountable boundaries between each group's unique dietary practices and habits can be maintained, while diets, recipes, and cuisines are in a constant state of flux" (Warde in Wilk, 1999, p. 244).

### **3. Historical Context and Research Setting**

#### ***3.1. Labour Migration during European Union Accession Process***

The breakdown of the "Iron Curtain" and the massive post-communist deindustrialization process, which was encountered by a reduction of real salaries and living standards for many Romanian citizens as well by an increase in unemployment rate, led to a high rate of labour migration to Western European countries. According to a national survey (Public Opinion Barometer, OSF, 2005), 30% of the citizens from the region under study (Neamț County) had at least one family member working abroad in the last year, a migration rate more than three-fold than the national average (9%). Based on research findings, the migration strategy from the villages where I did fieldwork takes cyclical or temporary forms and the main destination countries include Italy and Ireland.

In January 2002, as part of the European Union pre-accession process, Romanian citizens got the right to enter Schengen space without visa but just as tourists and with condition of not exceeding three months of staying. This led to an overall increase in labour mobility and brought important differences between the strategies to migrate in Schengen and in non-Schengen states and between the related irregular practices to enter and work. Whether in the case of labour migration in Italy, many workers entered as "tourists", started their jobs without contracts and frequently overstayed their permitted entry waiting for regularization programmes, in the case of migration to Ireland – a non-Schengen state – irregularity also included practices of illegal entry and brought a higher risk of deportation. This distinction relates with important differences between migration and integration patterns in the two countries. While migration to Italy had been mostly cyclical and temporary, strategies of long-term migration were more frequent in the case of migrants to Ireland. The EU

accession of Romania in January, 2007 brought freedom of movement outside the Schengen space, but the access to labour market and the social integration remained difficult for the migrants who chose Ireland as destination country. These differences regarding the degree of social, economic and political integration are relevant for understanding migrant's adaptation practices, including the culinary ones.

### ***3.2. General description of the sending communities***

Both villages where I carried fieldwork – Piatra and Temeșani – are situated in Neamț County (Eastern Romania) at a distance of about 100 km one from the other. The villages are close to Roman and Piatra Neamț towns where many villagers used to work as commuters. The surrounding industrial platforms from Roman, Săvinești and Roznov provided the main source of jobs and income during communist regime. The families from the two villages used to combine commuting with work on their land and local farms.

The deindustrialization process, which was part of the main post-communist transformations, brought high levels of unemployment in the concerned villages. Most of the commuters were dismissed on the basis of governmental ordinances by which they received a number of salaries as a compensation for losing their jobs. This process mainly took place between 1994 and 2000. According to local statistical data, in 2000 the employed population (in the country) did not surpass 7% of the total active population from the two villages (Prefecture of Neamț County). One of the main responses to the local job market reduction and decreasing of life level was the strategy to migrate abroad for getting jobs there.

Italy and Ireland are currently among the most preferred destination countries for villagers from the researched sending communities (see *Annex 1*). The migration strategies are gendered. According to the interviews, men were the first who migrate but the women also started to migrate 5-6 years ago. There is a division between the jobs which men and women perform abroad. Men usually work in constructions, both in Italy and Ireland, and have better paid jobs. For women it is easier to find jobs in Italy as domestic workers taking care of children and elder people. This partly explains their predilection in learning Italian cooking style. By contrast, women who are migrating in Ireland use to raise their children and to take care of their own family, paid jobs being less easy to find.

#### **4. Research Methodology**

Given the specificity of the topic, the research methodology articulated multiple methods, sources and perspectives. Ethnographic interviews carried with migrants and members of their families were particularly useful to have access to migrants' discourses regarding their culinary habits, and to the cultural meanings attached to these practices. They also facilitate contextualisation taking into account the personal and family life histories, on one hand, and the larger socio-economic changes, on the other. Whether the main unit of analysis had been transnational household, these interviews took place both with men and women, both with older and younger generations. This was done in order to explore processes of cultural continuity and transformation at family level. Second, participant observation complementarily revealed non-discursive realms of peoples' lives, providing a privileged and intimate access to culinary practices and preferences by "tasting culture". The project for this research is partly a result of the warm and friendly dinners I shared with Romanian migrants in Dublin. Third, photography helped recording aspects of food distribution abroad.

Because the lives of Romanian migrants and their families take place in spatially distanced but interconnected locations, this study encompassed multi-sited fieldwork research (Marcus, 1995; Hannerz, 2003). Part of the field research was accomplished in a rural region from Eastern Romania (Neamț County) and this especially helped interviewing the family members of the migrants. However, for a better understanding of the phenomena, a pilot research study was also carried out in Dublin, one main destination. The preliminary research I undertook in Dublin helped to create several "entry points" and contacts, which enabled the continuation of this research.

#### **5. Case Study: Culinary Habits and Taste preferences of Romanian Migrants from Neamț County**

##### ***5.1. Taste Predilections and Gastronomic Practices***

##### **5.1.1. Culinary Adaptation Abroad**

According to migrants' accounts, Italy and Ireland seem to belong to different culinary regions. The success of their culinary adaptation and the

required practices vary sharply from one country to the other. Whether Italian food is highly appreciated and the adaptation is successful, at least in the case of younger generations, Ireland is rather *an arena of confrontation and improvisation*, migrants trying to reproduce their Romanian eating practices and cuisines in a much more different culinary context. The logic of adaptation abroad is thus different from one case to the other. We may see a *logic of culinary and culturally integration in Italy*, by adoption on local cuisines, in contrast with Romanian migrants from Ireland who rather distance themselves from the dishes and culinary habits found abroad, by keeping their “traditional” eating habits in creative ways.

As migrants said,

We really got accustomed with Italian food. This one reason we want to go back to Italy. The vegetables are fresh there, even during winter. [...] The food is better than ours. And they have very good salami (*stagionati*). They have sweet dishes. They have the best olives, and a very good wine. [...] We also like *pasta*. It is a light and tasty food. If you combine it, you get thousands of tastes. (Romanian migrant to Italy)

When you are at the beginning it is very difficult. Their foods are too peppery. Their cuisines are very different from ours. [...] We use to prepare our food at home, and not their food. *We keep our Romanian tradition*. We cook the same food, but with their ingredients. Unfortunately, we cannot find there a lovage (*leuştean*), a good dill (*mărar*) or a good parsley (*pătrunjel*). We cannot find orache (*lobodă*) or celery (*ţelină*). For these, we try to find replacements. (Romanian migrant to Ireland)

We got sick of their food. In the end, their food is toxic and artificial. Meat is toxic for sure. They put a lot of preservatives. Not to speak about the fruits they import. They have no taste. Ours have taste, even if they have worms. (Romanian migrant to Ireland)

The difference in food preferences is thus justified by migrants in terms of health, tastiness and variety. Whether Italian food is seen as tasty and healthy, the Irish one is considered “toxic”, “artificial” and without taste. The above quotations also give a hint about food preparation. Migrants from Ireland reproduce the structure and taste of their Romanian cuisines, while creatively combining local ingredients.

### 5.1.2. Generational Differences and Taste Preferences

According to the research findings, the attachment to Romanian tastes and cuisines is heavily influenced by generational differences. In contrast with recipes and diets, tastes are less likely to change, being rooted in childhood and at a life time of learning. Besides, as a previous quotation illustrated, tastes are also markers of community and national belonging. The older generation is more conservative in its culinary tastes. In contrast, the younger generation of migrants has polisemic and even cosmopolitan taste preferences, which could mask pressures to acquire prestige and social mobility. At the end of the spectrum, migrants' children, born and socialized in different environments, bring a new diversity of culinary tastes to their families.

Do you know something? Our food tastes very good. It is better than the Italian one. <But the younger ones said the Italian food tastes better>. Yes. It is normal. (Old lady, mother of two migrants and "commuter" to Italy)

Our children prefer Italian food. They became Italians (*s-au italianizat*). This is because they eat a lot in school canteens. The girl is at nursery (*creșă*). Our boy eats like this from the age of two. They got used with that food. They like *pasta* and *spaghetti* a lot. We will cook *pasta* in this evening. From time to time we also eat *pasta*. (Romanian migrant to Italy)

The children born there in our crowd (*grămadă*) eat what we cook. The ones we sent to kindergarten eat their food. They adapt. They eat in both places and they like. (Romanian migrant to Ireland)

In this context the concept of *habitus* and its connection with taste are highly relevant. Taste – an acquired disposition to "differentiate" and "appreciate" (Bourdieu, 1984) – is produced and reproduced by education during primary socialization. Migrants' children rose in Italian and Irish nurseries and primary schools bring new tastes and combine them with those learned in their Romanian families.

### 5.1.3. Culinary Representations and the Role of Food in Everyday Life

For Romanian migrants, eating is not just a necessary daily activity but also a way of life, an opportunity to have fun, to socialize and to strengthen



their social relations. The difference in global culinary tendencies previously illustrated through the “fast food” / “slow food” duality seems to be well fitted with the difference in culinary representations the migrants have about Irish and Italian culinary habits. In contrast with Irish people who are seen as stressed and hurried in their eating practices, Italians are appreciated for their life care, self respect and joy. As one migrant said “From Italian we learned to live healthy”. The following quotations are relevant to illustrate the dynamics of these culinary representations,

In Italy, if you go out into the street at one a clock, is nobody there. They have one hour of lunch break. And this is not paid. You work 4 hours before and 4 hours after. [...] Romanian got a very good habit there. *They learned to live in a steady and ordered manner.* We were debauched (*destrăbălați*) before that. [...] I quarrel with my family here [in Romania] when they ask me to eat at 12 or at 11a.m. “No. I eat at one a clock!” I use to drink a coffee in the morning and to eat something light to avoid digestion problems. Italians are very ordered. They really care about their life (*țin mult la viață*). (Romanian migrant to Italy)

In Ireland, the life quality is much reduced when compared to Italy. In Italy, they respect themselves. They have fun. They have their food. Staying at lunch is different. So, they respect themselves. They have dessert. They stay one hour or one hour and a half. But in Ireland you stay 30 minutes and then leave. They are different. (Romanian migrant to Ireland)

Generally *we really like to stay and eat together.* You can talk. You can drink a glass of wine. But they [Irish] are not like us. They are always running. This is their life. *Everything is counted in minutes.* They do not want to lose time. This is how they eat. They do not stay to talk. But we Romanians are always making time. For them the schedule is the schedule. Everything is previously calculated. *This is how Occident is made (Pentru ca așa e făcut Occidentul ăsta).* But we didn’t get in this circle yet. For us, it doesn’t matter. [...] They are too stressed. [...] You have money but I don’t think this is extraordinary. Many times it is more important to have peace, to take care of your health, to have freedom. (Romanian migrant to Ireland)

In migrants’ representations about the culinary Other, both a temporal and a social dimension could be identified. Whether for Irish people “time is money” and “everything is previously calculated”, for Italians “time

is life” and this is reflected in their culinary habits and siesta. Making time to eat slowly and to share the dishes brings feelings of freedom and group belonging for Romanian migrants. Having shared dinners is also an opportunity for family discussions and education matters. They criticize the Irish eating style that leads to a fragmentation of their social relations.

### **5.2. Romanian Food Procurement Practices**

Food procurement strategies differ between the two groups of migrants. Finding alternative or complementary food items to those on the normal market is rather seen as a necessity by Romanian migrants who are working in Ireland. This is due to the perceived low quality of products on the market and their sharp difference in taste when comparing to those from the home country. However, even in Italy the interviewed migrants tend to bring some condiments and ingredients from home in order to cook dishes that taste “like home”. These “markers of taste” are important in the logic of cooking. As one Romanian old lady recounted,

When I go there (Italy) I cook for them. I prepared *caltaboş* for them [*Romanian homemade pork product made of pork offals, rice and spices*]. But I had problems with their meat because it is not fatty at all. So, I asked my son in law, who is international transporter, to bring me some ham (*şuncă*) [from Romania]. If you put *şuncă*, it ties up the composition (*se leagă*). They [Italians] use to throw away what is too fatty. [...] I also use to bring lovage (*leuştean*) from here. They do have parsley (*pătrunjel*). But they miss dill (*mărar*). However, I planted lovage there and it got roots! [...] Next time I want to make borsch (*borş*) for them. I especially want to do this. I brought fermented cereal broth (*huşe*) and husk (*tărâţe*) from home. (Old lady, mother of two migrants)

A similar strategy to bring condiments from home is also found in case of Romanians from Ireland. However, procuring “appropriate” and “tasty” food ingredients is much more difficult in Ireland. Sometimes, migrants use informal channels to get the products they need. Some items, as “Romanian sausages”, are “trafficked” through the border, as one migrant said. Other items are procured by means of private connections in the local food distribution sector. The following quotation is illustrative,

It is very difficult to bring meat in Ireland, but we have some Romanians who work at a supermarket there. They are Romanians and know which kind of meat Romanians prefer. They bring pork meat without preservatives. They know that on Friday, meat will be sold out and they do not put chemicals in it. [...] We also have a Romanian who is working at a butchery and knows the Romanian way of preparation. (Romanian migrants to Ireland)

Another channel for “Romanian” food procurement consists of the grocery stores with Romanian specific. Actually, Romanian shops and restaurants abroad are also arenas for an integration of Romanian food products and habits in a larger European context. These shops perform more functions than just distributing food. They are places for group meeting and some of them even offer money transfer services (see *Annex 2*). This food distribution channel is more important in Ireland than in Italy. Migrants from Italy alternatively use the service of transporters, the border control being less severe.

### ***5.3. The “Micro-politics of Cooking”***

#### **5.3.1. The “Logic” of Cooking**

Facing a diverse European cultural context, Romanian migrants from both Italy and Ireland increasingly incorporate a *wider “menu” of options* in their cooking activities. In their case, cooking became a *bricolage*, a creative improvisation process, being able to combine ingredients of different origins in original ways. However the cooking process has its specific logic. As already illustrated, foreign ingredients are used in cooking but what really counts is the final taste and “form” of the cooked cuisine and not its isolated basic elements. Characteristic flavours and aromas introduced through “traditional” condiments as lovage, dill and garlic, in specific ways, help keeping a constant *principle of taste* and give a “Romanian” taste to the cooked food. As Fischler points out, within such a food system one can introduce some new ingredients and still have the resulting dish be acceptable to the system (Fischler in Sutton, 2001, p. 130).

### 5.3.2. Gender and Generational Dynamics of Food Preparation

This paper pays attention to the “gastro-politics” (Appadurai, 1981) at household level through the exploration of the gender dynamics of food preparation in the case of Romanian migrants. Transnational migration led in many cases to a higher degree of flexibility of gender roles in the family. The transition of productive base from farming to wage labour altered the domestic roles of men and women. Thus, unlike previous periods, cooking became an activity that can be transferred to men, depending on situational contexts. This change in gender roles is not unique to Romanian migrants and can be found in case of other East European migrants, as well (Bloch, 1976). The transition to more balanced gender relations is explained by one of the interviewed migrants,

My wife is cooking, if she has time. If not, I help her. It is now the same. We speak on the phone and establish what to eat and what to buy. So now is balanced. [...] In the past it was beautiful, but it was a different way of life. The women stayed at home and it was normal for them to cook. What to do, to keep her doing nothing? [*O ai de gătit. O ții degeaba?*] But, as long as she brings money as you do, she works on the same schedule as you do... You came late in the evening and you have to take care of the children. So you have to do it together. (Romanian migrant to Italy)

With regard to generational differences and their effects on cooking, there are cases when the parents of the migrants go abroad to help their children at housework during winter. For instance, at Christmas time, they cook ritual food – named by them “traditional” food – as “*cozonac*”, “*caltaboș*”, “*tobă*” and “*sarmale*” (forcemeat rolls in cabbage/vine leaves). Migrants of older generation keep a constant connection with the culinary tradition from home.

### 5.3.3. The Oral Transmission of Recipes

According to the research findings, in all the explored cases the recipes and the knowledge of cooking were orally transmitted and learned in practice, while being in the origin families. The stress is thus on socially embedded apprenticeship, on learning by doing. Contrasting this type of transmission with cooking from written cookbooks, Sutton (2001, p. 19) notices: “what is remembered is not a set of rules, but images,

tastes, smells and experiences". These practices assure a transmission of embodied memories that carry their original social and emotional context of learning.

#### 5.3.4. New Cooking Technology and its Role

An interesting issue regarding the cultural contact and the change of cooking style during migration process is *the impact of modern technologies*. New cooking technologies are timesaving devices and tend to replace the older gestures and techniques. However, neither the traditional temporality of cooking, nor the practical knowledge and habits around it, are easy to change in case of Romanian migrants. Tools, as blender and microwave oven, provoke suspicions among migrants and their wives. As one interviewed couple said,

We have a microwave oven, but we use our classic oven (*aragaz*) because we got used with it. We sent the microwave oven from Ireland but we never use it. (migrant to Ireland)

But the microwave oven is not good at all! It emanates some currents, some energy that is not good for the children. *We have it but we never used it.* (migrant's wife)

Modern cooking tools – as microwave oven – have rather a *social role*, migrants being proud of their "acquisitions". They are markers of social prestige in the local sending community, being placed and exposed as decorative artefacts (sometimes on a carpet) in their household (personal observation).

### 6. Final Comments and Conclusions

This research paper revealed aspects of European cultural continuity and transformation by analysing the dynamics of culinary habits and taste preferences in the case of labour migrants from Eastern Romania and their families. It thus gave an account on processes of spontaneous European cultural integration of Romanian migrants that started long before the "official" pre-accession project directed at a larger political level. These

people were able to integrate by themselves and, through their interaction, exchange and mobility, they re-connected cultural European spaces at the level of their lives and daily practices, including the culinary ones.

