

# **REINTRODUCTION OF THE MULTI-PARTY SYSTEM IN ROMANIA: THE LEGAL FRAMEWORK AND THE EVOLUTION OF POLITICAL PARTIES FROM 1989 TO 1996**

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**Abstract:** After the 1989 Revolution, the term “transition” was associated almost immediately with the term “reform”. The transition required a long series of reforms consisting in the abolition of existing institutions and realities during the communist regime and their replacement with new ones necessary for the establishment of democracy. Unquestionably, a difficult task for the governors and therefore the indigenous political class. Romanian politicians had to consider what reforms were absolutely indispensable for achieving the transition to a genuine democracy and a real market economy, but they also had to follow the order in which these reforms were to be introduced, the expected effects, to justify them to the population in order to obtain its consent – by vote – in order to implement them. Romanians voted for reforms according to promises, and then rejected governments according to results. The role of political parties in the democratic game is very important. To underline this, we have analyzed, on the one hand, the legislative framework under which political parties were established and operate in Romania, as well as the route taken by the main political parties between December 1989 and 1996, which led to certain results from the 1996 elections, as in all election campaigns carried out till present.

**Keywords:** political party, elections, cleavage, doctrine, voters, electoral campaigns.

## **LEGAL FRAMEWORK FOR THE ESTABLISHMENT AND FUNCTIONING OF POLITICAL PARTIES IN POST-DECEMBRIST ROMANIA**

Since the first days of freedom following the Revolution of December 1989, Romania has embarked on a difficult process of democratization and institutional modernization, facing the difficulties of connecting to the values, principles and practices of liberal democracies<sup>1</sup>.

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<sup>1</sup> Valentin Naumescu, *Sisteme politice comparate. Elemente de bază*, Cluj-Napoca, Casa Cărții de Știință Publishing, 2003, p. 144.

Political pluralism was laid down in the National Salvation Front (FSN) Council's Communiqué to the Country on 22 December 1989, which established a pluralistic democratic system of government.

Decree-Law No.2/27 December 1989 provided for the abolition of the power structures of the former dictatorship, throwing into anachronism the Constitutions in force during the communist regime, the form of republican government, as well as the position of President of Romania.

The return to the democratic system, after a disruption of more than four decades, was legally enshrined in the adoption of Decree-Law No. 8/1989 which provided, in Article 1: "In Romania the formation of political parties is free, with the exception of fascist parties or those which propagate concepts contrary to the state order and the rule of law. No other restriction on the grounds of race, nationality, religion, degree of culture, sex or political belief may prevent the formation and functioning of political parties".

In their activity, political parties were obliged to respect sovereignty, independence and national integrity, democracy, "in order to ensure citizens' freedoms and rights and affirm the dignity of the Romanian nation". In order to be set up, a party needed at least 251 members, and in order to register it had to prove the statutes of organization and operation, its political programme, its headquarters and the financial means at its disposal<sup>2</sup>. According to the Decree-Law No. 8/1989, the military cadres and civilian personnel of the Ministry of National Defense and the Ministry of the Interior, judges, prosecutors and diplomats, as well as the operative personnel of the Romanian Radio-Television, could not be members of a party. The Romanian Communist Party was outlawed, and the most unpopular measures and normative acts of Ceaușescu's period were annulled or repealed.

Following intense and even violent political confrontations, on 9 February 1990 the Provisional Council of the National Union (CPUN) was established, a body with legislative powers that would operate until the parliamentary and presidential elections on 20 May. CPUN has taken over the functions and prerogatives of the FSN Council<sup>3</sup>. The CPUN consisted of 241 members, including 105 representatives of newly created political parties and formations, 106 representatives of the FSN Council, 27 representatives of national minority unions and 3 representatives of the Association of Former Political Prisoners, following that the delegates of the parties that would later be formed to participate only as an observer.

