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O I P O S D R U



ACADEMIA ROMÂNĂ



Ciprian Ilie BĂDESCU

**Fundamentele culturale  
ale crizelor economice**  
*de la etnoeconomie  
la teoria proprietății  
identitare*



Editura Muzeului Național al Literaturii Române



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**FUNDAMENTELE CULTURALE ALE CRIZELOR  
ECONOMICE**  
*DE LA ETNOECONOMIE LA TEORIA  
PROPRIETĂȚII IDENTITARE*



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**FUNDAMENTELE CULTURALE ALE CRIZELOR ECONOMICE  
DE LA ETNOECONOMIE LA TEORIA PROPRIETĂȚII IDENTITARE**

Autor: **Ilie Ciprian BĂDESCU**

Conducător științific: **Prof. univ. dr. Dumitru OTOVESCU**

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## ADDENDA

### Summary

My research project covers a wide spectrum of complex and challenging issues as the problematic of the foundations of economic crises requires a broader perspective within which economic factors are not the only ones responsible for inducing the causes of actual financial crisis so that other factors like the cultural ones should, also, be embedded in the analysis. This is a perspective focused on the cultural foundations of the economic crises and hence requiring an enlarged sphere of analysis, encompassing multiple facets, including economic factors but not excluding others based on pivotal concepts like the identity quasi-rent and civilization value of different economic systems of the so-called "economie-monde".

Globalization confronted mankind with new opportunities and new perils. One of the dangers of globalization, denounced as such by all theorists, is misleading, i.e. hybridation of cultural mixtures whose effect is the destruction of multiple cultural identities. The effect of globalization is gaining with the price of this destruction and thus with "illness of specificities". Second dangerous effect has been denounced by Howard Bloom, which warns of the threat that some subcultures to take control of the overall perception of humanity. (Howard Bloom: *Global Brain: The Evolution of Mass Mind from The Big Bang to the 21st Century*", Editura Tehnică, Bucharest, 2007). The third type of threat was denounced by the Toynbee by what he called "linguistic desacralization" of humankind, namely "irruption of secular civilization of West from the Cristiana Republica of the Medieval West".

Such a desacralization is equivalent to a collapse of the semantic level of the world, and therefore, as Toynbee showed us, missing out on the access to the mythological and religious strata of the culture or missing out the true power and human health and of civilizations which, in the Toynbean term, depends on the access to the strata of archetypes.

As far as we are concerned, without challenging the negative effects of globalization, we believe that globalization is a process that mediates the emergence of a true universalisation space of the local and therefore effective commissioning of ownership identity. My work will integrate, therefore, an interdisciplinary domain, in which, however, will prevail the approach called "sociology and economy of culture", in the tradition of a prestigious, such as Max Weber, but also in light of the theories of famous sociologists like Tudorel Postolache as well as I. Wallerstein.

Nevertheless, challenging the negative effects of globalization is similar to saying that our modern capitalist system and, consequently, our modern society, reached a bifurcation point as stated by Walerstein who has helped us to formulate several central questions as following: Is the „systemic default of the capitalistic system“<sup>219</sup> the major cause of the actual crisis? Or, is it „rather a consequence of its major success“<sup>220</sup> These are two major questions that we should address when trying to explain the causes of the actual global financial crisis. We would be inclined to consider that the capitalist system rather failed, leading to such massive disequilibriums as a consequence of its major success: “The basic structural features of capitalism as a world-system operate by certain rules that can be drawn on a chart as a moving upward equilibrium. The problem, as with all structural equilibria of all systems, is that over time the curves tend to move far from equilibrium and it becomes impossible to bring them back to equilibrium. (...)What has made the system move so far from equilibrium? In very brief, it is because over 500 years the three basic costs of capitalist production - personnel, inputs, and taxation - have steadily risen as a percentage of possible sales price, such that today they make it impossible to obtain the large profits from quasi-monopolized production that have always been the basis of significant capital accumulation. It is not because capitalism is failing at what it does best. It is precisely because it has been

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<sup>219</sup> Horst Hanusch, Florian Wackermann. Global Financial Crisis: Causes and Lessons A Neo-Schumpeterian Perspective, p. 2

<sup>220</sup> Ibidem

doing it so well that it has finally undermined the basis of future accumulation."<sup>221</sup>

We may argue that the capitalist system is always in a dynamic disequilibrium in a Schumpeterian view. The system cannot survive unless the actors involved (e.g. companies etc.) would be able to generate that kind of „genuine profit“ due to innovation process. „Schumpeter's "innovator" with his "creative destruction" is the only theory so far to explain why there is something we call "profit.""<sup>222</sup> Societal evolution was significantly influenced by the so-called “drivers” like "creative destruction" or the ways how the state managed to redistribute wealth through taxation: “Societal evolution was driven (...) by the ways in which states tackled the challenges of raising revenues and managing spending.”<sup>223</sup> Our question is whether this so-called „genuine profit“ due to innovation process, in a schumpeterian view, is socially and ethically desirable? Or, is this profit the only reason for the existence (*raison d'être*) of the business?