In dealing with taste preferences and culinary practices of Romanian migrant workers and their families, the findings indicate that both processes of cultural continuity and ongoing creative adaptation and confrontation are taking place. Whether strong elements of continuity and constancy could be identified at the more latent layer of dietary habits and taste preferences, diets, recipes, cuisines and basic ingredients are in a continuous state of transformation or improvisation.

Whether the migrants who are working in Italy rather emphasize aspects of *continuity* regarding their culinary habits and tastes ("We like Italian food", "They respect the meal hours", "They know how to drink"), Ireland is rather an area of *creative adaptation and confrontation*, Romanian migrants trying to reproduce their culinary habits in a much more different cultural environment.

Exploring the continuity and transformation of Romanian migrants' dietary habits and culinary preferences, this study brings its own "embodied" perspective on memory processes. It explores the "logics" of cultural practices around food, eating and cooking and thus gives an account on a latent layer of memory and habits encrypted at their level.

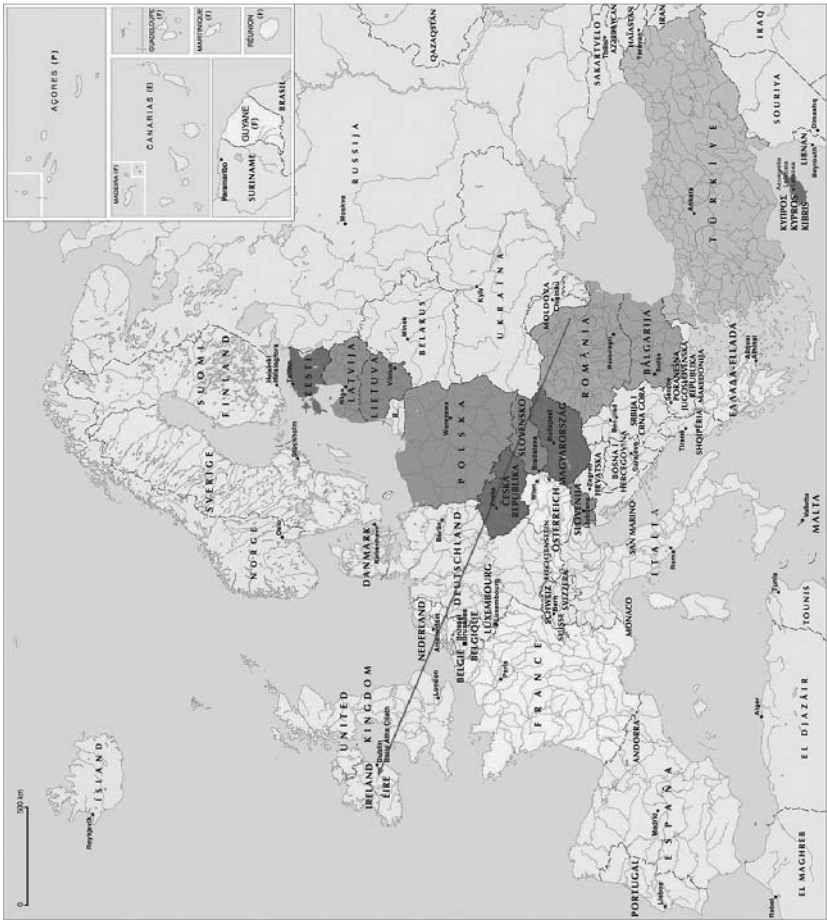
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# Annex 1: Routes of Transantlional Migration



## Annex 2: Spaces of Romanian Food Distribution



Romanian shop in Dublin selling “European” food





"Traditional Romanian restaurant" in Dublin



## SMARANDA VULTUR

Née en 1950, à Timișoara

Doctorat en Lettres, Université de Bucarest

Thèse : *Texte et intertexte. L'intertextualité comme principe de configuration du texte littéraire*

Maître de conférence, Université de l'Ouest, Timișoara, Faculté des Lettres, Histoire et Théologie

Bourse de trois mois par année, programme PAST, EHESS, Paris, 1999 – 2000

« Research Support Scheme », Université Centrale Européenne, 1992-1994

Conférences : France, Bulgarie, Suisse, Italie, Autriche, Allemagne, Etats Unis, Hongrie

Articles et études : linguistique, sémiotique, littérature, histoire orale, anthropologie culturelle, historiographie, anthropologie de la mémoire, Mémoire du communisme

### Projets :

*Pratiques mémorielles dans un contexte interculturel. Etude de cas : le Banat*  
*Remembering Communism*, Université de Leipzig

*Patrimoine et dynamiques sociales : Étude comparative des nouveaux usages en Europe*, Centre de Recherches et d'études anthropologiques,  
Université Lumière-Lyon 2

*Formes de la culture et de la mémoire urbaine dans l'Europe centrale (Timișoara-Dresde-Plovdiv)*, Mitteleuropazentrum,  
Centre d'études central-européennes, Dresde

*Transformarea proprietății, a persoanelor și a statului : Colectivizarea în România. 1949 – 1962/Transforming Property, Persons and State: Collectivization in Romania, 1949 – 1962*, coordonné par Katherine Verdery et Gail Kligman, National Council for Eastern and East European Research  
*Historiography in Southeast Europe after Socialism*, coordonné par Ulf Brunnbauer, Center for the Study of Balkan Societies and Cultures,  
Université de Graz

*A trăi împreună împărtășind memoria : Timișoara – Plovdiv (Vivre ensemble en partageant la mémoire : Timișoara -Plovdiv)*, European Cultural Foundation,  
Amsterdam

#### **Livres :**

*Infinitul mărunț. De la configurația intertextuală la poetica operei*,  
Cartea Românească, Bucarest, 1992 (Prix de l'Union des Écrivains, 1992)  
*Istorie trăită, istorie povestită. Deportarea în Bărăgan. 1951-1956*,  
Amarcord, 1997, Timișoara

# L'ALIMENT PORTEUR DE CULTURE OU « DIS-MOI CE QUE TU MANGES ET JE TE DIRAI QUI TU ES ». LE CAS DU BANAT

## Introduction

Parmi les traits les plus évidents de la cuisine pratiquée aujourd'hui dans le Banat – région qui sera au centre de notre étude actuelle – figurent le mélange des registres culinaires, l'existence de frontières floues entre des cuisines qui s'entrecroisent, la concurrence entre ce qui est perçu comme traditionnel et les tendances à la globalisation. Toute cuisine est dans une certaine mesure un fait de bricolage, déterminé par les voisinages, la transmission générationnelle, les innovations qui dérivent du rôle qu'elle joue dans la socialisation et le positionnement social, les contextes favorisant la communication entre les cultures et la mobilité des personnes. Ceci vaut d'autant plus pour l'époque postmoderne et pour une région frontalière au caractère pluriethnique et à vocation interculturelle comme le Banat. Il n'est donc pas surprenant qu'on s'y retrouve au cœur de la diversité, même dans ce domaine assez conservateur qu'est la cuisine. Cette diversité passe par la différenciation interne de la cuisine banataise, due à l'importance des variétés locales et ethniques (ou religieuses dans certains cas) et à la tradition interculturelle de la région, mais elle résulte aussi des rapports de cette cuisine à celle d'autres régions de Roumanie, à ce qu'on définit généralement, même s'il s'agit d'une construction culturelle, comme la « cuisine nationale » et à ce qu'on perçoit comme le « *fooding* globalisant ».

Les enjeux identitaires et les liens sociaux véhiculés par la cuisine, le rythme très rapide des changements<sup>1</sup> – stimulé par un monde plus ouvert et mobile et par l'impact des médias, qui, surtout dans les dernières années, consacrent un espace de plus en plus large aux faits de cuisine<sup>2</sup> – semble



rendre très difficile, sinon impossible, tout effort de définir *une* ou *des* spécificités locales, régionales ou nationales<sup>3</sup>.

C'est le terrain qui nous a suggéré une voie de sortie de cette impasse : les entretiens avec ceux qui ont accepté de partager avec nous leur expérience concernant leurs habitudes et comportements alimentaires, ainsi que ceux de leur entourage présent ou passé – surtout de leur famille – nous ont révélé que les gens ont tendance à analyser cet aspect de leur vie en termes de différences. Ces différences définissent des frontières plus ou moins floues par rapport aux autres en ce qui concerne les préférences et les habitudes culinaires, mais elles nous donnent en même temps la possibilité de *situer* notre interlocuteur par rapport à l'Autre. Ce positionnement, qui peut être lié au statut social de celui qui partage son expérience ou à des rapports de pouvoir, nous permet d'avoir accès à l'image de l'Autre, une image évidemment construite, qui sert de support à un discours d'auto-identification. *Nous* et les *Autres*, *maintenant* et *autrefois* sont les axes constitutifs d'un jeu de miroirs qui structure un système de significations autour du manger, nous permettant de définir des situations, d'explorer un champ de valeurs qui leur est associé. Roland Barthes a remarqué fort justement que « la nourriture tend sans cesse à se transformer en situation »<sup>4</sup> : il analyse par exemple le cas du café, en notant qu'il est de moins en moins « senti comme une substance que comme une circonstance » qui oppose le temps du travail à celui du repos, celui de l'activité à celui du loisir, définissant en dernière instance un type de civilisation<sup>5</sup>.

Notre étude se situe dans une perspective anthropologique. Elle tient compte des normes, des pratiques et des valeurs que l'homme associe à la cuisine, du fait que l'aliment peut devenir, dans certaines circonstances, un indice sensible des changements intervenus dans les modes de vie et les représentations (de ce qui est « bon » et « mauvais » à manger de différents points de vue, de la relation entre le corps et l'alimentation, de la répartition par sexe, des activités liées à la cuisine, des valeurs symboliques liés à certains aliments). La cuisine, par tout ce qu'elle implique (produits alimentaires, techniques de préparation et pratiques de consommation etc.), est porteuse de significations qui peuvent nous apprendre beaucoup de choses sur la relation de l'homme à la nature et à la société dans laquelle il vit. Un livre récent de Claude Fischler et Estelle Masson, résultat d'un travail d'équipe comparatif sur des terrains européens et américains met en relief le rôle essentiel que la dimension culturelle joue au niveau des choix alimentaires, des comportements



culinaires, des fonctions attribuées au fait de manger, mais aussi et surtout au niveau des représentations qu'on s'en fait<sup>6</sup>.

Notre perspective de travail valorise cette dimension qui voit dans la nourriture et l'alimentation « un système de communication, un corps d'images, un protocole d'usages, de situations et de conduites »<sup>7</sup>, mais nous allons procéder de manière inductive, structurant l'analyse et menant nos réflexions en fonction des suggestions dérivées directement de notre travail de terrain et de nos sources, - ou plus précisément de la manière dont ces sources instituent des distinctions entre le traditionnel et le moderne, entre le rural et l'urbain, entre le pauvre et le riche, entre le quotidien et le festif, entre le chez-soi et l'ailleurs, entre l'habituel et l'exotique etc.

## **1. Notre terrain, nos sources**

Notre terrain s'est constitué par un appel à différents types de sources : sources écrites, tels les récits de voyage ou les chroniques, monographies, cahiers de cuisine transmis dans la famille, livres de cuisine, mémoires et témoignages écrits, proverbes et expressions, anecdotes concernant les habitudes culinaires des Banatais, réponses à des questionnaires servant de sources monographiques (il en existe un pour la région de Caraș datant du milieu du XIX<sup>e</sup> siècle). Mais j'ai utilisé surtout des sources orales, créées par moi-même (elles sont le résultat des entretiens ciblés sur les questions de la cuisine) et que j'ai comparées au cours de l'analyse avec le résultat du travail de terrain des membres de mon équipe de la Fondation « La Troisième Europe »<sup>8</sup> ou de mes étudiants. En ce qui concerne les entretiens que j'ai menés moi-même, ils relèvent d'au moins trois catégories différentes, qui représentent trois étapes de ma recherche.

### **1.1. Les déportés au Bărağan**

Une première catégorie de sources est constituée par des récits de vie de personnes qui entre 1951-1956 ont été déportés au Bărağan, région du sud-est de la Roumanie, et dont j'ai recueilli plus de 120 récits de vie entre 1991 et 1997<sup>9</sup>, afin de documenter la déportation, mais aussi afin d'analyser l'impact de cet événement biographique, longtemps censuré dans la mémoire, sur la façon dont les individus évaluent rétrospectivement leur vie. À ma surprise, j'ai constaté que l'événement raconté ne se

réduit pas à un témoignage sur les faits, mais construit aussi un discours sur l'identité – une identité blessée, mise en crise par l'effet de choc du déplacement forcé et de la perte du statut économique et social des familles des déportés. À une distance de plus de 50 ans des événements, la mémoire des souffrances subies est mise en équilibre par un contre-discours décrivant les faits dans la perspective d'une histoire de survie. Celle-ci transforme l'histoire de l'exil forcé en une histoire de la refondation du Banat – le Paradis perdu – dans la plaine de Bărăgan. C'est tout un imaginaire identitaire qui en surgit, incluant évidemment les questions de la cuisine banataise. S'appropriant le rôle d'un héros civilisateur, le Banatais projette sur l'Autre l'image de l'autochtone à civiliser. Ce que les uns et les autres mangent, leur savoir-faire et leurs habitudes culinaires deviennent le cadre d'une négociation d'images et d'une réflexion sur soi-même qui implique l'identité régionale de chacun. Il est étrange de constater que celle-ci se définit en termes de préférences culinaires, mais aussi en termes de différences entre techniques de préparation et pratiques culinaires. Mais ce fait devient moins surprenant, dès qu'on constate qu'à travers ce discours ce sont d'autres revendications qui sont exprimées, comme par exemple une demande de reconnaissance de la supériorité du Banatais.

C'est d'ailleurs de la constatation du rôle important que la cuisine banataise occupe dans le discours identitaire des anciens déportés qu'est née l'idée de cette étude.

### **1.2. Des Banatais allemands dans le Midi de la France**

Les anthropologues s'accordent à penser que la cuisine et la nourriture font partie des traits identitaires forts, ceux qui disparaissent parmi les derniers chez les populations émigrées ou exilées, par exemple.

C'est la raison pour laquelle nous avons choisi de faire des entretiens dans une communauté de Banatais qui vit en France, à La Roque sur Pernes (à une distance de 26 km. d'Avignon, à une dizaine de kilomètres de Carpentras), communauté que nous avons étudiée à plusieurs reprises du point de vue de son travail de reconstruction mémorielle et identitaire. Il s'agit d'Allemands (des Souabes) du Banat, d'origine lorraine ou alsacienne qui se sont réfugiés après la Seconde Guerre Mondiale en Autriche et dont une partie (entre 7000 et 10000 personnes) ont été reçus en France en 1949, suite à des démarches faites auprès de Robert Schumann par Jean Lamesfeld, un banatais de Jimbolia<sup>10</sup>. Il s'est installé au début des années 50

dans le Midi, à La Roque, accompagné par quelques familles de Banatais, originaires du Banat roumain ou yougoslave. D'autres, les ont rejoints avec le temps. Vers 1960, ils sont tous naturalisés français : les plus âgés communiquent en dialecte souabe, les plus jeunes apprennent l'allemand à l'école comme langue étrangère. Mais la conscience d'une identité banataise, liée à leur lieu de naissance (la *Heimat*), est encore vivante, d'autant plus qu'elle est devenue un emblème touristique de la petite localité de Provence, dont la rue principale s'appelle la Rue du Banat.

En février 2007, au début de ce projet, je suis revenue à La Roque pour mener des entretiens plus ciblés sur la question de la cuisine. Je me demandais quelle était la place que la cuisine occupe par rapport à une dynamique de la mémoire qui met en relation les rapports complexes qui s'établissent à travers la nourriture et ses modes de préparation entre le lieu d'origine, le lieu d'adoption et les conduites ou les stratégies d'insertion.

L'intuition des anthropologues s'est trouvée confirmée. Les femmes que j'ai interviewées, surtout celles de la génération la plus âgée, gardaient non seulement le souvenir de la cuisine banataise, mais continuaient de la pratiquer et de la transmettre dans la famille. Leurs témoignages m'ont permis de saisir la façon dont elles définissent la spécificité proprement banataise : elles m'ont parlé des plats « typiques » souabes qui sont les mêmes que ceux qu'on trouve dans le Banat, non seulement chez les Allemands, mais aussi chez les Roumains ou les Tchèques. Il est difficile de dire dans quelle mesure la source de leur compétence actuelle dans le domaine de la cuisine banataise est due à la transmission mémorielle dans la famille, à l'intérieur du groupe des Banatais du village, ou le résultat de la consultation par tous des mêmes livres de cuisine banataise, apportés de ou commandés en Allemagne. Ces livres écrits et publiés en allemand sont de vrais aide-mémoires et ceci pas seulement pour les plats reconnus comme « spécifiques » pour le Banat. Le livre d'Olga Katharina Farca<sup>11</sup> par exemple, (que j'ai pu consulter chez Margareta B. de Pernes) accompagne les recettes d'illustrations des plats, mais aussi d'une courte incursion dans l'histoire de la communauté souabe du Banat, illustrée par la reproduction du tableau fondateur de la représentation collective de la colonisation du Banat par cette population au XVIII<sup>e</sup> siècle. Il s'agit d'un triptyque décrivant les étapes de la colonisation, peint par Stefan Jäger, le peintre par excellence des Souabes du Banat : on retrouve très souvent des reproductions de ses œuvres dans les maisons de Souabes du Banat et aussi de La Roque. Dans l'église de La Roque sur Pernes on

peut voir une sorte de réponse à ce tableau, peinte par une artiste de Paris pendant les années 60 : un triptyque qui décrit le trajet de l'exode des Banatais vers la France.