The new legislative body – the CPUN – adopted, on 18 March 1990, the Decree-Law No. 92/1990 on the election of the Parliament and the President of Romania, which stated that: "Political power in Romania belongs to the people and

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<sup>2</sup> Article 3 of the Decree-Law No. 8 of 31 December 1989 on the registration and functioning of political parties and public organizations in Romania.

<sup>3</sup> Decree-Law No. 81/1989 on the Provisional Council of National Union, published in Official Gazette No. 27 of 10 February 1990, Part I.

is exercised according to the principles of democracy, freedom and ensuring human dignity, inviolability and inalienability of fundamental human rights”.

Article 2 of the same normative act stipulated that: “Romania’s governance is carried out on the basis of the pluralistic democratic system, as well as the separation of legislative, executive and judicial powers”. This provision of the law established the principle of separation of powers in the state as opposed to the dictatorial regime when in the “inside” of power the balance between the three functions (legislative, executive, judicial) no longer existed and mutual control established between powers (for “power to stop power”) no longer worked (balance or “balance system” disappeared). By hypertrophy of one of the terms of the equation, legislative power/executive power (usually of the latter) was reached an authoritarian political regime established and maintained by coercion, under the conditions of the existence of a head of state who aimed at personalizing his own power and establishing a totalitarian system<sup>4</sup>. Thus, it reverted to multi-partyism after almost half a century of monopolyism characteristic to the totalitarian political regime.

In the literature it has even been stated that the provisional period – the provisional government of Petre Roman – was characterized by a “«toomultipartyism», amplified by the manifest appetite of the old and new political formations to face more or less political”<sup>5</sup>.

In art. 11 of the Decree-law no. 92/1990 regarding the election of the Parliament and the President of Romania provided: “The candidacies for the Parliament and the presidency of Romania are proposed by parties or other political formations, constituted according to the law”. The winner of the presidential competition between the candidates proposed by the parties had to follow the rule of partisan neutrality, fulfilling a dual function – to ensure the functioning of state institutions and to ensure compliance with the timetable for drafting the future Constitution<sup>6</sup>.

The change of the political regime, the abandonment of communist doctrine, the transformation of the institutional and legal framework for the exercise of dictatorial power into a democratic one took place in successive stages, carried out quickly and crowned with the adoption of the Constitution of 1991. The Romanian legislature promoted a new conception on the guarantee and defense of citizens’ rights and freedoms, as well as on Romania’s alignment with international standards in the field of fundamental rights and form of government. Thus, the

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<sup>4</sup> Avram Cezar, *Regimuri politice comparate. Autoritarismul și totalitarismul secolului XX*, Craiova, MJM Publishing, 2002, p. 25; Cezar Avram, Roxana Radu, *Terror, Manipulation and Demagogy – the Way to Absolute Power*, in “Revista de Științe Politice. Revue de Sciences Politiques”, nr. 8/2005, pp. 7–30.

<sup>5</sup> Ioan Scurtu (coord.), *Structuri politice în Europa Centrală și de Sud-Est (1918–2001)*, first volume, Bucharest, Romanian Cultural Foundation Publishing, 2003, p. 285.

<sup>6</sup> Under the new legal order established in December 1989, with the agreement of the Prime Minister and the Presidents of the Chambers, the President could dissolve the Constituent Assembly if it did not fulfil within 9 months its task of adopting the Constitution.

Basic Law, adopted in 1991 and revised in 2003, presents the Romanian state as a unitary state, with a semi-presidential democratic regime<sup>7</sup>.

Article 8 of the Basic Law enshrined the principle of pluralism in constitutional terms, stipulating that political parties are constituted and operate under the law<sup>8</sup>.

In 1996 the Law of Political Parties No. 27/1996, which was replaced – in 2003 – by a new law regulating the legal framework for the establishment, organisation and functioning of political parties: Law No. 14/2003.