Our research project is being, also, focused on finding out appropriate answers to these fundamental questions. Thus, we need a new theory which integrates explaining society with explaining the economic process which consumes its so-called "order", i.e., it produces *entropy* says Georgescu Roegen. The concept of entropy leads us to a major concept in economy, i.e. *creative destruction*, explained in one of Schumpeter's famous theory, i.e. *theory of economic innovation*.

A cultural foundation of the actual economic crisis must be traced back for centuries when the tax-states emerged: “(...) the great historical transformation in modern Western European history was neither the emergence of capitalism (Marx) nor the rise of modern rational bureaucracy (Weber), but the transition from the *desmesne* (or *domain*) state –

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<sup>221</sup> Wallerstein, I. (2008). *The Depression: A Long-Term View*. Fernand Braudel Center, Binghamton University

<sup>222</sup> Peter F. Drucker, *Modern Prophets: Schumpeter and Keynes?*, p. 3, [http://www.druckersociety.at/files/p\\_drucker\\_proph\\_en.pdf](http://www.druckersociety.at/files/p_drucker_proph_en.pdf)

<sup>223</sup> Mick Moore, *The New Fiscal Sociology in Developing Countries*, p. 3, <http://www.psa.ac.uk/cps/2004/moore.pdf>

where government activities were funded from surpluses derived from the rulers own properties – to the *tax state*, that was funded through regularised tax levies on the private sector and private incomes.”<sup>224</sup>.

The crisis that rocked the world's most powerful economies of the planet became one of the most terrible challenges for economic science. Great world leaders, from the spiritual to the political leaders have concluded that, in its essence, this world crisis is a moral crisis so that explanations should be sought at the level of its spiritual foundations.

*One of the objectives* of my research project is being focused on the analysis of the new context in which the actual economic crisis emerged. Analysis should be questioned, therefore, within the framework of the relationship between economy and culture and it is the main goal of our approach. Economic crises are most alarming phenomena within the dynamics of human societies.

They propagate in a way which causes the entire collective mental, being somehow pre-announced through what is happening at the level of the spiritual foundations of economies. The matter was investigated by the great economists and sociologists and however the process of building a theory on the cultural foundations of the economic crises has been delayed.

The delay itself is a part of what we can call the inertia of crisis. The phenomenon is similar to that of the relationship between the wars and the processes of organizing peace. Organization of peace begins long before the end of the war, and after all the energies are concentrated on the process of establishment of peace.

The same happens with the phenomenon of crisis: both during and after their propagation, the minds of politicians are centered on development policy issues, the removal from the crisis and much less on issues such as the crisis itself.

The issue is still more complicated in the context of the megaprocess of globalization, which induces massive deconstructions, disproportions, conflicts, anarchy, profound identity crisis on the scale of the global system as it is presented in the theory of periferialization etc.

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<sup>224</sup> Mick Moore, op. cit., p. 4

The paradigm of cultural foundations of crisis has brought into debate the dimension of intellectual capital, as a key factor of competitiveness of economies. Such consideration will move the field of our analysis towards a more focused approach of the distinctions between the "takeoff" elites, and the elites of the crisis, evoking famous theories like Toynbee's theory (on the relationship between the elite and the crisis of civilizations), *take-off* model of economic growth (Rostow), *superimposed class theory* (Eminescu), *the theory of pseudo-culture* (C. Radulescu Motru), *the theory of quasirent*, Schumpeter's *theory of innovation* and last but not least *the theory of „identity rent“* (Tudorel Postolache) etc.

*Another objective* of my research project will be the re-examination of the relationship between the modern world system and the geoculture of the ending crisis of the cycle of civilisation, as this issue was designed by american scientist, I. Wallerstein.

All this shows us that globalization does not standardize the world nor increases the order of the world, but on the contrary, so a process cannot be thought of as an universal panacea for the world crises of today and of tomorrow.

Arriving at a theory of emergent structures with a perspective on "transitions" in global context is another objective of my research journey as emergent structures are a regularity of periods of sudden or massive changes. The idea of emergence is largely a return to the immanent perspective on phenomena. This tells us that there are immanences in any period that may not be destroyed by revolutions, wars and crises, these immanences might explain some of the changes, especially in periods of transition.

In general, we can say that in any change we must seek a nuclear composition of two opposite and complementary elements: immanent and transcendence, i.e. given elements and superadded elements, which, since they are already added over those given elements (already existing) have the quality of some special qualities.

Immanences are the given of any phenomenon, transcendences are the superadded qualities from the composition of the phenomenon. This is

the "quantum" of change and it helps us to understand the phenomenon of emerging structures.

Economists talk about "emerging markets", i.e. about the birth and consolidation of capital markets, for instance, or the stock markets in so-called "frontier" areas of the system. They are also called frontier markets. The element of the given of that phenomenon is always there, the "element" which is superadded might not be always there, so emerging structures have two facets, these are structures with an ontological deficit, a disequilibrium and structures in equilibrium, good potentiated.