La reproduction des tableaux de Jäger qui s'inspirent de la vie quotidienne des Souabes ou de leurs fêtes identitaires, comme le *Kirchweih* (il peint aussi des costumes, des maisons, de scènes de travail) fonctionne comme un rappel identitaire pour la communauté. La mémoire de ce qu'on mangeait autrefois chez soi, s'associe donc à un cadre plus large de signes, destinés à renforcer le sentiment d'une appartenance commune à une *Heimat* originaire. Des photos de famille des années vingt ou le rappel de la pratique du sacrifice du cochon, des noces organisées dans les villages du Banat ajoutent ainsi à la transmission des recettes de cuisine un halo affectif qui stimule la mémoire de la lectrice, en lui suggérant que préparer et goûter des plats c'est dans une certaine mesure une façon de retrouver tout un monde perdu, de récupérer par un effet métonymique toutes ses saveurs. Donner de la consistance à ce monde, c'est sortir des limites d'un livre de cuisine, qui transmet d'habitude les recettes dans un registre impersonnel, neutre, strictement normatif<sup>12</sup>, ignorant les contextes et les situations.

### **1.3. Les Banatais chez eux**

Enfin une troisième catégorie de sources est constituée par des discussions et des entretiens avec des femmes du Banat, en général âgées (nées entre 1920 – 1935), disposant d'une longue expérience dans l'art culinaire, au point d'en avoir fait un vrai (ou second) métier ou une passion, ainsi qu'avec des femmes qui occupent dans les communautés en question des positions ou des rôles spécialisés (préparation des plats pour des noces, cérémonies des morts, etc.) ou qui s'assignent elles-mêmes occasionnellement un tel rôle. Il s'agit surtout de femmes, car pendant longtemps, dans le Banat, nourrir la famille a été une tâche exclusivement féminine. Les livres de cuisine des années 20 ou 30 du XX<sup>e</sup> siècle, que j'ai consultés chez une de mes interlocutrices<sup>13</sup> contiennent des préfaces ou de petites introductions qui propagent ces idées. Un des livres de cuisine les plus prisés a été écrit par Ecaterina dr. S. Comşa, qui a fréquenté une école de ménage à Vienne (*Damenstift*). Elle commence la préface de la troisième édition du livre en affirmant qu'être « une bonne ménagère est une des conditions essentielles pour assurer le bien-être et le bonheur de la famille ». C'est d'elle, femme, épouse et mère que dépend la bonne

administration de la maison et des biens que l'homme doit procurer par son travail à l'extérieur. « Comme une abeille zélée, la femme met de côté, façonne et partage les choses qu'elle a ramassées, selon les besoins. Le premier devoir d'une bonne maîtresse de maison est de posséder le savoir et l'habileté nécessaires pour préparer la nourriture indispensable, soit en sachant la préparer toute seule, soit en étant capable de diriger du personnel et d'exercer un contrôle sérieux sur lui ». Elle est responsable de la santé de toute sa famille et surtout de celle de ses enfants, car une alimentation correcte et une bonne éducation physique, « se trouvent aux fondements de l'éducation morale et intellectuelle ». Comme le livre a été publié en 1922 à Bucarest, donc à un moment proche de l'intégration du Banat à la Grande Roumanie (1919), l'auteur ne manque pas de s'adresser dans le préambule aux Femmes Roumaines, « ces femmes qui sont le berceau de l'existence d'une nation ». Assurer la santé de la famille revient donc, à l'époque, à assurer la santé de la nation, même si E. Comşa, ayant été formée à Vienne, recommande une cuisine plutôt cosmopolite avec beaucoup de plats autrichiens ou allemands, qu'on retrouve dans la cuisine banataise. Une étude consacrée spécialement aux livres de cuisine pourrait étudier leur fonction de transmission des pratiques culinaires au-delà des frontières ethniques ou nationales. Ces livres ont eu un rôle d'homogénéisation des différences, y compris au niveau des noms donnés aux plats, noms qui perdent leur saveur locale et font passer dans l'ombre les spécificités régionales.

Un autre fait qu'il faut mentionner est que la cuisine est assimilée par E. Comşa (et c'était une conception plus répandue) à un art, un art qu'il faut apprendre et qu'il faut cultiver. C'est dans les écoles de ménage que les jeunes filles du Banat – y compris celles des paysans riches (ceux qu'on appelait les *paori*, un nom dérivé de l'allemand *Bauern*) – pouvaient acquérir cet art. Ces écoles fonctionnaient comme des écoles d'art et métier, destinées aux filles. Passer par une telle école était un des meilleurs moyens pour parvenir au statut recommandé de femme mariée, dont une des obligations les plus importantes était, comme nous avons pu le constater, de bien cuisiner. Ces écoles développaient non seulement des compétences au niveau des pratiques culinaires, mais aussi au niveau des pratiques sociales liées à la cuisine<sup>14</sup>, car la maîtresse de la maison devait savoir recevoir chez elle. La dimension conviviale du manger, son rôle socialisant est sans doute très important dans le Banat, et ceci à tous les niveaux sociaux. Une femme de St. Hélène, village tchèque (habité par

des *Pemi* ou *Boemi*, colons venus de Bohême et s'étant installés au sud du Banat), m'a raconté qu'avant de se marier, les jeunes filles de *Pemi* allaient travailler comme femmes de service pour un an ou deux dans les maisons des Allemands (d'origine autrichienne) ou des Roumains des petites villes (qui furent à l'origine des villes minières) du sud du Banat, simplement pour acquérir un savoir faire culinaire, mais aussi social (les villages de *pemi* sont des villages de montagne ou colline assez isolés). Cette tradition était utile pour faire un bon mariage, mais elle permettait aussi la circulation des savoirs entre les ethnies et même entre les classes sociales. Une des fonctions de la cuisine semble bien être non seulement de conserver les spécificités, mais aussi d'assurer la communication et de construire une forme d'interculturalité.

Pendant la période dont nous parlons, c'est à dire entre les deux guerres, des filles de toutes les ethnies et issues de catégories sociales diverses (y compris les Roumaines de Paori ou les Juives provenant des familles cosmopolites néologues, par exemple) fréquentaient des écoles de type Notre Dame<sup>15</sup> ou *Kloster*, des écoles privées confessionnelles de niveau gymnasial et de langue allemande. En dehors de l'éducation religieuse, de l'apprentissage d'une langue et d'un instrument musical, elles s'initiaient à la cuisine et à un autre métier (couturière, par exemple). Mais, même dans les lycées roumains de filles, comme le lycée Carmen Sylva de Timișoara ou d'autres villes du Banat, les cours de cuisine étaient courants et ont été maintenus dans les *curricula* scolaires jusque dans les années 50-70, donc jusqu'à l'époque communiste (j'en ai profité moi même).

## 2. Le Banat culinaire

Dès mes premières recherches de terrain au Banat, j'ai pu constater l'importance sociale et culturelle que le fait de « bien manger » a pour les gens de la région. Un proverbe, souvent cité, exprime cela d'une manière ramassée : « Bănățeanu-i om și la masă-i domn » (« Le Banatais est homme, à table il est seigneur »). L'idéal de beauté féminine des Banatais a été pour longtemps associé à la corpulence et donc à une nourriture qui donne de l'énergie. « Albă, grasă și frumoasă » / « Blanche, grasse et belle » est une triade aujourd'hui bien périmée, mais le fait qu'elle a constitué, au moins pendant la première moitié du XX<sup>e</sup> siècle, le critère de choix d'une épouse s'explique si on se rappelle que les voyageurs du XIX<sup>e</sup> siècle ont noté la pauvreté de la région, du moins celle des milieux paysans.

L'idée que les Banatais se font de leur identité régionale passe indubitablement par la cuisine et par les valeurs qui lui sont associées : l'hospitalité, l'affection, le prestige social, le partage de certaines valeurs et d'un type d'état d'esprit, des souvenirs communs. Dans les récits de vie que j'ai recueillis, le thème de l'enfance et de l'ambiance familiale sont fortement mis en relief : ce qu'on mangeait chez soi devenait donc un vecteur important des reconstructions mémorielles associées à cette période de la vie. Tout un univers se reconstruit autour des goûts et des saveurs de la nourriture du chez-soi ou du lieu d'origine, une sorte de matrice dont surgissent des nostalgies qui chargent l'aliment de valeurs affectives et identitaires.

Le texte de Radu Ciobanu<sup>16</sup>, écrivain originaire de Timișoara, (né en 1935) à qui j'ai demandé de noter pour moi les traits qu'il associe à une cuisine typiquement banataise, illustre ceci. Comme on peut le constater dans son texte et dans les textes d'autres écrivains qui ont fait du Banat culinaire un *topos* (Livius Ciocârlie<sup>17</sup>, Sorin Titel, Daniel Vighi, Viorel Marineasa etc.), les simples noms de plats créent déjà une couleur locale qui rend exotique, d'une certaine manière, l'univers tellement familier pour ceux qui l'évoquent.

La région historique du Banat semble être un terrain idéal pour aborder le rôle de la cuisine dans la reconstruction des identités<sup>18</sup>. Cette région se singularise en effet par l'entrecroisement d'un modèle culturel de type central-européen (de source allemande, autrichienne et hongroise) avec un modèle balkanique (de source serbe, bulgare et turque), et par l'existence de tendances cosmopolites, se manifestant surtout dans les milieux urbains et ressenties par diverses catégories sociales comme un facteur de promotion sociale. La concurrence entre les différentes traditions ethniques spécifiques à la région passe souvent par des compétitions au niveau symbolique. Celles-ci ont favorisé l'ouverture vers les traditions gastronomiques françaises ou italiennes, mais ont aussi induit une attention spéciale accordée aux traditions directement avoisinantes.

D'après mon expérience de terrain, dans la mémoire des gens plus âgés, quand il est question de cuisine ce sont surtout la tradition et la dimension identitaire centrale-européenne qui s'actualisent. Le point de vue exprimé ci-dessous est courant :

« Je pense à cette grande influence qu'a eue l'Autriche-Hongrie. Côté culture, j'entends, et côté financier. Cette région a subi une grande

influence, il y avait beaucoup-beaucoup d'Allemands, et pour sûr c'est pourquoi les Banatais ont été en tête, parce qu'ils ont copié ce qui était beau, ce qui était bien, et voilà pourquoi ils ont prospéré. Ils se sont développés comme personnes et c'est pourquoi le Banat est en tête. Car l'Allemand, il savait faire, courageux au travail qu'il était et nos femmes ont appris des Allemands comment faire la cuisine et ainsi de suite » ( S.G., liste des interviews)

## **2.1. Nommer, classer, instituer**

La langue de la cuisine est dans une large mesure normative et prescriptive. Elle fonctionne sur le principe du langage juridique, au sens où elle institue un monde.

La nomenclature culinaire, souvent dialectale et donc locale ou régionale, pose des problèmes d'équivalence (en roumain littéraire) ou de traduction. On perd non seulement l'expressivité des dénominations (au niveau des significations que nos interlocuteurs leur donnent dans des contextes précis), mais aussi ce qui fait la différence, par exemple entre un *papricaș* (prononcé *paprikasch* de *paprika*, en langue littéraire *boia*), un *goulasch* (hongrois) et une *tocană* ou *tocăniță* (diminutif de *tocană*), qui est le terme utilisé dans la langue littéraire roumaine. Ce plat qui en Transylvanie se prépare par exemple avec de la crème fraîche, constitue l'équivalent de ce que les paysans de la Munténie nomment, avec un mot turc, donc d'origine balkanique, *ciulama*, un plat dans lequel le *paprika* – ingrédient qu'on utilise souvent dans les sauces de la cuisine banataise ou transylvane – est omis. Le français « ragoût », qui exprime d'une façon approximative ce que veulent dire *papricaș* et *tocană* ou *tocăniță* et l'*angemacht*<sup>19</sup> – terme utilisé tel quel par mes interlocutrices d'origine allemande du Banat roumain, et qu'on trouve dans les livres de cuisine allemands, mais aussi roumains (en roumain on prononce *angemah*)<sup>20</sup> – ne sont pas tout à fait la même chose. Souvent l'énoncé de la recette est la seule définition opératoire et nos interlocutrices ont recours à cette solution à chaque fois que cela s'avère nécessaire pour que la transmission et le partage des informations se déroule dans les meilleures conditions. Évidemment, chaque plat connaît des variations locales ou familiales : le mot recouvre donc souvent des réalités légèrement différentes. Le *schmarn*, *șmar* (allemand) ou *șmoară* (dans la prononciation roumaine) – un plat sucré à base d'un type de pâte semblable à celle des crêpes, mais qui, une fois cuite, s'émiette avec la fourchette et auquel on ajoute du sucre, de la



compote ou des fruits – se prépare avec semoule (selon Jeannine B. de La Roque ou Maria R. et Eva C. du Banat roumain) ou sans semoule (selon Margareta D.). Il s'agit d'un dessert ou un deuxième plat typiquement allemand du Banat, mais suite aux mariages mixtes et aux voisinages, les Roumains ou d'autres ethnies le consomment aussi. Ce sont les livres de cuisine qui introduisent davantage d'ordre dans ces variations : le livre de Comşa E. nous décrit (sous les numéros 750 à 754<sup>21</sup>), tout de suite après le chapitre portant sur les crêpes, les recettes du *šmarrn impérial, roya*<sup>22</sup>, du *šmarrn de petits pains*, du *šmarrn aux griottes* et à la semoule. Ce dernier peut se manger avec des confitures, des marmelades ou même avec une crème à la vanille (ce qui transforme ce plat très répandu dans le milieu rural en un dessert déjà plus prétentieux et raffiné).

De son côté, Rolla, L. évoque les « crêpes françaises » cuites sur une seule face et dont la pâte, comme celle du *Schmarrn* comporte plus d'œufs que les crêpes ordinaires. Elle se souvient de leur nom hongrois *csusztatot palacsinta* (qui veut dire « clătita alunecoasă » / « crêpe coulante »), qu'on retrouve sous le nom des *Palatschinken* dans les livres de cuisine allemands ou roumains.

Le fait de dénommer un plat d'une façon ou d'une autre, indique souvent son origine ou au moins la chaîne par laquelle il s'est transmis (cf. le texte de Rolla L. en annexe, par exemple). Dans son livre de cuisine banataise (qui circule parmi les Banatais du Vaucluse), Olga Farca qui, dans son village natal, cuisinait pour les repas de noces, mentionne certains plats qui portent des noms roumains comme *Vinetesalat* (elle donna aussi la traduction allemande *Auberginensalat*), c'est à dire le caviar d'aubergine. Elle utilise le terme de *vinete* qui est le nom roumain du légume (connu assez tard dans le Banat), pour un plat que les Roumains considèrent comme typique (même si son origine balkanique est indubitable), de même qu'elle utilise le terme de *langos* – qu'elle orthographie *langosch* – pour un type de beignet salé fait à base de pâte de pain et dont le nom, utilisé par tous, indique clairement ses origines hongroises.

Tout ce qui précède constitue un argument parlant en faveur de la désignation des aliments ou des plats dans la langue et la forme utilisées par celui qui les présente ou les recommande. Les termes natifs ont en effet souvent valeur d'indice identitaire. Je vais procéder de la même manière avec mes propres souvenirs culinaires, en indiquant les autres variantes en circulation.

## **2.2. Une société de femmes ?**

Le partage des compétences et des pratiques culinaires entre amies, voisines, collègues ou entre générations construit la cuisine en un espace consacré, celui d'une société de femmes qui en détiennent les secrets et donc le pouvoir. Mais il s'agit d'un espace perméable, ouvert, dans la mesure où la consommation de la nourriture en commun, selon un horaire autrefois fixe et suivant des règles bien précises (par exemple, toute la famille devait manger ensemble à une heure convenue d'avance, sinon aux trois repas journaliers, du moins au repas journalier principal et le dimanche)<sup>23</sup>, la transforme en objet de partage avec les autres. Dans une telle circonstance, qui fut longtemps spécifique pour la région que j'étudie (elle commence seulement à changer aujourd'hui, pour ma génération et celle de mes enfants), le mari et les enfants sont des « êtres à nourrir ». Toute une mythologie de la Grande Mère nourrissante est réactivée ici, mythologie qui a influencé de manière décisive les rapports entre les différents rôles familiaux. Maria R. (née en 1925) mentionne comme des faits plutôt exceptionnels les cas d'implication des hommes de son entourage et de sa génération dans le travail cuisinier et, surtout, dans la préparation de la nourriture. Elle juge qu'une de ses belles-filles, originaire d'une autre région de la Roumanie, a commencé assez tard (au moment de la retraite) à s'occuper à « bien nourrir son époux », c'est à dire le fils de Maria R., qui a autour de 60 ans. Je dois mentionner aussi que préparer à manger pour les autres est une des formes les plus courantes de manifester et de communiquer son affection (selon un proverbe « l'amour passe par l'estomac ») : Jeannine B. de La Roque dit qu'elle fait beaucoup de gâteaux à Noël, des petits gâteaux banatais-allemands, « car les enfants adorent ça ». Lorsque leurs fils/filles parti(e)s ailleurs leur rendent visite, beaucoup de mères et de grand-mères leur préparent leurs plats préférés, d'habitude « les plats de chez soi » qui évoquent un plaisir perdu, mais qui peut être retrouvé, comme la madeleine proustienne. Je pourrais évoquer bien d'autres situations de ce type qui montrent une culture familiale traditionnelle et une répartition plutôt rigide des rôles selon les sexes, au moins jusqu'à la fin de la Seconde Guerre Mondiale.