## ESTABLISHMENT OF THE MULTI-PARTY SYSTEM

The transition to the multi-party system was clearly essential to the establishment of democracy. The democratic regime established after December 1989 is based on the principle of political pluralism, known as multi-partyism. Political parties are the intermediate bodies between the population and the governors. The political class is the source of specialists, decision-makers and expertise in the political, social, etc. field. However, classical political institutions and political parties do not have the whole monopoly of leadership or the monopoly of public opinion<sup>9</sup>. It is the electoral body that has important decision-making tasks at central and local level.

In post-decembrist Romania, a real “inflation” of political parties has emerged, driven by the sincere desire of some Romanians to overcome as quickly as possible the phase of the single-partyism of the community and the intention of others to assert themselves on the political scene, taking advantage of the small number of members required by law to form a political party<sup>10</sup>. Thus, the historical parties – the National Liberal Party and the National Peasant Party, the Social Democratic Party of Romania – re-emerged on the political scene.

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<sup>7</sup> Mihaela Bărbieru, *Accuracy Data of the Presidential Voting Outcomes to an Inferential Bias of the New Romanian Electoral Code and Electronic Vote (2014)* in “Revista de Științe Politice. Revue des Sciences Politiques”, nr. 45/2015, Craiova, Universitaria Publishing, p. 137.

<sup>8</sup> Political pluralism was originally foreseen in the CFSN's Communiqué to the Country of 22 December 1989, which established a pluralistic democratic system of government. In April 1996, Parliament adopted the Law on Political Parties (Law No 27/1996), which created the democratic legal framework for the establishment and functioning of political parties. The law provided that associations established according to its stipulations, those acting to respect national sovereignty, independence, unity and territorial integrity, respect for the principles of constitutional democracy and the rule of law, can function as political parties. See Cristian Ionescu, *Regimul politic în România*, Bucharest, All Beck Publishing, 2002, pp. 110–112.

<sup>9</sup> Avram Cezar, Roxana Radu, *Regimuri politice contemporane: Democrațiile*, Craiova, Aius Publishing, 2007, p. 234.

<sup>10</sup> Ioan Scurtu (coord.), *Structuri politice în Europa Centrală și de Sud-Est (1918–2001)*, vol. I, Bucharest, Romanian Cultural Foundation Publishing, 2003, p. 283.

In post-decembrist Romanian political life political parties were considered the legitimate representatives of the social body liberated by the “political monopoly of the Communist Party”<sup>11</sup>, being endowed with a “natural capacity for representation”<sup>12</sup>.

Perceived as extremely useful tools that respond to a function of “public utility”<sup>13</sup>, a multitude of political parties appeared “like mushrooms after rain” during January 1990: The Romanian Ecological Movement, the Romanian Democratic Socialist Party, the Democratic-Christian Union, the Democratic Party, the Romanian Ecologist Party, the Democratic Unity Party, the Progressive Party, the National Democratic Party, the Liberal Party (Freedom Party) of Romania, the Ecologist-Humanist Party of Romania, the Party of Democratic Unity of Moldova, The Socialist-Liberal Party, the Party of Romanian People, The Free Democratic Party, the Romanian Social-Democratic-Christian Party, the Romanian Freedom and Democracy Party, the Romanian Agrarian Democratic Party, the Republican Party etc.

A moment full of political and highly controversial change was the transformation of the National Salvation Front (FSN) into a political party. On February 6, 1990, Ion Iliescu was appointed president of the new political party. The controversy was caused by the fact that it was the FSN that had taken political power in the state on 22 December 1989, forming its governing structures in all the counties of the country, in enterprises and institutions, which clearly benefited it over other parties. According to the platform-programme, the FSN was the expression of “the national consensus achieved with a view to overthrowing the dictatorship and advancing Romania into the era of freedom”. The Front declared itself to be “a centre-left movement aimed at the working people, the broadest social categories, a orientation that brings it closer to the values and objectives of European social democracy”. The officially stated objective of the FSN was to create “a rule of law, based on justice and social equity, on the rule of law”. In the economic field, the focus was on decentralisation, privatisation, liberalisation, profitability, the introduction of market mechanisms, in parallel with social protection measures and social-political stability. As far as property was concerned, the FSN advocated for the mixed market economy, for the coexistence of public and private property.