The great challenge is to make the two components ineligible, that is, to develop the theory that helps us to address the phenomena through this nuclear dualism, as *donum* and *superadditum*, as what is given and what is superadded. We invoke some famous theories as to use them for having access to the new aedificie of the new knowledge.

One of the emerging systems' theoretician, I. Wallerstein, considers that the new system of the world, which he called "the modern world system" to distinguish it from the world systems of historical Empires, was born through the emergence in a crisis environment of continental proportions and it was developed through the expansion over the entire planet. What is curious, in his analysis, refers to those elements which make up the given of the phenomenon and those that make up the superadded qualities of the central area (core area), and which may explain the «passionate impulse» which give birth to the system.

Given the aim of my research approach of theoretical reconstruction, we will adjust our methodology to the proposed objectives. My approach fluctuates between a macroperspective and a microperspective of the crisis. Accordingly, the methodology will be adapted to this aggregate of perspectives, so that methods such as that of calculating quasirents of successful firms in the economy will be used.

An approach like the one we adopt within this research project wouldn't be fulfilled without taking into account the necessity of finalizing several applicative elements. In this regard, we propose the elaboration of a set of theoretical and applicative guides (manuals) which, on the one hand, will treat the factors that have led to the emergence of the financial crisis

and, on the other hand, will offer solutions to tackle the effects of the crisis.

We will use various methods of information analysis, based on the principle of plurality of methodologies and information so that the secondary sources of information provided by the statistics from different countries or supranational institutions, statistics, online databases or information provided by articles of journals, will establish the basis for secondary analyses of data. One of the main methods of analysis to be used will be that of case study method.

At the same time, in order to examine the evolution of the crisis, we will use research methodology of the megacycles as the one of the modern world system (1450-2005), a method originated in Wallerstein's studies, using the intersected examination model of the great historic cycle of the modern world system with the last Kondratieff cycle (1945-2005), ending the age of the 20th century, to capture the mutations in the identity property in several countries (preferably Russia, Romania, Germany, especially after the fall of the Berlin Wall).

All of the economists argue that crises are common phenomena, being part of the process of carrying out the economic cycles. In other words, a crisis can be previsioned. The famous Russian economist Kondratiev determined the cycles which bears his name. These cycles are carried out in two phases, growth and decline that ends with an acute crisis, after which the ascending phase follows and so on. In other words, the crises are cyclical phenomena and, as such, they should be included in the methodological settings when determining the temporal series, i.e. secular time series in order to characterize the cyclical incidence of crises. Roubini did the same thing in his book called *Economics of Crises* (published in 2010, two years after the outbreak of the crisis in 2008) as a co-author, with the historian St Mihm.

A theoretical enquiry into the nature of actual crisis should be accompanied by empirical evidence within which such complex *pivot concept* like the *welfare regime approach* would provide theoretical as well as methodological directions for encompassing social, cultural as well as institutional factors in a world confronted with increasing amplitude of asymmetries.



One of my proposed research projects is part of a series of studies on the complex issues of welfare state that might be traced back in 1999 while finalizing my master's thesis in the field of political sociology and welfare policy. Then, I decided to have a better insight in the field of strategic management while studying within a master's degree program (MBA) in Cambridge (U.K.) at Ashcroft International Business School. I realized that the mainstream economics is being influenced by a new so-called "integrated approach" in the science of modern management in which the current economic thoughts are being influenced by a stream of managerial discourses of famous managers (so-called "gurus") from different parts of the world and from various international organizational environments. It is the new way of manifesting the integrated approach on economic as well as managerial thoughts. We are, actually, facing the so-called "managerialism".

My research studies culminated with the award of a PhD Degree in Sociology in 2006 with the thesis entitled "The Vertical Boundaries of the Firm - A Strategic Approach". My research projects, culminating with the award of my PhD Degree in Sociology, were and are still focused on the study of organizations and strategy processes requesting somehow a broader perspective on the foundations of those sudden, unprecedented in its uniqueness of social as well economic phenomena that would lead to massive disruptions in the allocation of resources in the postmodern society, i.e. the crisis.

I realized, then, that developing, also, a sense of cultural awareness of these sudden and massive disruptions in the history of our modern society would, actually, challenge the current economic paradigm seen as being the most important perspective and, probably, regarded as the main theoretical driver for understanding the surrounding reality. In 2011 I had a great opportunity to initiate an extensive research project on the cultural foundations of the crisis as a postdoctoral fellow of the Romanian Academy. As a Fellow of the Romanian Academy's Postdoctoral School "*Harnessing Cultural Identities in the Global Processes*", I examined the issues of welfare regimes within a study period at John Rynalds University Library at Manchester University, UK, elaborating a research project with

participants from Switzerland, Fribourg University (Professor Dr. Heinrich Bortis, President of the Department of Economics, Prof. Dr. Martin Hauser, Director of the Department-UNESCO Chair for the Study of Intercultural and Inter-religious Exchanges, University of Bucharest) as well as from Romania like Professor Dr. Ioan Marginean, Deputy Director of the Research Institute for Quality of Life, Romanian Academy.

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