Il est vrai qu'autrefois la femme travaillait moins en dehors de la maison. Lorsque c'était le cas, une autre femme de la famille (plus âgée) ou une femme engagée pour l'aider dans la cuisine, la remplaçait. L'unité familiale de la maisonnée fonctionnait sur des principes de coopération et de répartition des rôles selon le sexe et l'âge.

Je me suis maintes fois demandé pourquoi je continue à me conformer, plus ou moins, à ce modèle, malgré une vie professionnelle active qui rend ce type d'obligations assez difficile. Les réponses que je pourrais donner, en adoptant une vision distancée, illustrent bien toute une palette mentale qui est encore agissante dans ma génération (je suis née en 1950) et dans mon entourage, même si elle connaît certaines variations et modifications : je le fais pour imiter ma grande mère banataise (maîtresse de maison et cuisinière redoutable) que j'adorais et qui était capable d'aller dans la cuisine pour préparer à manger pour un membre de la famille ou un hôte arrivé par hasard à n'importe quelle heure du jour ou du soir ; je le fais pour concurrencer (inconsciemment ?) ma mère (professeur) grande spécialiste de *torte* – des gâteaux à la crème et au chocolat ; je le fais pourrait-on dire par conformisme ou pour maintenir une tradition (je continue par exemple à préparer des confitures, des gâteaux et des boissons de fruits à la maison) ; je le fais pour le plaisir des autres (membres de la famille ou amis/amies) ; je le fais parce que « j'aime bien manger » ou parce que je suis gourmande, pour utiliser les termes de ma mère qui apprécie mes talents de cuisinière et me compare à ma grande mère maternelle ; je le fais parce que j'y trouve du plaisir et que cela me détend. Je pourrais évidemment prolonger la liste. Par ce témoignage subjectif, je voulais simplement mettre le doigt sur le fait que dans la mise en commun des mémoires que je me propose d'entreprendre ici, ma propre expérience et mon observation participative ont joué certainement un rôle important.

### **3. Regarder dans l'assiette de l'autre**

Je vais reprendre mon analyse en détaillant et en systématisant (dans la mesure du possible) ce que les trois catégories de sources présentées ci-dessus nous donnent comme informations sur les choix alimentaires des Banatais, sur leurs pratiques culinaires, sur leur culture familiale et de groupe(s). Je vais procéder par une analyse qui met en évidence les différences sur le plan horizontal des voisinages et des transmissions dans l'espace, ainsi que sur le plan vertical des transmissions générationnelles ou entre les groupes sociaux et des transformations dans le temps.

En ce qui concerne le cas des Banatais déportés au Bărgan (1.1.1) entre 1951-1956, très peu de temps après les expropriations entreprises dans le cadre de la réforme agraire de 1945 et le début de la collectivisation des

terres (1949-1950), les différences culinaires soulignées par les déportés (un demi siècle plus tard) mettent en évidence la confrontation de deux modèles de maisonnée (*gospodărie*) et de culture familiale. Les paysans Banatais de condition moyenne ont été déportés avec l'ensemble des membres de la famille qui habitaient la même maison dans le village d'origine. Il s'agissait encore dans les années 50, de trois ou quatre générations qui vivaient ensemble : les tâches de chacune étaient bien établies, ainsi que les rapports entre générations et les règles de mariage. La famille fonctionnait comme une unité économique assez autarcique, elle produisait ce dont elle avait besoin, des vêtements jusqu'à la nourriture et les boissons, et elle assurait la transmission des biens et des pratiques entre les générations. Pour les Roumains, ainsi que pour d'autres ethnies, le modèle d'administration des biens et des stratégies sociales d'insertion était celui du Souabe ou de l'Allemand en général<sup>24</sup> (car sous cette identité ombrelle on trouvait réunis des Autrichiens, des *Pemi* (*Boemi*, Bohèmes) allemands, des Saxons – plus rares dans la région – et même des Luxembourgeois, des Lorrains de langue française et des Italiens qui ont été germanisés tout le long du XIX<sup>e</sup> siècle.

Dans le Bărăgan (la Munténie, partie de l'Ancien Royaume de la Roumanie depuis 1859), les déportés rencontrent un autre modèle de famille paysanne. Une grande partie des paysans avaient travaillé la terre très fertile de la grande Plaine Roumaine pour les grands propriétaires (expropriés en 1945) en système salarial. C'était un travail saisonnier et les familles se déplaçaient au début de chaque semaine du village d'origine pour travailler dans les fermes. Elles étaient nourries par le propriétaire. La maison avec tout ce qu'elle impliquait comme culture familiale était beaucoup moins importante comme centre économique et symbolique. Mais il existait aussi d'autres différences au niveau des traditions et des pratiques, liées au milieu naturel (par exemple, la proximité du Danube faisait d'eux de plus grands consommateurs de poissons).

En suivant les témoignages des déportés concernant ces aspects précis (voir l'annexe), nous pouvons remarquer que les axes de différenciation se construisent autour de quelques aspects culinaires qui transforment les choix alimentaires en véritables « situations » signifiantes sous l'aspect identitaire :

- la soupe (*supă* ou *zupă* pour les Banatais) ou la *ciorba* (des paysans de Bărăgan)
- la pratique du sacrifice du cochon et la conservation de la viande

- la préparation des gâteaux et du pain (avec ou sans levure)
- la culture des légumes

### 3.1. *La soupe ou la ciorba ? Le pain ou la mămăliga ?*

*La soupe* est opposée à la *tchiorba* (*bortch*) comme le doux s’oppose à l’aigre. Ce sont les ingrédients qu’on ajoute dans cette dernière pour lui donner un goût un peu acidulé (par exemple en Munténie, du vinaigre de mirabelles ou de prunes) qui font la différence, qu’il s’agisse d’un potage (ou *bortch*) aux prunes, aux légumes ou préparé à partir de viande de poule. La *ciorba* / *tschorba* des gens du Bărăgan manque de consistance<sup>25</sup> : c’est un plat « maigre » comme disent les Banatais, pensant qu’elle ne donne pas assez d’énergie pour le travail. Elle est aussi « vite faite » ce que n’apprécie pas, par exemple, Eva S. B. (née en 1910), qui, en tant que banataise, pense que la cuisine est plus prestigieuse si elle est plus élaborée.

La soupe banataise est claire elle-aussi quand on la fait – comme c’est le cas le plus souvent – sous la forme d’un bouillon de poule (la viande qui a bouilli avec des légumes dans la soupe est servie comme deuxième plat, avec de la sauce tomate ou du raifort) mais on lui ajoute des nouilles – des vermicelles très fines préparées dans la maison<sup>26</sup> – ou des boulettes de semoule (*găluște de gris*). Jeannine B. de la Roque continue à préparer les *Grissknödel* (elle prononce *Grissgnädel*) et les *feine Nudeln* pour la soupe, tout comme Margareta B. de Pernes, qui se souvient avoir souvent mangé chez elle, en Roumanie, à Becicherecul Mic, ce qu’elle nomme *le bouillon de pot-au-feu* avec des pâtes fines dedans (il semble que malgré le sens du français *pot-au-feu*, elle le prépare à partir de viande de poule). Un proverbe qui circule dans le Banat dit que « c’est la poule bien vieillie qui fait la bonne soupe », mais dans le Banat de montagne surtout, on utilisait aussi de la viande de veau ou de mouton (Lucia B. née en 1925).

Cette soupe, on continue de la préparer aujourd’hui dans le Banat et la Transylvanie, elle est surtout une soupe du dimanche<sup>27</sup> (dans la semaine on mangeait autrefois moins de viande à cause des périodes assez longues de jeûne) ou pour diverses occasions, comme les fêtes patronales<sup>28</sup>. Il est assez surprenant de constater que le menu dans lequel elle était intégrée – et qui se composait obligatoirement d’un premier plat (la soupe), d’un deuxième plat (de la viande bouillie dans la soupe ou un rôti) et d’un dessert – est à peu près le même dans le souvenir de Margareta B. (qui a quitté la Roumanie en 1944) et dans celui de deux

voyageurs qui ont séjourné plusieurs fois et pour assez longtemps au Sud du Banat (Orawitza et Iam) au milieu de XIX<sup>e</sup> siècle. Il s'agit d'Arthur et d'Albert Schott qui ont recueilli et publié des *Contes valaques* en 1845 à Stuttgart et qui ont accompagné leur recueil d'une petite monographie des mœurs, y compris les habitudes culinaires, des Valaques du Banat (nom qu'ils utilisaient pour les Roumains)<sup>29</sup>. Un des deux frères affirme avoir apprécié « les aptitudes culinaires des femmes valaques » et il indique les menus des repas qu'il a pu goûter comme « hôte d'un juge local lors des mariages, de fêtes patronales et autres du même genre (...) » :

- bouillon de poule aux pâtes, un mets qu'on sert presque toujours en de telles occasions ;
- veau avec du raifort râpé au vinaigre et des cornichons en salaison ;
- jeunes poulets en fricassée à la sauce aigre-douce ; une pâtisserie remplaçant souvent la pâte feuilletée ;
- choucroute accompagnée de porc bouilli et rôti ; deux sortes de viande rôtie avec de la salade, habituellement du céleri<sup>30</sup> ; comme dessert, quelque pâtisserie, des gâteaux et choses semblables<sup>31</sup> ».

C'est un repas maximal et il s'agit d'une famille appartenant à l'élite locale qui se formait au contact des fonctionnaires autrichiens des mines de la région et en concurrence avec eux. A. Schott n'oublie pas de souligner que la nourriture des paysans roumains était beaucoup « plus sobre » (si les rôtis abondent pendant les fêtes, ils sont absents pendant la semaine, au moins le mercredi et le vendredi, jours de jeûne), et que leur vie était « simple pour l'ordinaire<sup>32</sup> ». Il décrit la façon dont se nourrissaient les paysans valaques pendant leur travail dans les champs : ils mangeaient du *mălai* (du pain de maïs) avec de l'ail vert ou quelquefois avec du saucisson et de la *mămăliga*, que Schott décrit comme « une pâte (*sterz*) de fine farine de maïs, qui rappelle la *polenta* italienne ». Leur nourriture était donc bien simple par rapport aux exigences de Mircea P.<sup>33</sup>, travaillant les terres de Bărağan en tant que déporté un siècle plus tard (il était d'Iam, le même village où avait séjourné entre 1840 et 1850 un des frères Schott, en tant que topographe chez le comte Von Bissingen). Manger du *mălai* et de la *mămăliga* devient peu à peu moins fréquent (cf. Ana B. née en 1921, originaire elle aussi de Ciclova-la-roumaine, située dans le sud du Banat qu'on appelle aussi Banat de montagne / *Bergland*), même si ceux qui quittent le village en ont la nostalgie (Maria R.)<sup>34</sup>.

Les Banatais déportés sont très fiers de leur pain de farine blanche, « grand, rond et gros », qu'ils préparent dans le *țăst* ou le four (Margareta B,

Ana B., Minodora U.) au moins une fois par semaine (de deux à six pains en fonction des nécessités). Le pain des paysans de Bărgan est fait sans levure, il est donc plus mince et plat, comme une sorte de *lipie* (fouasse) mais pendant les années 50 du XX<sup>e</sup> siècle, ils mangent beaucoup plus de *mămăliga* (surtout avec de la *ciorba*) que les Banatais.

Manger du pain ou de la polenta semble donc tracer une frontière entre les riches et les pauvres, comme la soupe aux vermicelles en trace une entre l'ordinaire et le festif et entre un chez-soi banatais et l'Autre, celui qui vient d'une autre région de la Roumanie. La distinction entre soupe (banataise) et *ciorba* (roumaine) tend à devenir peu à peu une distinction identitaire : il est significatif que dans son livre de cuisine banataise publiée en Allemagne, Olga Farca introduit une *Fleischklößchentschorba* en indiquant en sous-titre : « Rumänische saure Suppe »<sup>35</sup>.

Margareta D. de Pesac (Banat de nord-ouest, dans la plaine), déclare n'avoir mangé de la *ciorba* qu'après le mariage de son fils avec une femme venant de Moldavie, qui a introduit ce type de plat dans la famille. Ana B. dit que c'est une Bessarabienne réfugiée, entrée dans la maison pour aider dans la cuisine, qui leur a appris à préparer des *ciorba* aigries à l'essence de vinaigre. Maria R. (née en 1925) de son côté déclare avoir commencé à préparer des *ciorba* seulement quand son mari (Banatais de souche !) est rentré de Bucarest où il a fait ses études supérieures et où il s'est habitué à ce type de plat. Mais il appréciait aussi les soupes aux légumes qui, pendant la semaine et surtout pendant le période de jeûne, remplacent la soupe à la viande : soupe d'haricots verts ou blancs, soupe de pommes de terres (*zamă de crumpi*<sup>36</sup>) ou soupe de tomates – soupe (*zupă* ou *zamă*) de *paradaise* disent les Banatais, qui lui ajoutent un peu de sucre pour en atténuer l'acidité<sup>37</sup>-. D'ailleurs l'aigre-doux est une des caractéristiques de leur cuisine traditionnelle : ils ajoutent un peu de sucre dans la vinaigrette des salades et les Allemands et les *Pemi* utilisent les compotes pour accompagner le rôti et les pommes de terres, à la place des *murături* (légumes saumurés) plus aigres des Roumains. On ajoute du sucre dans d'autres sauces comme la sauce de griottes ou de coings.

Une autre différence régionale qui aligne le Banat sur la Transylvanie est représentée par le *rântaş* (roux) qui donne de la consistance aux plats, et même aux soupes aux légumes : c'est de la farine cuite dans de la graisse, autrefois du saindoux (*untura*) de porc, aujourd'hui de l'huile de tournesol. Selon les témoignages, l'huile de courge était elle-aussi appréciée (Ana B.). À partir de la farine de courge, on préparait aussi un plat spécifique,

*laçse*, dont m'a parlé Minodora U. (née en 1928, originaire de Ciuta, près de Caransebeș) et que j'ai retrouvé dans une récente publication du Centre de culture et d'art du Banat<sup>38</sup> visant à promouvoir les plats traditionnels de la région.

Mais le *râtaș* constitue aussi la base des sauces, qui, selon un livre de cuisine de la période d'entre les deux guerres sont « ce qui distingue une cuisine primitive d'une plus raffinée, un cuisinier artiste de la femme simple qui prépare à manger pour sa famille », malgré l'opinion des médecins qui estiment qu'elles ne font que « ruiner la santé »<sup>39</sup>. Les sauces – aujourd'hui sorties de mode pour des raisons diététiques, comme le roux aussi – accompagnent la viande du pot au feu et les légumes servis comme deuxième plat. Dans le Banat elles sont faites de tomates, de raifort, d'aneth, mais aussi de fruits comme les griottes, les pommes, les coings. Dans les milieux plus élevés et dans une cuisine plus élaborée, on utilise les sauces béchamel (à la crème fraîche) et à la mayonnaise.

### **3.2. *La cuisine comme ressource de prestige social et d'ouverture vers la différence***

Sur un plan général, on assiste à une différenciation progressive entre une cuisine plus élaborée, appréciée comme plus prestigieuse, de souche allemande – autrichienne, et une cuisine plus simple et plus naturelle, assimilée à une cuisine « plus paysanne » (quelquefois à « plus roumaine » ou « plus serbe »), ce qui donne naissance à une distinction d'ordre social. Ce sont les jeunes filles passées par les écoles de ménage qui sont le moteur de la première tendance, mais aussi les professeurs de ménage payées parfois en nature par les femmes paysannes pour instruire leurs filles (surtout pour leur apprendre à préparer de petits gâteaux) ou les livres de cuisine qui, après 1919, commencent à circuler même dans le milieu rural.

Dans ce contexte, on assiste à l'émergence d'une cuisine petite-bourgeoise, pratiquée dans les milieux urbains (par les filles de paysans mariées dans les villes et qui deviennent de vraies « femmes au foyer »), mais aussi dans les milieux de paysans riches ou de condition moyenne. Tout le texte d'Ana B. qui, suite à son mariage en 1943 avec un notaire, fils de paysan, a déménagé de Ciclova-la-roumaine à Iam, est construit sur les différences entre ce qu'elle mangeait chez elle et ce qu'elle mangeait dans son nouveau lieu de résidence. Les deux villages du sud du



Banat ne sont pas situés loin l'un de l'autre et elle provenait d'une famille aisée<sup>40</sup>, dont elle avait reçu en héritage des terres, mais aussi des meubles, du linge de lit etc. tout ce qui faisait à l'époque le trousseau (roum. *trusou*) d'une fille<sup>41</sup>. Elle a appris à cuisiner de sa mère, mais aussi de sa tante paternelle qui avait été instruite au *Kloster* d'Oravitza. Elle se souvient avoir aussi appris à l'école d'Oravitza à préparer des crêpes et des *cartofi franțuzești* (sorte de gratin de pommes de terre). Pourtant, elle trouve que la cuisine qui se pratiquait dans la maison de son beau père – resté veuf d'une première épouse et avec un enfant à élever – était plus « *hoch* », car lui et les femmes de ménage qu'il avait fait venir dans la maison pour cuisiner (dont une femme de Steierdorf, village de *Pemi*, et une femme hongroise du village) s'inspiraient des livres de Comșa, commandés à Bucarest. De plus, lors d'un second mariage, son beau-père épouse la sœur de la directrice du lycée d'Oravitza, grande spécialiste de cuisine. Dans la maison de ses beaux-parents, Ana B. apprend à préparer des *paștete de foie*, toutes sortes de viandes hachées et enveloppées dans des pâtes, une grande variété de nouilles et des fritures de porc (« on enlevait quatre - cinq porcs par an, car on avait plus de 20 ouvriers journaliers engagés pour travailler la terre »). On ajoutait beaucoup de crème fraîche dans les plats, « car on en avait à foison » et on utilisait beaucoup le jambon fumé, la couenne frite, les saucisses fumées et conservés dans du saindoux. Et bien sûr, on préparait beaucoup de gâteaux, des plus simples aux plus sophistiqués.