After the transformation of the FSN into a political party, the composition of the FSN Council changed according to the principle of parity (half of the number of members of the Council at the time, to which were added, in the same

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<sup>11</sup> Alexandra Ionescu, *Consolidarea partidelor politice și reforma instituțională a autorității publice în Europa Centrală și Orientală. Pluripartism și pluralism politic în postcomunismul românesc*, in “Studia Politica: Romanian Political Science Review”, vol. 13, no.1/2013, p. 114.

<sup>12</sup> Daniel Barbu, *Republica absentă. Politică și societate în România postcomunistă*, second edition, Bucharest, Nemira Publishing, 2004, p. 170.

<sup>13</sup> Ingrid van Biezen, *Political Parties as Public Utilities*, in “Party Politics”, vol. X, no. 6, 2004, pp. 701–722.

proportion, representatives of political formations and national minority organisations co-opted in the Council).

Although won the elections of 20 May 1990, the FSN was on the verge of collapse. The National Convention of the FSN of 16–17 March 1991 was the time of the first attempt to settle the party on a doctrinal basis. According to the motion “A future for Romania”, the FSN was defined as a “centre-left party that was inspired by the values of modern European social democracy”. As a social basis and as political representation, the FSN represented a total “catch-all-party” (or “attrape-tout”) that had received massive electoral support on the basis of social-democratic promises<sup>14</sup>.

The FSN Convention of 27–29 March 1992 was the moment when the differences in leaders’ vision led to the division of the FSN. Supporters of the “Future – Today” motion won as a result of the vote, and Petre Roman became president of the FSN. The group of those who lost elections inside the FSN broke away and formed a new party, the Democratic Front of National Salvation (FDSN). At the first National Conference of the new party, held on 27–28 June 1992, it was decided to support Ion Iliescu for the presidential elections. In the parliamentary elections of 27 September 1992, the FDSN, newly established after the FSN split, won first place, and Ion Iliescu became president of Romania with 61.5% of the votes.

Proponents of the “Future-Today” motion, although they managed to impose themselves inside the FSN, lost the 1992 parliamentary elections. Petre Roman’s main concern was to change the name of the party the opposition had accused of neo-communism, releasing the slogan “FSN=PCR”. On 28 May 1993, the FSN merged with a tiny party – the Democratic Party, resulting in the Democratic Party-FSN. Subsequently, the second part of the name was dropped, retaining only the title of Democratic Party (PD).

One year after its founding, the FDSN reaffirmed its social democratic orientation, at the National Conference on 9–10 July 1993, when it changed its name to the Party of Social Democracy of Romania (PDSR). At the same time, the absorption was achieved by merging with the Social Solidarity Party, the Republican Party, the Cooperative Party and the Democratic Socialist Party of Romania.

Another objective pursued by Petre Roman was to join the Socialist International, for which the PD concluded a cooperation agreement with the PDSR thus constituting, on 27 April 1995, the Social Democratic Union (USD) with a view to presenting the two parties on joint lists in local and general elections. In September 1996, at the UN headquarters in New York, the PD and PDSR were officially received in the Socialist International.

Between 1992 and 1996, the PD was a very dynamic parliamentary party, constantly challenging the work of the executive and initiating numerous motions

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<sup>14</sup> George Voicu, *Pluripartidismul, o teorie a democrației*, Bucharest, All Publishing, 1998, p. 220.

of censure. With the help of young cadres, the PD has totally changed its image, defining itself as a “modern social democratic party”, determined to “reform”, open to broad and forward-looking collaborations, including with its former political opponents<sup>15</sup>.

In the 1992–1996 legislature, being at the country’s government, the PDSR underwent a severe process of erosion and lost the elections in the autumn of 1996.