### 3.2.1. « *La meilleure des volailles est le porc* »

C'est autour du choix et de la préparation des viandes<sup>42</sup> que se dessinent d'autres champs de différenciation. Le proverbe cité plus haut exprime une réalité chère aux Banatais de souche. Pratiqué encore aujourd'hui, dans les milieux paysans, mais pas seulement, le sacrifice du cochon est un moment important de réunion familiale, comme en témoignent les très nombreuses photos qui l'immortalisent (chez les Roumains, les Allemands, les Bulgares catholiques, les Serbes). Le sacrifice du cochon implique la participation des voisins et d'hommes spécialisés dans la découpe de l'animal et dans la préparation de la charcuterie : saucissons, boudin, andouillettes, fromage de tête, jambon, rillons, lard – appelé *clisă* par les Banatais, qui le préfèrent avec un peu de *pecină* (viande) – cf. Sosa P. Pour avoir de la viande de Noël à Pâques on la fume, de même que la charcuterie.

Ce sont ces pratiques de conservation, liées à un type d'économie fondée sur l'idée de provision pour les fêtes et les temps difficiles que les Banatais ont transmises aux autochtones du Bărăgan et qui font la fierté des déportés. Le texte d'Aurel M. (voir l'annexe), est un des plus convaincants, mais il y en a beaucoup d'autres qui peuvent en témoigner. Comme nous l'avons vu plus haut, la viande, les saucisses, le jambon sont réputés pour donner de l'énergie aux travailleurs dans les champs (*cf.* l'annexe, Mircea P.). À Pernes, Margareta B. nous dit : « En Roumanie, oh, mon Dieu, si vous aviez des travailleurs et l'assiette n'était pas pleine de saucisses, ... c'était grave ! ». Elle se souvient que sa belle-mère, qui ne les a rejoint qu'en 1960, a été surprise de constater, lors de son arrivée à Pernes, que les écoliers n'avaient pas les mêmes habitudes que les enfants du village banatais (mixte, roumain, serbe et allemand) qu'elle venait de quitter. Là-bas, les petits étaient contents de manger une saucisse fumée avec du pain et éventuellement avec des cornichons (*Gurken en vinaigre* – dit Margareta B.) le matin, avant de partir à l'école. Les Banatais ont continué à sacrifier le cochon dans le Midi de la France (Jeannine B.), mais seulement durant une courte période après leur installation dans cette région où le climat était beaucoup plus doux et dont les traditions n'encourageaient pas ce type de pratiques (Margareta B.).

Margareta B. et les autres Banataises du Midi de la France en revanche ont continué à préparer le *papricaș de pui* (une sorte de ragoût de poulet préparé au *paprika/boia*<sup>43</sup>, c'est-à-dire du piment rouge en poudre), tel qu'on le préparait dans le Banat roumain (surtout de plaine) où beaucoup de femmes interviewées le considèrent comme un plat spécifique. Plat d'origine hongroise, d'après son nom et selon les dires des historiens<sup>44</sup> (ce sont les Hongrois qui ont été les premiers à pimenter les plats des Allemands), on peut le faire aussi à partir d'autres viandes (porc, vache, agneau) ou même à partir de pommes de terre (pour le jeûne). Margareta B. le distingue du *goulasch* qu'elle a mangé pour la première fois pendant qu'elle était réfugiée en Autriche : « *ils* mettaient de la farine dans le goulasch, nous non, dit-elle, la couleur était par conséquent différente, notre *paprikaș* était plus rouge ». Les ingrédients eux aussi étaient différents : le *kummel* (*chimmel*, adica *chimion*) en Autriche, les feuilles de laurier à la maison ; et surtout, dans le *paprikaș* on met de l'eau dès le début et on n'en ajoute pas tant que les morceaux de viande (on les fait revenir au début dans la graisse de porc avec de l'oignon) ne sont pas bien bouillis. Une demi-heure avant que le plat ne soit prêt, dit Margareta

B., « les enfants avaient le droit de tremper du pain dedans », petit geste familial qui évoque les temps de l'enfance et la nostalgie de la *Heimat* qui, bien évidemment, se compose aussi des couleurs et des saveurs des plats, des rituels, qui les accompagnent. En France, elle a néanmoins adopté des plats comme la bouillabaisse ou le couscous, les aubergines (qu'on n'utilisait pas encore chez elle avant son départ), farcies avec de la viande, la paëlla espagnole et les lasagnes italiennes. C'est la daube, que sa belle-fille de Pernes préférait, qui remplaça peu à peu le *paprikaş*, surtout après la mort en 2006 de son mari, d'origine souabe banataise comme elle, et qui appréciait beaucoup ce plat. Par ses principes elle reste néanmoins attachée à sa propre culture familiale : « toujours manger comme il faut », « présenter les plats de manière à ce qu'ils stimulent l'appétit », s'ouvrir à la cuisine de l'autre. Dans son carnet de recettes il y en a de toutes origines : de ses copines roumaines et serbes de son village de Roumanie, de sa cousine d'Alsace, d'Autriche, d'Allemagne.

Quant aux Banataises de La Roque qui se sont réfugiées du Banat serbe (sud du Danube), comme Caroline P., elle préfèrent le *gyuwetsch*, un équivalent balkanique du *paprikasch*, mieux adapté à la cuisine méridionale d'ailleurs. La fille de Carolina, née en France, dit que c'est le plat qu'elle a adopté de sa mère et qu'elle associe au Banat. On le préparait surtout dans le sud du Banat avec ou sans viande, les Juifs sépharades et les Roumains le consommant (cf. annexe Rolla L.) en concurrence avec le *paprikasch*, davantage central-européen. Il est significatif que dans le livre de cuisine publié en France, en 1952, par Magda Waigand – née Hammang (nom d'ailleurs d'origine française, puisqu'il est dérivé d' « Amand »), originaire de Werschetz (Banat serbe) – sous le titre *Kochbuch des Donauschwaben*<sup>45</sup>, on trouve trois recettes de *gyuwetsch* (de poissons, bulgare, serbe) qui sont totalement absentes du livre d'Olga Farca, Souabe du Banat de la plaine roumaine (Timiș Torontal).

Nous pouvons voir ainsi qu'il existe tout un système d'équivalences possibles entre des plats dont la différence dépend de la graisse et des ingrédients utilisés, ainsi que d'une répartition dans l'espace qui dessine des appartenances et des frontières culturelles.

Il existe toute une gamme de plats à base de viande hachée qui est d'origine balkanique. Les reines en sont les *sarmale* (pl. de *sarma*), un type de choux farcis, faits d'une composition de viande de porc et de bœuf hachée, avec de l'oignon braisé et du riz, enveloppée dans une feuille de choux saumurée. Dans le Banat on ajoute du jambon fumé dans

l'eau où on les fait bouillir lentement. C'est un plat festif autour duquel se développe toute une mythologie<sup>46</sup> et dont la vocation de plat national « spécifique » est cultivée comme telle par les restaurants (où elles sont souvent servies avec de la *mamaliga*/polenta et de la crème fraîche) et par le tourisme rural, mais aussi dans les familles. Pendant les périodes de carême, encore respectées actuellement, on remplace de nos jours la viande par des champignons. Il s'agit d'un plat principalement d'hiver, et, dans une cuisine de type plus raffiné, elle-aussi d'origine balkanique, il est remplacé en été par des boulettes enroulées dans des feuilles de vigne, arrosées de yaourt.

Parmi les 42 types de *sarma* que Radu Anton Roman et Vintilă Mihăilescu<sup>47</sup> ont identifié sur le territoire de toute la Roumanie, celles du Banat sont de dimensions plus grandes, contiennent plus de viande que de riz, se voient ajouter du bouillon de tomates dans l'eau où on les prépare etc. Les différences locales sont nombreuses, une caractéristique qu'on retrouve souvent quand un plat a un rôle important dans une cuisine. Les *sarmale* sont suivies de près par les *gefüllte paprika* (poivrons farcis), pour reprendre les termes de Margareta B. (Pernes) et Jeannine B., tout comme ceux de Carolina P. (La Roque), qui les préparent encore comme un plat ordinaire, même si dans le Banat où ils sont toujours très populaires, ils peuvent être aussi un plat pour des occasions spéciales. De nature davantage centrale-européenne (cf. Rolla, L.) sont le *faschiert* (un plat juif-hongrois) et les petites boulettes de viande qu'on met dans la *ciorba* (roumaine) depuis que celle-ci a été adoptée par les Banatais.

Dans une cuisine socialement plus élevée (ce qui dans notre contexte signifie une cuisine située à la frontière du rural et de l'urbain), on farcit les tomates, les courgettes et les aubergines (ces dernières adoptées tardivement par les Banatais, mais utilisées beaucoup dans la cuisine méridionale et balkanique (Rolla L.). De même rang sont le poulet farci (avec de la farce faite à partir de foie, d'oignon, de pain trempé dans du lait, de persil, de poivre etc.), l'oie farcie (Ana B. Rolla L.), le canard (Margareta B.) ou le dindon farcis. Rolla L. évoque le « gefilte fish » des Ashkénazes, plat traditionnel fait « sur un principe culinaire très ancien, la peau servant de récipient » comme nous informe A. Rowley<sup>48</sup>.

Un autre moyen pour « anoblir » les fritures de viandes (de porc, de poulet, d'oie, de dinde, de canard ou – dans le Banat de montagne – plutôt de veau ou de mouton), ce sont les garnitures.

« Les *tuspais*, qu'on appelle aujourd'hui *garnitures* – se souvient Radu Ciobanu – accompagnaient d'habitude les rôtis : le *spenot* (en allemand *Spinat*), qu'on n'appellera qu'assez tard 'épinards', et la courgette étaient les accompagnements préférés. Comme garniture, la courgette allait peut-être le mieux avec la *carmanadla*, la côtelette de porc. L'asperge, le *spargel* (qui vient évidemment de l'allemand *Spargel*), était une garniture plus noble. Elle n'était pas encore devenue une rareté comme aujourd'hui, car on pouvait la trouver n'importe quand, ensemble avec la rhubarbe pour la compote, chez les marchandes de légumes souabes de n'importe quel marché de Timișoara. »

Si, comme le remarque Maria R., même dans les milieux paysans aisés, tel celui de ses beaux-parents de Ciuchici, les viandes (en elles-mêmes signe de richesse) étaient exposées sur la table jusqu'à la fin du repas et on les mangeait avec du pain et de la choucroute ou des légumes saumurés, dans les milieux socialement plus élevés (elle est d'origine allemande et a fait des études avant de se marier) la garniture, le *zuspeis* (fait de courgettes, de carottes, d'épinards, d'haricots vert et d'autres légumes) était obligatoire. Les haricots blancs et le chou sont des légumes « traditionnels » pour les périodes de jeûne.

Mais le légume le plus utilisé pour accompagner la friture reste néanmoins la pomme de terre. Les pommes de terre (*crumpi*) sont préparées sous forme de soupe, de *paprikasch*, de frites, mais aussi au four, bouillies et en purée (en ajoutant du lait et du beurre). Selon Anthony Rowley<sup>49</sup>, la pomme de terre a été pendant longtemps un légume des pauvres (elle était l'unique légume cultivé chez les *Pemi* des montagnes) et moins bien accepté (comparé au maïs par exemple) dans l'Ancien Royaume de Roumanie auquel le Banat n'est attaché qu'en 1919 (cf. le témoignage de Maria H. de Tomnatic, déportée au Bărăgan dans l'annexe).

On l'utilise en revanche beaucoup dans le Banat, souvent avec la semoule, pour la préparation des boulettes de tout type, pour un plat comme le *grenadiermarsch* ou des *Knödel*, parmi lesquelles les boulettes aux prunes (*gomboți*, comme ma grand-mère les appelait en utilisant leur nom hongrois) sont des plus appréciées.

Contrairement à ce qu'on pourrait penser, la viande était consommée plutôt le dimanche et lors d'occasions festives, rôtie, grillée (selon une tradition turque, méridionale, notamment dans le Banat de montagne, où on élevait plus de vaches et de moutons) et panée (surtout le dimanche). Le *schnitzel* pané de veau, de blanc de poulet, de porc a été importé aussi

dans le Midi de la France par les Banatais émigrés. Cette préparation est par ailleurs, aujourd'hui encore, très appréciée en Roumanie surtout pour les repas de dimanche. En revanche, pour les jours de jeûne et pendant la semaine, comme le précise Maria R., une soupe et un deuxième plat composé de pâtes de toute sorte (des nouilles au pavot et aux noix, au fromage frais sucré, des *schmarrn*, des crêpes, des *palatschinken*, des *turte* faites de pâte de pain, des *langosch*) étaient beaucoup plus courantes.

Mais ces derniers exemples nous rapprochent du domaine des desserts, qui constituaient et constituent encore – pour autant qu'ils n'ont pas souffert des effets de la publicité négative faite à l'utilisation du sucre – le délice de toute la cuisine banataise. L'influence autrichienne est ici une des plus importantes, mais le mélange des cultures et la hiérarchie sociale y jouent aussi un grand rôle.

### **3.2.2. La pâtisserie, les gâteaux**

Du sucre, on en trouvait « à profusion », se rappelle Minodora U., qui évoque la vie de sa famille dans un village près de Caransebeș avant la guerre. C'est en comparant le prix d'un kilo de sucre aux revenus du ménage, que la banataise yougoslave, Carolina, P. aujourd'hui habitante de La Roque, mesurait la pénurie de l'époque de la guerre. Dans les recettes des livres de cuisine d'entre les deux guerres que j'ai cités (cf. par exemple Sanda Marin), les quantités de sucre sont énormes, ainsi que les quantités de beurre ou d'œufs, ce qui rendait inutilisables ces recettes dans les années 80, au moment de la pénurie alimentaire du régime de Ceaușescu. Les noix et le pavot (« tout le monde en cultivait dans son jardin », dit Ana B.), les marmelades sont beaucoup utilisées dans les pâtisseries de tous les jours, mais aussi lors des occasions rituelles.

Dans les carnets de recettes des Banataises – mes sources principales d'information – ce sont les gâteaux qui dominent. Mes interlocutrices m'ont précisé de qui elles ont appris à préparer ces gâteaux, qui portent souvent le nom des personnes qui ont transmis les recettes (Lucia- *Torte*, Stela- *Torte*, Nelly- *Torte* etc.). On peut se laisser fasciner par les noms exotiques de certaines d'entre elles (*Greta Garbo*, *Alcazar*, *Arlequins*, *Budapest*, *bombes au diable*), à l'exemple de Livius Ciocârlie dans le passage déjà cité de son roman. Mon intérêt, ici, est néanmoins un autre : il s'agit de mettre un peu d'ordre dans ce domaine, qui est la carte de visite la plus importante de toute femme du Banat et qui la « situe » du point

de vue social<sup>50</sup>. Il y a d'abord les pâtisseries de tous les jours, comme les nouilles aux noix ou aux pavots, comme les *scoverzi* (les crêpes), les pommes en robe (*Äpfel im Schlafrock*) les *papanasi* / *Topfennudel* (boulettes de farine, semoule et fromage frais sucré, qu'on fait bouillir dans l'eau, avant de les faire passer par l'huile et la chapelure et de les servir chaudes, avec du beurre et de la crème fraîche).

Avec les *crofne* ou *croafne* comme les appellent les Banatais, les *gogoși* (roum.) imitant les *Krofnen*<sup>51</sup> des natifs de langue allemande et avec les *Strudel* (aux griottes ou aux pommes, mais aussi au potiron ou au fromage blanc), on se rapproche de la limite entre l'ordinaire et le festif. Valeria B. de Foeni, dit que sa mère les faisait deux fois par semaine. Je me souviens de la pâte fine de *Strudel*, étendue sur toute la surface de la table de cuisine, jusqu'à devenir transparente, ainsi que des beignets (*croafne*) saupoudrés de sucre ou fourrés de marmelade<sup>52</sup>. On préparait des gâteaux au moins deux fois par semaine, des gâteaux secs comme le *griliaj*, des *nougats*, des *petits croissants aux noix* et à la vanille, des *puszerli*, des pains d'épices, des *ștangle* aux noix (*Nußstangerl*, Jeannine B.), mais aussi des petits fours comme le *non plus ultra* ou l'*ischler*. Les enfants savaient qu'ils pouvaient les trouver dans le *credenz* de la cuisine ou de la salle à manger quand ils en avaient envie. Le gâteau était une façon de transmettre l'affection et d'assurer aux enfants l'énergie nécessaire. Dans le milieu rural ce sont les *Knödel*, les gimblettes, les nouilles cuites dans du lait, mais aussi les *Apfelpitten* ou les *Topfpennitten*, les gâteaux comme le *cuib de viespi* (« nid de guêpes ») ou les pommes en robe, qui sont les plus appréciés. À la Roque, j'ai goûté, dans une famille allemande, les *Müzen* ou *minciunele* à la confiture d'églantine. Aux brioches de type *cozonac* (kozonak), préparées pour les occasions festives, les Banatais préfèrent le *baigli* ou *colac cu nucă sau cu mac*<sup>53</sup> (*Mohnstrudel* et *Nußstrudel*) ou les *aranygaluska* (« boulettes d'or ») faites d'une pâte de *cozonac* (Maria, R. nous en donne la recette).

Recevoir des invités constitue une occasion pour les petites bourgeoises, qui sont fières de faire elles-mêmes la cuisine, de démontrer leurs talents et de se voir rendre des hommages. Ceci était souvent le cas quand elles préparaient des *damenkaprizen* ou *schmerkifle* (« pâte brisée à la graisse de panse de cochon »<sup>54</sup>, que les Hongrois appelaient *haios*), de la *crempita*, *cremșnit* ou *kremesch*, du *Rigo – Jancsi*, qui sont tous des gâteaux qui demandent déjà un niveau supérieur de compétence.

D'un niveau encore supérieur comme performance cuisinière et davantage liées aux occasions festives sont les *torte* (*Torten*) faites à la crème, au beurre et au chocolat. La plus appréciée est le *Dobosch*, dont m'ont parlé en détail Mindora U, Ana C., Ana B. Jeannine B., Margareta B. et Maria R., qui, pour pouvoir préparer rapidement les 26 couches de son *dobosch*, se faisait aider d'une amie. D'ailleurs, à Noël comme à Pâques les amies échangeaient entre elles de petits fours ou d'autres petits gâteaux afin d'avoir une plus grande diversité de pâtisseries (au moins sept). Dans les livres et les cahiers de cuisine, on retrouve d'autres *Torten* d'origine centrale-européenne comme la *Linztorte* ou la *Sachertorte*, le *Krantz*, la *Creanga*, traduction roumaine de *Baumsteige* (une *Torte* en forme de rameau d'arbre), la *Grlliastorte*, mais aussi la *Malakofftorte*, la *Torte* au limon, ou la *Torte* banataise. Récemment, lors d'une présentation des plats traditionnels du Banat organisée à Gottlob, une femme a présenté une « *torte* Diana » pour rendre hommage à la princesse disparue (une grande *torte* ovale, couverte de crème fouettée qui rappelle les *tortes* de mariage).

Les absences sont elles-aussi significatives : les *baklavas* ou le *cataïf* turcs, très appréciés à Bucarest, ont été introduits à Timișoara par un salon de thé roumain- viennois (*Boncescu*) d'entre les deux guerres, mais n'ont pas connu beaucoup de succès. C'est aujourd'hui, par la filière arabe (anciens étudiants étrangers en Roumanie), qu'ils essaient de se faire une place au Banat.

L'urbain et le rural tendent aujourd'hui à se confondre de plus en plus et « le traditionnel » change de contenu, ne pouvant plus être réduit à une cuisine, supposée simple, de paysans plus ou moins imaginaires. Récemment, le *tiramisu* ou le *vitello tonnato*, les *raviolis* et d'autres pâtes qui remplacent les pâtes traditionnelles ont fait leur entrée dans le cahier de recettes de Maria R., grande spécialiste de cuisine banataise. La globalisation culinaire passe à Timișoara par la cuisine italienne, très prisée par les restaurants (il y a actuellement une communauté italienne importante à Timișoara) et encouragée par des principes diététiques qui préconisent une cuisine de type méditerranéen. L'huile d'olive, tend, par exemple, à remplacer l'huile de tournesol, comme autrefois celle-ci avait remplacé le saindoux de porc. Les ingrédients traditionnels comme le persil, l'aneth, le poivre et le paprika se voient remplacés par le basilic, l'origan, le curry, etc.



## **En guise de conclusion**

Ma conclusion sera courte, car j'ai tenté de respecter mes points de départ théoriques et méthodologiques, pour démontrer que la cuisine ne se réduit pas à un répertoire de recettes, mais qu'à travers elle on peut explorer les champs les plus divers de la réalité culturelle. Sans épuiser la question de la cuisine banataise, j'ai essayé de montrer quelles sont ses lignes de force et j'ai tenté de mettre en lumière les mentalités qui la structurent, ainsi que les changements qu'elle a connus à travers le temps. J'ai suivi la façon dont la cuisine trace des frontières dans l'espace, entre les groupes ethniques et sociaux, la façon dont elle crée des liens et des échanges qui permettent de dépasser, grâce à une dynamique interculturelle, l'enfermement sur soi. L'ordre que la cuisine introduit est, comme nous avons pu le constater, fragile, sujet à des négociations permanentes – comme c'est le cas de tout ordre culturel.

La mémoire de ce qui avait cours autrefois se voit confrontée à ce qui a cours aujourd'hui : mon étude se propose d'être un point d'appui pour une recherche consacrée aux effets de cette confrontation, ainsi qu'une réflexion sur les questions qu'il conviendra de traiter dans l'avenir. Je pense continuer mes recherches en inclinant la balance du côté de ce présent qui remodèle les traditions et les met en situation de concurrence, encourageant les unes, abandonnant les autres.

La cuisine est centrée sur le partage. Cette idée de partage constitue le point de départ de mon étude, mais elle la traverse aussi sous la forme d'une ouverture aux autres, ceux avec qui j'ai partagé mon parcours et à qui j'exprime ici ma gratitude. C'est à partir de cette expérience de mise en commun des compétences, des émotions et des souvenirs – que je n'ai pas pu décrire dans tous ses détails – que cette étude, de caractère préliminaire, a pris corps. En variant les registres de mon exposé, j'ai voulu expérimenter plusieurs pistes d'analyse. Parmi celles-ci, la plus séduisante, à savoir l'analyse de chaque entretien comme une étude de cas, reste à faire.

## ANNEXE

**Fragments de témoignages** des Banatais déportés du livre : Smaranda Vultur, *Istorie trăită, istorie povestită. Deportarea în Bărăgan, 1951-1956*, Amarcord, Timisoara, 1997, traduits de roumain par Luminița Brăileanu.

Alors, quand c'était l'époque de la moisson du blé, je faisais garder les enfants par les beaux-parents et j'allais avec ma femme et mon père et mon grand-père, on coupait, on fauchait, on moissonnait. Seulement nous, on n'employait pas la faucille comme les gens de l'endroit ! Ils se mettaient à 7 à 8, à 10, et les voisins, et les parents et ils coupaient le blé avec des faucilles, alors que nous, on avait des faux, on était des spécialistes de la faux !... A une bonne femme, on lui a moissonné un hectare de blé. On a dormi aux champs et le lendemain elle s'amène vers 11-12 heures avec la pitance. Et que croyez-vous qu'elle nous apporte à manger ? Un *borsch* de mirabelles, aigre comme tout et une poule au pot mais à part, pas dans le *borsch* où elle avait bouilli... Hé oui, la soupe aigre c'est pas mal surtout en été mais pas pour nous. Banatais ! Mon père, il a pris quelques cuillerées mais...grand-père, lui non, moi et ma femme non plus. On s'est rabattu sur la poule, bouillie comme elle était, on n'en a rien laissé. On a mangé à notre faim, elle nous avait apporté un kilo de pinard, on a bien mangé, quoi (avec du pain, on lui avait dit qu'on ne mangeait pas de la polenta, chez nous on en mange rarement). (...) Nous sommes allés semer du maïs. Nous avons mesuré et jaloné un hectare. On avait coupé le blé mais on n'avait pas labouré !... Les autres sont venus regarder : « Regardez-moi, qu'ils disaient, ces Banatais, comment ils labourent ! Regardez-moi ces sillons, tout droits ! » Et ils restaient là à nous regarder travailler. Pour sarcler, ils retournaient la terre avec la bêche, nous, on creusait juste un peu, la largeur d'une paume pas plus, on a fait venir nos femmes, une femme ça vous retournait un demi-hectare en une journée...il n'y avait pas grand'chose à creuser ! C'était de la bonne terre, bien travaillée, bien hersée, bien labourée, voilà, vite fait ! Et en automne, vous auriez vu quelle récolte, on n'en pouvait plus de la rentrer, toute cette récolte de maïs... Et quel maïs, des épis grands comme deux paumes ! A fendre une tête. « Regarde-moi ce maïs, qu'ils disaient, le maïs aux Banatais ! De longues tiges, des épis grands comme ça. Là où on avait travaillé,

nous, c'était du bon. (*Et à midi, qu'est-ce que vous mangiez ?*) Ben, du jambon, comme chez nous, du jambon, vise le jambon aux Banatais, qu'ils disaient ! Eux, c'était surtout de la couenne, épaisse comme le pouce, pas étonnant avec les pourceaux qu'ils tuaient. Mais ils mangeaient aussi de la viande de mouton, ils tuaient des moutons et séchaient la viande salée qu'ils accrochaient au toit pour qu'elle sèche au vent ! Nous on avait not' jambon, épais comme une demi-paume, et de l'oignon, enfin, ou de l'ail, chacun son goût ! On n'avait pas de fromage là-bas. Chez nous, ici, c'est le jambon et le fromage avec des radis, maintenant c'est la saison de l'oignon et on a le vin de la treille. Enfin, ceux qui en ont, ceux qui n'en ont pas regardent boire les autres ! Et aussi de la *tzouica* (eau de vie) de prunes ou du marc de raisin et du vin de la maison, y en a du rouge et y en a du blanc. Du bon vin bien fort. C'est du meilleur, et fort et buvable, du meilleur. (**Mircea P.** né en 1926)

(...) Pour travailler, ils la travaillaient, la terre, mais la cuisine, ils savaient pas la faire. Ils ont vu ce qu'on faisait, nous, et ils ont appris. On a fait des tartes et des gâteaux, comme on faisait chez nous !...- Si on mangeait tant, on clamserait, qu'ils disaient, « on n'a pas l'habitude de manger ce pain-là que vous mangez ». On avait construit des fours, on a fait du pain. On est allé au moulin, un seul d'entre nous qui est allé pour tous, il a fait moudre, alors on a fait le pain et on l'a fait cuire dans les nouveaux fours. Et les bonnes femmes là-bas, c'était du jamais vu. Elles mangeaient le pain qu'on leur donnait à la ferme d'État, elles étaient trop contentes de travailler à la ferme rien que pour avoir du pain. Ils mangeaient du *borsch*, ils avaient des volailles et nous, le samedi, on arrêtait de travailler à midi et on allait, j'allais surtout avec la sœur chez ma mère à Giurgeni, pour acheter ! Et on achetait ! Une fois on a acheté un agneau, on a partagé. Et puis, pour acheter des poussins, on est allé dans la vieille partie du village. Elles avaient plein de volailles et pourtant elles mangeaient du *borsch*, de l'eau claire comme qui dirait. On leur a demandé : qu'est-ce que vous avez mangé de bon chez vous ? – Un *borsch*, qu'elles ont dit, vite fait ! » Nous, on s'est marré, on n'avait rien mangé de pareil ! (*Mais eux ils ne tuaient pas des volailles ?*) – Si fait, ils en tuaient mais ils savaient pas faire comme nous le rôti et la soupe, ils coupaient de gros morceaux et mettaient le tout dans un pot et voilà le *borsch*. Ils ne savaient pas faire des nouilles, ils ne savaient pas. Nous, on avait vu ça dans la maison de nos parents, on avait appris. Moi j'ai appris à mes

enfants et...et ma bru quand elle est entrée à la maison elle savait pas, c'était qu'une enfant, elle était allée en classe, on lui avait pas appris... alors moi, j'ai fait et je lui ai montré (**Eva S. B.**, née en 1910, Bergsău)

Je me rappelle encore d'une chose, un lien entre nous et eux. Dans la gare de Călărăși, ils étaient là, on les avait mobilisés avec leurs charrettes quand on est arrivés. Un citoyen qui m'a amené là où l'on devait rester, par la suite on est devenus amis. Et lui, le soir de Noël, on était déjà couchés, on avait mangé...c'était au début, on ne s'était pas encore organisés, on n'avait rien à faire. On s'était couchés et quelqu'un frappe à la vitre. Je me lève et le vois, c'était lui, Costică qu'il s'appelait. « Vous, père Costică, à cette heure-ci ? » « Allez, ouvrez, qu'il fait, vite ! » Il était venu avec quelques kilos de vin, une brioche aussi, là. Ma femme s'est réveillée aussi... elle n'était pas encore à l'hôpital – nous avons mis sur la table ce qu'on avait, et on a vite fait un gâteau, là, pour Noël, pour fêter Noël, on a échangé. Ils étaient plus contents de ce qu'on leur a donné que nous de ce qu'ils nous ont donné encore que leur brioche (*cozonac*) ait été assez bien faite. Et puis, on a été amis si bien qu'il a tenu à m'inviter pour le sapin de Noël. J'y suis allé, invité, non ? Et j'ai regardé. Et encore un souvenir, je l'ai raconté à d'autres aussi, ils avaient fait des saucisses et ils avaient mis du riz... je ne sais plus comment ils les appelaient. Alors j'ai dit : « Écoute, ça te va si je te fais de la cochonnaille à not'façon ? » « Pourquoi pas ! » qu'il fait. Il m'a fait confiance. Alors je lui ai fait un ou deux saucissons et du boudin et de l'andouillette et je ne sais quoi encore, comme on fait chez nous, dans le Banat et le type il est tout content. L'année d'après on n'a plus discuté de tuer le cochon. Et puis, un jour, je le vois arriver qui dit : « Demain on tue la truite, on t'attend ! » Le lendemain, j'y vais, il n'est pas là, le propriétaire n'est pas là ! « C'est lui qui m'a appelé, je dis à sa bonne femme, à sa mère. Il m'a appelé pour tuer la truite »... « Mais oui, qu'elles disent, c'est ça ! » « Il a dit qu'on te donne le cochon, que tu le tues, que t'en fasses ce que tu veux ». « Vrai ? Mais comment ça ?... Alors, j'étais on ne peut plus content, et je ne me tenais pas de joie, c'était donc comme ça, ils avaient aimé ce que j'avais fait l'année d'avant ! J'ai tué le cochon et j'ai tout fait comme je savais, moi, comme j'ai cru bon ! Ce qui prouve que l'amitié était très proche avec eux...et la confiance. Le boudin, disons, ils n'avaient pas tout ce qu'il fallait mettre dedans, ils avaient que de l'ail, du poivre, et encore un quelque chose que je ne me rappelle plus. (**Aurel M.** né en 1920, Vrani)

(...) Au début, ils\* ont eu peur de nous, on leur avait dit que nous étions Coréens, qu'ils devaient nous éviter. Après, ils ont vu qui nous étions. Et ils ont fait comme nous, en tout, nous avons mis des graines et nous avons repiqué et puis nous avons planté des tomates, des melons. Et l'été, on est allés dans la petite ville de Slobozia et on criait par les rues : Poivrons ! Tomates Melons ! Ça nous faisait un peu d'argent. La vie, beaucoup de peines, mais on a travaillé, c'est comme ça qu'on s'en est sorti. Après, ils ont vu quels hommes on était, ils ont voulu être nos amis, ils ne nous ont plus repoussés et quand on est partis, ils ont pleuré : la culture, c'est vous qui nous l'avez donnée, qu'ils disaient. Car le Bărăgan, c'est la Sibérie roumaine. Nous leur avons appris à travailler, à s'habiller, à se tenir. Ils ont vu comment on faisait pour les potagers, ils ont fait de même. Ils ont toujours dit que la pomme de terre, ça ne pousse pas par là, mais mon mari a dit, je vais vous montrer, moi, que ça pousse chez vous aussi, la pomme de terre, et il en a été ainsi. Et alors ils s'y sont mis aussi. (**Maria H.** née en 1913)

### **Témoignages reçus par courriel :**

**Sânziana Preda** (anthropologue, doctorante, elle étudie les communautés de tchèques (les Pèmes) du Banat, à ma demande, elle m'a fait part de son expérience de terrain. Les villages Bigăr et Eibenthal sont deux des six villages tchèques du Banat, situés dans une région montagneuse dans la proximité du défilé du Danube>

« Au moins deux personnes de la communauté (en fait de Bigăr) ont exprimé comme avis général que la cuisine tchèque est plus fine et plus sucrée que celle des Roumains. Et quand il s'agit de sucré, je pense aussi à la sauce de tomates qui, dans la variante « pème » doit être sucrée (elle est comme cela dans tout le Banat – n. n.). L'ingrédient de base de la cuisine est la pomme de terre, à partir de laquelle on élabore un produit spécifique, le *knedliky*, qu'on prépare de deux façons : soit on fait une pâte qui est comme de la pâte de pain (avec de la levure), puis on en détache des morceaux de la dimension d'une grande boulette, qu'on fait bouillir à la vapeur et qu'on sert de façon générale avec de la viande grillée et de la sauce de tomates, mais on peut les manger avec ce que l'on veut ; soit on les fait à partir de farine, de pommes de terre cuites à l'eau que l'on passe ensuite au tamis, d'œuf (qu'on utilise comme liant ; des fois on ajoute aussi un peu de semoule), préparation qu'on fait bouillir ensuite toujours

à la vapeur ou dans de l'eau bouillante et qu'on égoutte. On peut aussi les manger avec de la *tocăniță* (un type de ragoût) et de la salade de chou ou de betterave, avec du cumin (faux anis). On en fait aussi des *knedličky* (c'est un diminutif), et alors on les mange avec de l'*ourda* (fromage doux de vache ou de brebis) ou avec de la marmelade. J'ai appris aussi par une dame originaire de Bigăr (qui vit depuis longtemps à Severin, je mentionne cela parce que je soupçonne que la vie citadine a raffiné un peu certaines recettes qu'elle connaissait depuis sa jeunesse, car j'ai noté quelques petites différences entre ce qu'on m'a raconté dans les villages et ce que je sais d'elle), – elle s'appelle Barbara Mleziva, née à Bigăr, le 4 mars 1955, j'ai réalisé une interview avec elle le 29 août 2006, à Severin, mais nous nous parlons aussi au téléphone –, que la salade (celle qui garnit le plat) était remplacée des fois par de la compote de prunes, de pommes ou de coings ; elle a entendu que c'est de la même manière qu'on procédait dans certaines maisons d'Eibenthal et de Sumita. C'est également elle qui m'a parlé des *šiški*, qui sont des beignets soufflés (pets-de-nonne), un peu plus grands, (j'en ai mangé et, en fait, ils ressemblent plus à des *langosi* (type de beignets salés fait à partir de pâte de pain, qu'on cuit dans de l'huile brûlante), avec un trou au milieu, qu'on peut enrober avec du sucre en poudre, mélangé à de la cannelle ; des fois on peut les faire avec de la marmelade, et le plus souvent on ajoute par-dessus de l'écume de blanc d'œuf. On les mangeait surtout le dimanche matin, avant d'aller à l'église, on en faisait dans chaque maison, si bien que tout le village était envahi de leur odeur, et on les servait avec du lait, mais aussi avec de la *țuica* (eau de vie faite à partir de prunes) bouillie (mais c'était une eau de vie plus douce et pas forte). Ces beignets soufflés étaient préparés surtout à l'occasion du tri des plumes d'oies et des filanderies : le travail fini, on servait les filles et les femmes avec des friandises, des gâteaux. Madame Mleziva mentionne également les *buhty*, une sorte de *cozonaci* (sorte de brioche) plus petits, au pavot ou aux noix, et qui, dit-elle, sont plus sucrés, plus moelleux et meilleurs que nos *cozonaci*. Sous le nom de *cesky colače* on faisait un autre dessert : à partir de la pâte, on modelait quelques boules de la dimension d'un œuf d'oie environ, qu'on disposait (disons quatre morceaux), sur un plat graissé, et lors de la cuisson, elles levaient et collaient les unes aux autres. Sur chacune on faisait un trou, dans lequel on mettait de la marmelade de prunes, et ensuite, par dessus, de l'*ourda* douce (sorte de fromage doux de vache ou de brebis), mélangée avec de l'œuf, de la cannelle et du sucre. Leur forme finale était approximativement

carrée et on les saupoudrait de sucre (autrefois, on demandait aux enfants de faire du sucre en poudre, en le pilonnant dans un mortier).