Another party plagued by change and infighting was the one created in July 1990, the National Liberal Party – Young Wing, which changed its name on 26 May 1993 to the Liberal Party 1993 (PL’93). Some of the members of the new party later joined the CDR, leaving the party without a parliamentary group in October 1994. Between 1994 and 1996, PL’93 underwent other changes, which further weakened the liberal pole.

The Civic Alliance Party (PAC) is another party that has suffered numerous seizures. The first president of the Convention, Nicolae Manolescu, had not received support in the race for the Romanian presidency, Emil Constantinescu being the favorite, which is why Manolescu refused his party to join, post-election, with the joint forum of the opposition. However, the members of the PAC acted individually, joining parties that were part of the CDR, and that party remained, in June 1993, without a parliamentary group in the Chamber of Deputies.

An important political force of the opposition was the National Liberal Party (PNL), the continuation of the former PNL established in 1875. He underwent a first transformation when, under the leadership of Radu Câmpeanu, he left CDR (15 April 1992) and proposed King Michael I (on 18 July 1992) to the post of President of Romania. This step was sanctioned by the electorate, with the PNL no longer meeting the number of votes needed to enter Parliament. Thus occurred the spectacular fall of the PNL in the preferences of the electorate, losing its place as the main opposition party it had occupied in 1990. Radu Câmpeanu did not take responsibility for this failure, although most politicians blamed him for this. As a result, in December 1993, the Permanent Delegation of the PNL decided to exclude Radu Câmpeanu from the party.

In February 1993 the PNL Congress was convened, occasion with which was elected as party president Mircea Ionescu-Quintus.

Radu Câmpeanu’s reply was no longer expected. In February 1994, he initiated an extraordinary PNL Congress, with his followers electing him as party president. Thus began the confrontation with the grouping of the same name led by Quintus, the conflict over the name of the two political formations being cut into justice: the party led by Mircea Ionescu-Quintus continued to be called the PNL, while the other faction was to be called the National Liberal-Câmpeanu Party (PNL-C).

In August 1994 it was decided to rank the component parties according to the representation in the territory and to nominate the alliance’s president as the sole

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<sup>15</sup> *Ibidem*, p. 295.

candidate for president. PSDR, PL'93 and PAC refused to sign this act, leaving the CDR in February 1995 and March 1995 respectively.

In November 1994, the PNL entered the CDR, the great opposition coalition, where it played a minor role, accepting all the initiatives and directions imposed by the new "head of line"<sup>16</sup> – PNȚCD, a party that received 100 eligible seats on the electoral lists (55.5%) of the total, in accordance with the agreement of 13 August 1996.

On 23 November 1995, the Convention presented a programme platform entitled "Contract with Romania" by which the CDR promised that, within 200 days of taking power, it would impose a set of laws whereby the lives of Romanians, especially young people and pensioners, would improve significantly.

As the election approaches, the number of coalitions for electoral purposes has increased. On 7 April 1996, the USD and the PAC signed a protocol of cooperation in local elections, with the signatories committing themselves to act together to conduct the elections in a civilized, fair manner and for electoral victory.

The Greater Romania Party was established in June 1991 as a promoter of national doctrine, and the Hungarian Democratic Union of Romania was created in January 1990. The UDMR is not a political party per se, but an organization comprising a set of bodies of a political, socio-professional, cultural, scientific nature, etc.

### **LEFT-RIGHT CLEAVAGE IN POST-DECEMBRIST ROMANIA**

Post-decembrist Romanian political life, in search of normality, has evolved in the spirit of alleviating contradictions, in the spirit of consensual models and improving political cleavages. Post-decembrist Romanian political life, in search of normality, has evolved in the spirit of alleviating contradictions, in the spirit of consensual models and improving political cleavages. Analyzing the paradigm built by Stein Rokkan (using as a starting point and processing a thesis formulated by Giovanni Sartori), as well as the model built by Arendt Lijphart, which is based on the four traditional binomas, namely: right-left (socio-economic), centre-periphery, church-state (attitude towards ethical issues such as divorce, abortion, homosexuality, etc.), rural-urban, we must point out that these cleavages have a distorted image in the Romanian reality, they must be redefined as they continue to evolve.