Je n'ai pas fait précéder ce premier témoignage par ma question, car j'avais demandé à la narratrice de me raconter autre chose, et de façon inattendue elle a commencé l'histoire avec ce gâteau, *miel (agneau)*, mais Madame Mleziva croit qu'on ne le fait plus depuis longtemps ; en même temps elle n'est pas capable de dire s'il est spécifique au Bigăr ou à tous les villages. A Sainte-Hélène, on m'a parlé d'un plat tchèque, on voulait dire d'un plat connu par tous les Tchèques du monde, et qu'on fait aussi chez les *pêmes* : *vpřove-knedlo-zelo*, c'est-à-dire de la choucroute, cuisinée avec un pied de porc fumé (et à la fin on ajoute quelques pommes de terre crues râpées, pour épaissir le chou) et servie avec du *knedliky*.

Enfin, le deuxième entretien m'a permis de recueillir quelques détails sur le repas de noces. Le menu était composé de soupe, de viande cuite (bouillie) garnie de raifort ou de sauce de tomates, de *sarmale* (boulettes de viande hachée, enveloppée dans une feuille de vigne ou de chou), rôti de porc et de veau (« d'autres y ajoutent aussi du poulet »), servi avec de la purée de pommes de terre et de salade de betterave / chou / salade verte/ légumes saumurés ; petits et grands gâteaux.

### Fragments d'entretiens de S. Preda :

« Avant, on faisait comme une sorte d'agneau\*, ou un gâteau rond et sur ce gâteau un agneau, fait comme ça, aussi à partir de cette pâte comme pour les gâteaux, avec de la farine de maïs, roulée comme ça, et c'est devenu exactement comme un agneau ; on lui a mis aussi de l'herbe à la bouche, ici on lui a attaché un ruban, et puis les jambes, il était très beau ; il y en a encore quelques-unes qui savent le faire ici, mais... quand tu reviendras ici, on demandera à quelqu'un de nous en faire un. Aujourd'hui encore on en fait de ces agneaux à partir d'œufs, cette pâte - comment vous appelez cette pâte ?, on l'arrondit et on fait la tête ; ensuite, on bat des blancs d'œufs avec du sucre et ça se cuit et se colle sur cet agneau, et avec la fourchette, on fait comme ça, comme une sorte..., comme s'il avait une toison sur lui (elle rit) – il a l'air très beau » (Terezia Mareş, née le 26 juillet 1936, à Bigăr, interview faite à Bigăr, le 21 août 2006)

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\* voir le site <http://mariepearson.com/9401/index.html>

« *(Racontez-nous, s'il vous plaît, comment se déroulait la fête de la moisson ?)* – D'habitude, le 2 août c'était la fin de la moisson. Je me souviens de ce moment vaguement, seulement comme dans un rêve et seulement dans mon enfance, sur une clairière, on faisait des gâteaux, c'est-à-dire du *cozonac* (une sorte de brioche) et des *colaci* (gimblettes) tchèques. La pâte, on l'a fait, comme pour le *cozonac*, une pâte levée, avec de la levure, et avec un verre ou avec quelque chose, on découpait des rondelles dans la pâte. Et on les mettait sur un plat et on faisait, soit comme ça, un petit trou, avec les doigts, ou bien à l'aide de deux fourchettes, de deux petites cuillères, on faisait comme ça, un trou. C'est là dedans qu'on mettait de la marmelade, d'habitude de la marmelade de prunes, qu'en ce temps là on faisait chez soi, on n'achetait pas ça comme aujourd'hui. Et ensuite on couvrait ça de fromage blanc, caillé, comment on dit. Et on mélangeait le fromage, du fromage salé avec du fromage blanc caillé, comment vous dire. (Et le gâteau s'appelle comment ?) – *Ceski colace*. Et on partageait ça entre les jeunes, entre tous ceux qui étaient réunis pour le bal, sur la clairière (Barbara Pospisil, 63 ans, interview effectué à Eibenthal, le 27 août, 2006)

**Réponse reçue par courriel de Rolla L.,** née en 1925, à Timisoara, elle vit en Israël où elle a émigré dans les années '80, après avoir vécu à Timisoara, puis à Bucarest :

Après mûre réflexion, je suis arrivée à la conclusion que la nourriture la plus aimée des habitants de Timisoara, de presque toutes les générations est...le pain beurré avec du poivron vert. Aucun poivron vert du monde n'a un goût aussi agréable que celui de Timisoara et je ne crois pas qu'il y ait d'enfant à Timisoara qui ne soit pas prêt à avaler à n'importe quel moment un sandwich avec du pain beurré et avec beaucoup de poivron vert.

*Que mangiez-vous à la maison quand vous étiez enfants ?*

De la soupe de tomates, du poulet, de bœuf, pot-au-feu, du *paprikas*, des *sărmăluțe* (petites *sarmale* qui sont des boulettes de viande hachée), enveloppées dans une feuille de vigne ou de chou) dans des feuilles de vigne et des *sarmale* dans des feuilles de chou aigre, des boulettes aux prunes ou aux abricots, des nouilles avec de la choucroute, des aubergines avec de petites boulettes de viande hachée, des boulettes de viande hachée avec de la sauce tomate, des poivrons farcis, des plats d'oseille, d'épinards, d'haricots verts, des macaronis au fromage – mais ce qui faisait notre bonheur, celui des enfants, c'était le foie d'oie préparé dans



de la graisse d'oie, bien pimenté, et les *papanasi* (sortes de beignets faits à partir d'une sorte de fromage blanc avec de la semoule, cuits dans l'eau et parsemés de sucre et de crème fraîche) au fromage, sucrés. Chez nous, nous mangions beaucoup de *ghiveci* (sorte de ratatouille) que je prépare toujours, puisque je l'aime beaucoup.

*Qu'est-ce qui a changé quand vous êtes partis pour Bucarest et qu'est-ce qui a changé entre temps ?*

Les difficultés pour se procurer la nourriture. Nous mangions souvent de la *mămăliga* (polenta) avec du fromage et de la crème fraîche, parfois de la viande de porc car elle était plus accessible, de temps en temps du poulet (quand nous réussissions à nous en procurer), des pommes de terre sous diverses formes (nous allions à la campagne pour nous les procurer), cuits à l'eau et préparés avec du beurre et du persil, du *tocăniță* (une sorte de ragoût), qui était différent du *paprikas* banatais parce que moins assaisonné et moins gras.

*Qu'est-ce qui vous semble spécifique pour la nourriture du Banat ?*

Pour te répondre correctement à cette question je me suis transportée, en souvenir dans les années 1951 -54, lorsque j'étais médecin de campagne (dans le texte c'est médecin de circonscription rurale) à Săcălaz (village allemand), Beregsăul Mic (village serbe), Beregsăul mare (village roumain, véritablement banatais). Le siège de la circonscription se trouvait à Săcălaz et là nous mangions à la cantine et, de temps en temps, nous mangions chez la sage-femme avec laquelle j'ai travaillé au Beregsăul Mare, mais nous étions invités ensemble avec toute la famille chez elle, à table, à l'occasion de la fête appelée *rugă* (fête patronale de l'église), événement pour lequel elle se préparait de façon intense, car elle aimait avoir des *goști* (*Gäste* en allemand, invités) et nous aimions l'atmosphère de la campagne et la chaleur avec laquelle elle nous recevait. La fête patronale de l'église avait lieu à la fin du printemps. Chez la sage-femme nous mangions de la soupe de poulet aux boulettes de semoule, du rôti de poulet, de porc, toutes sortes de cochonnailles (de charcuteries) et des saucisses grillées faits à partir du porc saigné quelques mois plus tôt, et comme dessert : toutes sortes de petits fours (des petits croissants (*cornulete*) avec de la marmelade de prunes, du *strudel* aux pommes (*Apfelstrudel* en allemand). A la cantine, j'aimais beaucoup la soupe d'haricots blancs avec de la viande fumée et même non-fumée, un plat de pommes de terre avec un peu de sauce et un peu de viande, du chou avec un peu de viande.

*Sur quel plat spécifiquement banatais mettriez-vous l'accent ?*

Sur la soupe d'haricots blancs avec de la viande fumée et des saucisses.

Initialement, je ne t'ai rien écrit sur les plats juifs parce que je pensais que cela n'entre pas dans le cadre du sujet que tu as proposé, bien que j'aie été tentée de décrire certains plats classiques que j'adorais pendant mon enfance. Une autre raison qui m'a empêché de les mentionner est le fait que nous étions de rite espagnol et que nous avions une toute autre cuisine que les autres, qui sont de rite néologue (comme on les appelait dans la ville dans laquelle j'ai grandi). Il y avait donc les juifs séfarades (originaires d'Espagne) et ashkénazes (originaires d'Allemagne). Chez nous on mangeait beaucoup de mets avec des gombos et *arbodingas* avec *mirigena*, c'est-à-dire un plat d'aubergines avec de petites boulettes de viande, ou du *pastel*, une pâte fine farcie de viande, servie coupée en petits carrés, *frijalda*, la même pâte ou de la pâte feuilletée au fromage et aux épinards, qui était très goûteuse. Les ashkénazes mangeaient beaucoup de *solet*, des haricots blancs avec de la viande de bœuf ou d'oie avec différents condiments, bien cuite à l'eau et gardée au four pendant toute la nuit, à une température pas très élevée. Ce plat compte jusqu'à aujourd'hui parmi les plats traditionnels et on le mange tous les samedis (lors du Shabbat). Ici, il s'appelle *ciulent* (nom polonais) ou *hamin* (nom marocain).

*Doboş* est le nom du pâtissier hongrois qui a préparé le gâteau pour la première fois pour l'empereur Franz Joseph et comme Sa Majesté s'est montrée enchanté, le gâteau s'est vite popularisé. Ici ce sont seulement les pâtissiers hongrois qui savent le préparer comme il faut.

Le *Beigel* est né en Silésie et il est connu dans beaucoup de pays européens. Quelles friandises (sucreries) nous mangions ? Des nouilles au sucre et aux noix (je crois qu'elles sont aussi d'origine hongroise, j'en ai souvent mangé à Budapest), des baklavas (d'origine turque, ici ce sont seulement les arabes qui les préparent mais ils sont trop sucrés et je ne les mange plus, bien que pendant l'enfance j'aimais énormément la façon dont ma mère les préparait. De la semoule au lait sucré avec peu de marmelade, de la *plăcintă* (sorte de galette, pâtisserie) aux pommes, faite avec de la pâte ou avec de la pâte feuilletée, des crêpes avec de la marmelade, du riz au lait au four, des *clătite franţuzeşti* (des « crêpes françaises ») comme on les appelait en Roumanie, c'était une crème de crêpes préparée avec beaucoup d'œufs (4), 50 g de sucre, un verre et

de mi de lait, 120 g de farine, un peu d'écorce de citron. On bat bien les jaunes d'œuf avec le sucre et le beurre, on ajoute du lait et à la fin, on les mélange avec les blancs d'œufs bien battus. On les cuit dans un peu d'huile comme toutes les crêpes, mais uniquement sur une seule face, et ainsi elles restent moelleuses comme une crème savoureuse. Les hongrois les appellent *csusztatot palacsinta*, c'est-à-dire des crêpes coulantes. Pendant mon enfance, quand on les préparait, c'était un grand jour et moi je les aimais énormément et jusqu'à aujourd'hui je les prépare lorsque je veux gâter un invité de marque (si vous venez chez nous, vous allez aussi pouvoir en goûter).

Ce que mangent les Ashkénazes : du *gefilte fish*, c'est-à-dire du poisson farci avec du poisson haché, ou des boulettes de poisson haché – nourriture obligatoire deux fois par an, à Pâques (*Pessah*) et pour le Nouvel An, *Ros hashana*, je crois qu'il est d'origine polonaise. Nous aimons ce plat que nous avons connu ici et une amie nous l'apporte depuis 15 ans, sans interruption, à chaque fête.

La soupe de poulet avec des boulettes de *matza* de *Pessah* est elle-aussi obligatoire, aussi bien chez nous que chez eux. A Pâques, lorsqu'on ne mange pas de pain, chez ceux qui gardent cette coutume, on prépare des boulettes de pommes de terre râpées aux œufs et à la farine de *matza*, frites dans de l'huile (*hremzli*) ou de petits pains de farine de *matza*, de petites galettes (*plăcintuțe*) farcies de chou (d'origine hongroise, je crois), de la soupe de poisson, du *gulasch* hongrois, du riz aux pruneaux. Moi je prépare souvent de la viande de dindon avec toutes sortes de fruits secs et avec un peu de cannelle, je ne sais pas qui a inventé cette recette, mais je l'ai apprise ici. Parmi les plats hongrois, je me suis souvenue de *tepertus pogácsa* (une sorte de pâte avec des rillons (*jumeri*) de porc ou d'oie (*pogăcele*) en roumain – n. n. S.V.). Un plat que j'ai mangé uniquement dans le Banat est la *tarhana*, je crois qu'il était fait à partir de farine et d'œuf et on faisait passer la pâte par des tamis spéciaux et on obtenait un grand nombre de petits morceaux de pâte ronde, délicieuse.

## NOTES

- <sup>1</sup> Comme tous les aspects de la vie des Roumains, la cuisine a connu des transformations importantes, non seulement pendant les seize dernières années, mais aussi avant 1989. Le communisme modifiant l'accès aux ressources, suite, entre autres, à la déprivatisation des biens (cf. aussi la collectivisation, les déportations etc.), a influencé la relation de l'homme à la nourriture et sa façon de la penser, en lui limitant en même temps l'accès à certains types de relations sociales. La réduction dramatique de l'offre au début des années 80, la soi-disante « rationalisation de la nourriture », (en fait une forme parmi d'autres de contrôle de l'individu), a contribué, après la relative aisance des années 70, à une réduction significative de la consommation et à un changement brutal des pratiques alimentaires (y compris la remise en circulation des recettes de cuisine de l'époque de la guerre, l'utilisation d'aliments et d'ingrédients de substitution). La pénurie de la fin de l'époque de Ceaușescu se voit remplacée aujourd'hui par une explosion de l'offre et de la consommation qui multiplient les possibilités de choix, le lien entre la consommation et l'identité devenant ainsi plus serré et surtout plus visible. Dans ce contexte, les pressions du global sur le local deviennent de plus en plus importantes et la tension qui se crée entre les deux tend à intégrer les oppositions traditionnelles.
- <sup>2</sup> C'est un sujet qui mérite une étude à part, car son impact sur les comportements alimentaires est énorme.
- <sup>3</sup> Cf. la discussion de cet aspect dans Roman, R. A. et Mihăilescu, V., *Cât de națională e bucătăria națională ? in Reflecții asupra diferenței*, Limes, Centrul de Cercetări Interetnice (Culic I, Horvath I, Stan, C, eds.), Cluj Napoca, 1999, p. 117-127.
- <sup>4</sup> Barthes, R, *Oeuvres complètes*, tome I, 1942-1965, Seuil, Paris, 1993, p. 932.
- <sup>5</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 933 (Première publication, *Annales*, septembre – octobre 1961).
- <sup>6</sup> Fischler, C., Masson E., *Manger. Français, Européens et Américains face à l'alimentation*, Odile Jacob, Paris, 2008.
- <sup>7</sup> Barthes, R., *ibid.*, p. 926.
- <sup>8</sup> Il s'agit du Groupe d'histoire orale et d'anthropologie culturelle créé en 1998 auprès de la Fondation et dont l'archive sera mentionnée sous le sigle *AHOFE*. L'archive contient des récits de vie de personnes appartenant à différentes générations et aux plus importants groupes ethniques de la région, ce qui permet de mettre en évidence les différences entre ces catégories, mais aussi d'importantes différenciations qui se structurent autour de l'opposition entre le local et le global, le sacré et le profane, le quotidien et le festif.
- <sup>9</sup> Cf. Vultur, S, *Istorie trăită – istorie povestită, Deportarea în Bărăgan 1951 – 1956*, Amarcord, Timișoara, 1997. Pour plus de détails cf. aussi les textes en français dans l'annexe et la liste des interviews.

- 10 Sur les circonstances de ce déplacement de populations et sur les effets d'ordre identitaire qu'il a produits, voir Vultur, S., *De l'Ouest à l'Est et de l'Est à l'Ouest. Les avatars identitaires des Français du Banat* dans Diminescu, D., *Visibles mais pas nombreux. Les circulations migratoires roumaines*, Éditions de la Maison des Sciences de l'homme, Paris, 2003, p. 99-115.
- 11 Farca, O. K., *Das Koch- und Backbuch meiner Mutter, Kulinarische Köstlichkeiten aus dem Banat, Erinnerungen einer Hochzeitsköchin*, Olga Farca Verlag, Villingen-Schwenningen, 2001.
- 12 J'ai retrouvé le même type de démarche dans un livre de cuisine destiné aux Roumains des Etats Unis : Klepper N, *Taste of Romania. Its Cookery and Glimpses of Its History, Folklore, Art, Literature and Poetry*, Hipocrene, New York, 1999, où l'auteur publie à côté des plats qu'il considère comme « spécifiquement roumains » des poésies du poète national des Roumains, M. Eminescu, ou encore de L. Blaga, des proverbes et des fables destinées à renforcer une perspective identitaire nationale dont la cuisine ne peut pas se passer. Dans les deux cas mentionnés, nous pouvons saisir une tendance commune à associer la cuisine à la culture d'un peuple et à assigner à l'ensemble qui en résulte une dimension de récupération d'un pays perdu. Il s'agit d'un processus de production des identités qui mériterait être analysé plus en détail.
- 13 Les livres ont appartenu à son beau-père et ont fait l'objet d'une transmission familiale. Voir *infra*, Ana. B.
- 14 Cf. par exemple l'interview avec Sidy Julan pris par Mirela et Sorin Tomuța, *in* Vultur, S, *Lumi în destine*, Paideia , Bucarest, 2000, p. 59-86.
- 15 Parmi les personnes que j'ai interviewées cf. Magdalena Csendes, *in* Vultur, S, *Memoria salvată, Evreii din Banat ieri și azi*, Polirom, Iași, 2002, ou Ana, B, Mariana, Ș, Minodora, U. (dans la liste des interviews).
- 16 Pour le texte de Ciobanu, R., *Lectures et paysage. Entre cuisine et Speiss* traduit du roumain par Ioana Vultur, cf. [www.memoria.ro](http://www.memoria.ro).
- 17 Cf. Livius Ciocârlie, fragment de *La Cloche submergée* (traduit du roumain par Andreea Gheorghiu) dans « Le Banat – un Eldorado aux confins », *Cultures d'Europe Centrale*, hors-série, nr. 4, 2007, CIRCE, Université de Paris – Sorbonne, Paris IV, p. 227-233.
- 18 Babeți, A, « Un paradis aux confins » *Cultures d'Europe Centrale*, nr.4, CIRCE, Univ 2004, p. 225 – 240.
- 19 Dans tous les cas, il s'agit d'une viande coupée en morceaux qu'on fait revenir dans de l'huile (ou dans un autre type de graisse) avec de l'oignon coupé fin et qui est ensuite bouillie. Ce qui varie c'est le type de graisse, la quantité de viande et surtout les ingrédients, la façon de préparer la sauce. Cf. dans l'annexe le texte de Rolla L. qui une fois déménagée à Bucarest mange de la *tocăniță* (type de ragoût) qui « se distingue, dit-elle, du *papricaș* banatais, étant moins épicé et moins gras ».

- 20 Cf. Marin S, *Carte de bucate*, prefață d'Al. O. Teodoreanu, Cartea Românească, București, 1936, p. 158 (anghemaht de poulet et d'agneau) et p. 158 et p. 136.
- 21 Comșa E, *op. cit.*, p. 321-323.
- 22 Voir *Kaiserschmarrn* dans le livre déjà cité d'Olga Farca, p. 137.
- 23 Ces règles sont de moins en moins respectées dans la semaine, mais, comme il résulte des essais que mes étudiants ont écrits sur le thème de la cuisine, en 2007, les jeunes familles d'aujourd'hui et d'autant plus celles de ma génération essaient de conserver le repas en commun dominical, ouvert souvent à la famille élargie, aux amis, aux invités. Se réunir autour d'une table c'est conserver, au moins symboliquement, la solidarité familiale. Dans son témoignage, Maria, R. (née en 1925) insiste sur cet aspect : elle a réussi à imposer à ses belles-filles de respecter ce rituel, au moins pour les fêtes les plus importantes de l'année (à Noël, à Pâques) et pour les anniversaires des membres de la famille, malgré les différences qui ont vu le jour au fil du temps dans les choix alimentaires et le mélange des recettes de plusieurs régions (une de ses belles-filles est originaire de Moldavie et de Munténie et l'autre de la Transylvanie).
- 24 « Les Banatais c'est pas pareil que les gens de là-bas (*de Bărăgan- n.n.*). Même qu'on les donnait pour modèle dans le Bărăgan, pour le travail qu'ils faisaient et là, dans l'IAS (Ferme Agricole d'État) où l'on a été, et pour notre comportement, nous et les Allemands des environs de Timișoara. Les Olténiens, eux, étaient... ils étaient pas pareils. Ils n'étaient point comme nous autres, Banatais. Ça se voyait aux maisons aussi et au travail qu'on faisait aux champs. Là où travaillaient les tractoristes, la plupart c'étaient des Allemands, ça se voyait. Le tracteur de l'Allemand ça se voyait, le tracteur de l'Olténien aussi. L'Allemand, il était bien propre, pédant, il mettait un bleu de travail, quand il montait sur le tracteur, ça faisait plaisir de monter à côté de lui. Et le tracteur, ça vous fonctionnait comme un tracteur. Chez les autres ça clochait, les pompes d'injection crachottaient, l'Allemand, lui, le métier ça le connaissait ». (M. P. né en 1926 déporté au Bărăgan de lam) Cf. pour le texte en roumain Vultur S, *Istorie trăită, istorie povestită*, p 167.
- 25 La *ciorba* d'aujourd'hui en revanche contient des légumes finement hachés et de la viande.
- 26 Objet obligatoire de transmission familiale comme on peut le voir dans le texte d'Eva (née en 1910) : voir annexe textes des déportés au Bărăgan et en roumain Vultur S, *Istorie trăită, istorie povestită*, *op. cit.*, p. 276.
- 27 Cf. aussi Babeți, A, *Ultimul sufleu la Paris. 60 de rețete culinare*, Polirom, Iași, 2006, p. 111-114.
- 28 Je la mange et je la mangeais chez moi et chez des paysans de Parța près de Timișoara (1960-1980) où nous étions invités pour la fête de l'église (*ruga* ou *nedeia* dans le Banat)

- 29 Schott A. et A., *Contes roumains*, traduits de l'allemand par Denise Modigliani, Ed. G.-P. Maisonneuve et Larose, Paris, 1982, p. 98-100. Cf. aussi Melwisch – Birăescu, S., *Banatul din Speis (secolul al XIX- lea)*, dans Vultur S. (éd), *Banatul din memorie. Studii de caz*, Marineasa, Timișoara, p. 247 – 257.
- 30 On la mange encore aujourd'hui à Tomnatic / Triebswetter, village d'origine lorraine. J'en ai reçu la recette en 1997 d'Ana C., née en 1929, qui me l'a indiquée comme plat spécifique local.
- 31 Schott, A. et A., *Contes roumains*, p. 99 – 100.
- 32 Pour le Banat de montagne (la région de Caraș) nous trouvons des informations sur l'alimentation des Banatais de 1858 – 1859 dans les monographies des localités, rédigées par le cadastre de la STEG (La Société des Chemins de Fer Autrichiens) qui est entré en possession des Domaines des mines en 1855. cf. Leu, V, *Memorie, memorabil, istorie în Banat*, Ed. Marineasa, Timișoara, 2006, p. 242 (Ciacova), p. 319 (pour Dognecea/ Karlsdorf), p. 341 (pour Sasca Roumaine), p. 357 (Lupac, village croate), p.361 (Doman) p. 362 (Văliug). cf. aussi p. 310-312 sur les impressions de voyage dans le Banat de J. von Dörner publiées à Pressburg en 1839. Ces sources font une différence entre la nourriture du Banat de montagne, plus pauvre, et celle du Banat de plaine, plus riche, car la terre était plus fertile et les récoltes plus importantes.
- 33 *Nous, on avait not'jambon, épais comme une demi -paume, et de l'oignon, ou de l'ail, chacun son goût ! Chez nous ici c'est le jambon et le fromage, avec des radis* (cf. l'annexe le texte de M.P.)
- 34 Les restaurants qui servent des plats spécifiquement roumains introduisent la *mămăliga* dans leur répertoire. Je dois préciser que « manger traditionnel » est devenu tendance. Ce qu'on présente sous l'étiquette de plat banatais (des crêpes banataises, de la soupe banataise, des nouilles au pavot ou aux noix, boulettes aux prunes) constitue un sujet d'étude en soi.
- 35 "potage roumain acidulé" in Farca, O., *op.cit.*, p. 46.
- 36 Le mot *zama* (de *zeamă* ) est surtout utilisé dans les milieux plus pauvres, assimilés aujourd'hui aux milieux « plus traditionnels ».
- 37 C'est un trait plus général de la cuisine banataise et non seulement des *Pemi* (cf. Sânziana Preda dans l'annexe).
- 38 Verteș Olteanu, M. V., Pisat M., *Gourmandises de Banat - saveurs et traditions*, Timișoara, 2008, p. 14-15.
- 39 Sachelarie A. et H., *Manual de bucătărie economică și practică*, Cugetarea, București, f. a., p. 7.
- 40 Son père a fait une école des arts et métiers, il avait un moulin, un petit commerce, et était spécialiste de toutes sortes d'installations.
- 41 Il est significatif que lorsqu'on mène avec elle une discussion sur la cuisine, elle évoque toute cette ambiance familiale, dont elle est très fière et dont elle

- a réussi à perpétuer les traditions, malgré les pertes subies par la déportation au Bărăgan.
- 42 Pour ses valeurs, valables aussi dans notre contexte d'analyse voir Montanari, M., *Foamea și abundența. O istorie a alimentației în Europa*, Polirom, Iași, 2003, p148 – 154.
- 43 Les gens de Tomnatic étaient de grands producteurs et vendeurs de *boia*, v. Ana. C.
- 44 Rowley, A., *Une histoire mondiale de la table, Stratégies de la bouche*, Ed. Odile Jacob, 2006, p. 194.
- 45 Waigand, M., *Kochbuch des Donauschwaben*, Dinsheim (Bas-Rhin) France, 1952. C'est Mme Giry de Paris, fille de Jean Lamesfeld, qui a vécu à une époque à La Roque, qui m'a parlé de ce livre, pendant l'interview de février 2007, mais j'ai pu le consulter chez Margareta D. de Pesac qui continue à l'utiliser régulièrement.
- 46 Mihăilescu V., « Enquête de la *sarma*. Essai sur les attentes sociales », *Recherches, Revue du Mauss*, nr. 25, premier semestre 2005, p. 428-451.
- 47 Roman, R. A. et Mihăilescu, V., *Cât de națională e bucătăria națională ? in Reflecții asupra diferenței*, Limes, Centrul de Cercetări Interetnice (Culic I, Horvath I, Stan, C, ed.), Cluj Napoca, 1999, p. 117-127.
- 48 Rowley, A., *Une histoire mondiale de la table, op. cit.*, p. 169. En citant le chapelain Francesco Alvarez, membre de l'Ambassade portugaise en Ethiopie de 1520 à 1526, l'auteur décrit « le service d'une poularde farcie dont il ne restait que la peau : on avait enlevé la chair, retiré très soigneusement les os sans déchirer la peau, haché finement la viande avec de délicates épices, puis farci la peau de l'animal avec le mélange ».
- 49 *Ibid.*, p. 187-191.
- 50 Voir l'étude de Maria Chiș, *Livius Ciocârlie – rețetele centralității*, dans Vultur S, éd. *Banatul din memorie*, p. 71-95.
- 51 Il était surprenant de les retrouver avec le nom *crapfen* parmi les plats de la Moldavie, région pourtant située à l'autre bout de la Roumanie, dans un livre de cuisine de 1841, Kogălnicean M. Negruzzi K, *Carte de bucate boierești*, Vremea, București, 2007, p. 62 (il est possible que la recette ait été introduite au contact de la Bucovine, qui faisait partie de l'Empire des Habsbourg).
- 52 Ma grand-mère les servait le jour qui suivait le Nouvel An, en cachant dans l'un d'entre eux une monnaie : elle était censée apporter de la chance pour toute l'année à celui qui la trouvait.
- 53 *Kugluf* dans Verteș, M., Pisat, M, *Gourmandises du Banat*, p. 36- 37. On retrouve aussi ce plat à l'autre bout de la Roumanie, en Moldavie.
- 54 Traduction du texte de Ciocârlie L. par Andreea Gheorghiu, *op. cit.*, p. 227.



## Liste des entretiens

### Banat, Roumanie :

**Maria R.**, née en 1925 à Bocşa, d'origine allemande, mariée à un Roumain du Banat de montagne qui a fait ses études d'ingénieur à Bucarest. Elle a habité à Bocşa, Văliug, Reşiţa, Timișoara. Interviewée par S. Vultur, Timișoara, 2007 (texte : 2 cassettes audio et transcription).

**Lucia B.**, née en 1925 à Timișoara, d'origine roumaine (Banat et Olténie). A habité Bocşa, Timișoara. Interviewée par S. Vultur, Timișoara 2007 (texte en notes)

**Ana B.**, née en 1921 à Ciclova Română, d'origine roumaine, déportée au Bărgan, a vécu à Iam, Oravitz, Timișoara. Interviewée par S. Vultur, Timișoara 2009 (texte : 1 cassette audio et transcription sous forme de notes).

**Minodora U.**, née en 1928 à Ciuta (Obreja), d'origine roumaine, mariée à un Roumain banatais. Elle a habité Ciuta, Caransebeș, Timișoara. Interviewée par S. Vultur 2007 (texte sous forme de notes).

**Mariana Ș.**, née en 1916, d'origine juive, a vécu à Timișoara. Interviewée par S. Vultur, Băile Herculane, 2002. (texte sur cassettes audio et transcription), *AHOFE*.

**Eva C.**, née Bürger, en 1922 à Neudorf, d'origine allemande luxembourgeoise, déportée en URSS 1945. Interviewée par S. Vultur, Cluj Napoca, 2008 (texte sur cassette audio et transcription).

**Margareta D.**, née en 1936 à Periam, d'origine allemande, mariée à un Roumain. A habité Periam, Pesac, déportée au Bărgan, interviewée par S. Vultur, Pesac, 2008 (texte en notes).

**Sosa P.**, née en 1922, à Secusigiu, paysanne, a vécu tout le temps dans le village. Interviewée par Delia Vasiliu (texte sous forme de notes) en 2007.

**Ana C.**, née en 1929 à Tomnatic, allemande, cuisinait pour les noces, déportée au Bărgan, enregistrée par S. Vultur, Tomnatic 1997. (texte sur cassette et transcription). *AHOFE*

**Eva S. B.**, née en 1910, roumaine, déportée au Bărgan, interviewée par S. Vultur 1992. Texte publié in Vultur, S. *Istorie trăită- istorie povestită*, p. 271 - 277. cf. fragment annexe.

**Mircea P.** né en 1926 à Iam, roumain, déporté au Bărağan, enregistré par S. Vultur, 1991. Texte publié in Vultur, S. *Istorie trăită- istorie povestită*, p. 157 – 162. cf. fragment annexe.

**Gina S.**, née en 1935 à Vrani, déportée au Bărağan, enregistrée par S. Vultur, Oravitza, 1996.  
Texte publié in Vultur, S. *Istorie trăită- istorie povestită*, p.191 – 201.

**Aurel M.**, né en 1920 à Vrani, déporté au Bărağan, enregistré par S. Vultur, Oravitza, 1996.  
Texte publié in Vultur, S. *Istorie trăită- istorie povestită*, p. 79 – 100. cf. fragment annexe.

**Maria H.**, allemande, née 1913 à Tomnatic, déportée au Bărağan, enregistrée par S. Vultur, Oravitza, 1996. Texte publié in Vultur, S. *Istorie trăită- istorie povestită*, p. 257 – 263.

#### **France (Pernes, La Roque sur Pernes, Paris) :**

**Margareta B.**, née en 1926 à Becicherecul Mic, Roumanie interviewée par S. Vultur, Pernes les Fontaines, février 2007 (a participé aussi **Philippe W.**, originaire de Banloc, né en 1936 ; les deux parlent entre eux en allemand souabe quand ils parlent des certains plats du Banat). Texte sur 2 cassettes, transcription sous forme des notes).

**Jeannine B.** née en 1930 à Ploschitz, Banat yougoslave, interviewée par S. Vultur, La Roque sur Pernes, février 2007 (ont assisté et sont intervenus son mari Peter et sa belle-sœur **Karolina P.** née Brestowacz, Banat yougoslave, **Philippe W.**). Texte sur cassettes audio, transcription notes.

**Erika U.**, née en 1936 à Lenauheim, Banat Roumanie, mariée avec un Italien, interviewée par S. Vultur, La Roque sur Pernes, février 2007 (texte sur cassette audio).

**Maria G.**, née à Gottlob, Banat roumain, interviewée par S. Vultur, Paris, 2007. (texte audio, notes)