Due to four decades of Soviet import socialism with negative political, social, economic and mental consequences, Daniel Seiler believes that "exit from the communist system is not done by a simple pen trait. This involves a revolution as

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<sup>16</sup> Scurtu Ioan (coord.), *Structuri politice în Europa Centrală și de Sud-Est (1918–2001)*, first volume, Bucharest, Romanian Cultural Foundation Publishing, 2003, p. 294.

profound as the one that gave rise to the previous regime. It is not enough to establish democratic institutions to establish democracy. It must go from a culture of passivity, of obedience, to a culture of citizenship”<sup>17</sup>. Returning to the question of the origin of political parties in this part of Europe, Seiler adopts the idea of Jean Charlot who completed Rokkan’s paradigm by including a fifth cleavage, namely that made up of the state – civil society, the result of the international revolution produced on the territorial-cultural axis. Starting from this, Seiler has developed the typology of political parties, for Central Europe, with four families of antagonistic parties: totalitarian parties – democratic parties, resulting from the above cleavage, and social parties – liberal parties, resulting from the cleavage between minimalists and maximalists, both cleavages being consequences of the international revolution. If the description of the latter does not raise particular problems, the opposition between totalitarian and democratic parties is not as clear and predictable as it seems at first glance. “The party system translates both the reaffirmation of the ante-communist remnants and the conflicts born of the collapse of communism”<sup>18</sup>.

The right-left cleavage was not very relevant at the dawn of Romanian democracy except in the plan of slogans. The problem was posed at the level of ideologies assumed by newly created political parties or formations as well as in the plan of supposed historical legitimacy or generated by the mass movement of December 1989 legitimacy. At the same time, the intellectualist currents of the different orientations have imagined scenarios of decommunization of the country centered on the theory of guilt and past responsibility. This dichotomy was defined as the cleavage of neo-communists – democrats, the political reality quickly going through the stages from the reorganization of the party of “workers” to a pluralistic democracy, so that society was redivided between the followers of conciliation (forgetting communist history) and the followers of memory, the latter calling vindicatively for the antanting of a genuine process of communism. The result of this dichotomy was the appearance on the political scene of an impressive number of parties.

Originally born as a social-political movement of national consensus, amplified by the country’s first governing body – FSN Council on the adhesion system, the National Salvation Front breaks off phased as a result of ideological dilemmas and as a different reflection of the social, conscientious and emotional convulsions of an early democracy, in which the followers of memory, as exponents of civil society, are fighting a total battle in the sense of democratic foundation and institutionalization.

Parallel to this solution of the FSN, political life is crossed by ephemerals due to opportunists and by a reconsideration, reorganization, relaunch of the “interwar” parties who, before seeking electoral support on ideological grounds, claim a historical legitimacy.

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<sup>17</sup> Daniel Seiler, *Partidele politice din Europa*, Iași, Institutul European, 1999, p. 56.

<sup>18</sup> *Ibidem*.

In the 1996 campaign, civil society led by self-proclaimed anti-communist groups achieved a consensus in the “mirror”, embodied in the CDR, and the right-left adversity is listed paroxysmal, without correspondence in the political “topography”.

The right-left cleavage rather refers to systems of opinions, attitudes and values. This system of representation includes cognitive, evaluative and affective components. The content of these structured assemblies of attitudes is clearly neither monolithic nor definitive. For example, one can speak of the fact that the CDR governments had a left-wing component.

The bottlenecks of the functioning of institutions and bodies during the CDR governments due to the PDSR-PSD’s own helplessness and their manifest opposition as the country’s first political party, but a minority in comparison with the ruling coalition, led to the electoral amendment of Romanian politicianism in 2000 and the considerable narrowing of the number of parties with parliamentary representation.

The theory of social consensus is not new. It is expressed in France by the need for solidarity, by the imperative maintained only as a desire to establish a just and brotherly society. The principle of solidarity was stated in 1902 by Alexandre Millerand: “We consider it the duty of the Republic to establish a public service of social solidarity, which differs essentially from charity by recognizing the interests a right and providing the legal means for this right to prevail”. The theory of social solidarity has probably become the post-integration political preserve, when the economic marginalization of poor regions and nations generated the “compassion” of rich societies (former colonial powers: Great Britain, France, Spain, Portugal, Italy, Belgium, the Netherlands or developed democracies/economic powers: Germany, Sweden, Finland, Denmark).

In the name of this social solidarity, each new government of Romania favoured other categories and social groups. Ion Iliescu gave back the land seized by the communists following the collectivization of Romania, the PDSR favoured the tenants of nationalized housing, allowing them to buy the dwellings, while, four years later, the CDR favoured the former owners, adopting legislation that would return their buildings, etc. Despite the fact that society was going through a prolonged economic and social crisis, there was a continuous redistribution of wealth and access to power and social prestige in Romania, and some social categories always had the prospect of a better life. Thus, in Romania there was continuously a population mass (25–40%) convinced that she will live better in the immediate future. The prosperity of the population has in no way been a priority on the political agenda of post-communism, but the mirage of its promise has always fascinated the Romanian electorate. For 30 years this “chain of weaknesses” has continued to renew over time, every four years, according to the formula: promises – vote – disappointment – other promises – no vote/absenteeism – disappointment.

Governments so far have demonstrated that Romanian society has a real cleavage between maximalists – minimalists, i.e. between followers of the theories of economic shock changes and those of step-by-step economic changes. Economic

transformations have benefited more or less from transparency, from public awareness. Post-decembrist governments acted in the light of assistant liberalism, namely the restriction of state participation in economic management, correlated with semi-populist social protection measures. These measures are requested by an overwhelming majority of the population who accuse the state of no longer performing all the paternalistic functions of the communist state. It should be noted that most Romanians still share values passed down through the paths of communist socialization and summarily reassessed in the “eternal” transition period after 1989. We can say, in conclusion, that Romanian society is facing “an inherited mass political culture, the result of the impact between an amorphous society and Leninist-Stalinist ideology of the totalitarian type”<sup>19</sup>.

Rapid social, political, technical and informational changes have disrupted the life of the common man, each seeking his own stability and have shaped the youth differently. Youth has found a fundamental value at large and has overcome the paternalistic barriers of previous generations, but has so far not preferred active political participation.

In fact, the two secondary cleavages mentioned above, namely the followers of memory against the followers of oblivion and the followers of shock theories against staged changes, have become out of date in the face of the earth-shattering prospect of economic crises.

It is obvious that “party systems cannot ensure, by themselves, the guarantees of democracy”<sup>20</sup> in a society even if not exactly “recently liberated by a long-term totalitarianism”<sup>21</sup>, Romania’s future is still in question. The solution may appear to the generation that spent their childhood and much of their youth in communism, and which bans, violations of freedom of expression and lack of all kinds left with a bitter taste, but also to the young people who put freedom and individualism in the foreground, provided they are educated. The final answer lies, in the end, in education, information and culture, the only “weapons” with which we can fight against the marginalization of Romania in Europe.

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<sup>19</sup> Cristian Părvulescu, *Cultură și comportament politic în tranziția post-comunistă. Cazul românesc*, in *Cultură politică și democrație*, Libertatea Press and Publishing House, Panciova, 2005, pp. 16–23.

<sup>20</sup> George Voicu, *Pluripartidismul. O teorie a democrației*, Bucharest, All Publishing, 1998, p. 313.

<sup>21</sup> *Ibidem*.