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**T H E S I S**

**The political philosophy of the discourse of the Hungarian public  
sphere formation in Romania**

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## Introduction

The last few years events in the life of the Hungarian community in Romania were utterly important. Although in 2012 for the second time in a row more than one political party fought for their votes, the results were worst then at the previous elections. Experts of the field explained this by the joint effect of the general disillusionment observed in the post-socialist countries and the political crisis of the Hungarian public sphere from Romania. In their opinion this crisis has several elements: the lack of consensus between the parties, the failure of reaching the proposed strategic objectives and the drastic demographic changes, such as assimilation and migration.

This paper proposes to analyze the origins of this crisis through the prism of the public sphere theory developed by Habermas. With the help of the Habermasian model it tries to demonstrate that the observed events and processes are caused by the characteristics of the structural framework of the Hungarian public sphere. In Habermas' conception the public sphere is a space where social actors get together in order to present their private interest in a rational way with the goal of creating the public interest. However, the model proposed by Habermas cannot be used in the case of post-socialist public sphere, his conclusions are valid only in a certain historical context, he's book entitled *The structural transformation of the public sphere* is a sort of normative vision of an ideal society and democracy. Nevertheless the public sphere model can be used as an analytical framework in the examination of the institutionalization of a political community.

The thesis analyzes three aspects of the public sphere: its structural framework, the public interest models that are generated within it and the strategies of exclusion that are used by the actors. In my opinion, the interaction of these aspects can describe how the public sphere works, what its effect is on the community which created it and what are the power-relations that make it work.

From a scientific point of view the paper is interdisciplinary. It can be integrated both in critical theory and in political science or "transitology" as well.<sup>1</sup> Through its objectives and methodology its part of critical theory because it deconstructs the power-relations within the community and by the detailed presentation of the system it searches for egresses from the crises presented above.

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<sup>1</sup> I use transitology as the interdisciplinary domain that studies post-socialist transition.

The central hypothesis of the paper is that the Hungarian public sphere in Romania did not develop in a vacuum, but in interaction with the public spheres from Romania and Hungary and the international community. Events and processes present within these other spheres influenced decisively not only the reactions, visions and interests of the actors involved but the power-relations of the sphere as a whole. However, the Hungarian political elites in Romania ignored these facts, defining their own sphere as independent and considering their own community a separate society in which they used their own methods and techniques for consolidating power and for constructing the public interest. As a result of these premises the research was centered on political elites, the references to major social processes are seldom.

The paper uses several research techniques and methods. For presentation of the structural framework I use a method developed by Ruth Wodak for analyzing transition, the interaction of the interest-models is based on an analytical framework named triadic nexus model by Rogers Brubaker, and the strategies of exclusion are analyzed with the help of different types of discourse analysis.

In the research I used several types of data: interviews, press-materials, documents, memoirs and the critical analysis of the literature. The interviews were held in the last 15 years belonging to three major research projects. The first between 2002 and 2004 by the Teleki László Institute from Budapest, the second between 2011 and 2012 by the Romanian Institute for Research on National Minorities, and the third in 2012 within an international research project on ethnic parties from Central and Eastern Europe. The interviews were processed in NVIVO8, qualitative data analysis software.

The press-materials were used in the historical analysis and analyzed discursively. I gathered data from the most important Hungarian newspapers and journals in Romania: *Romániai Magyar Szó*, *Erdélyi Napló*, *Hét*, *Orient Express* and *Európai Idő*. In the bibliography only those articles appear that are cited within the paper.

The memoirs and the documents form separate sources. I used the most important documents of DAHR and the biographical writings of members of the Hungarian political elites – for example Domokos Géza, Király Károly, Zonda Attila – who participated in the development of the public sphere.

The most problematic sources were the scientific articles. A large part of the analysis published on the Hungarian political community from Romania was written by authors who actively participated in the political events. In other words, the scientific literature has

a double role: on one hand it is used as scientific material in the literature review, and on the other hand as source for the research.

## **I. Critical analysis and operationalization of the public sphere model developed by Habermas**

The first chapter is a critical analysis of the Habermasian concept of public sphere, in order to develop a proper theory on the Hungarian public sphere in Romania. The chapter has four major parts. The first part examines what is the scientific and social context of the appearance and the rediscovery in the 90s of the book entitled *The structural transformation of the public sphere*. Therefore, I briefly present the most important work of Habermas' predecessors (Horkheimer and Adorno), and the most important aspects of critical analysis.

The second part presents the model of public sphere from three different, but interrelated perspectives. These are the three ways that one can read Habermas: from the perspective of history of culture, which focuses on the development of the public sphere in the context of the bourgeois societies of the 17<sup>th</sup> and 18<sup>th</sup> century; from a normative perspective, which focuses on the problematic relationship of public sphere and the ideal of democracy; the last is the perspective of critical theory, which explores the structural transformation of public sphere and its relationship with industrialization, mass-media and universal suffrage.

The third part of the paper is about the most important critical reflections on the public sphere model. I analyze it from the perspectives of political philosophy and feminist theory, history and history of culture and nationalism. The criticism focuses on the conception of a more deliberative and fluid way of the public sphere and on its role in the development of different group identities. This chapter is the bases for the operationalization of the concept.

The last part formulates the starting points of the research. Habermas presents the public sphere as a space where social actors can present their own private interests in a rational way, in order to reach consensus in the formulation of the public interest. In this process social status – wealth, social position, etc. – is not important, what matters is the quality of the presented argument. In his opinion, the public sphere conceived this way provides the bases of a well functioning democracy, because the citizens not only



participate actively in the political life, but can control the outcomes of the political decisions as well.

Analyzing the arguments presented by Habermas, it is clear that his ideas can work only in a certain historical context, the one presented in his book: the social processes of the 17<sup>th</sup> and 18<sup>th</sup> century in France, Germany and England. Furthermore, the critics demonstrate that a purely rational public sphere is utopian, it is more a space of struggle and exclusion of different groups in order to pursue their own interest.

Therefore, in order to depict the Hungarian public sphere in Romania a minimal definition of the concept is needed. On one hand the development of the public sphere cannot be understood without dealing with the past 22 years of political and social change, and on the other hand four aspects need to be analyzed, without which no public sphere can work:

- *private interests that tend to become public interests* – the motor of the public sphere is interest. Habermas visions a rational struggle, but he's critics demonstrate that most of the times these are not rational. The quality of argument is secondary, the most important aspect is the process of defining public interest and the struggle for its redefinition. In most of the cases we cannot speak of an open and egalitarian public sphere, because that would assume the participation of every social actor in the process. The formulation of the public interest has its own discursive rules.
- *social actors and groups* – the historical inquiries demonstrated that the public sphere model described by Habermas was not open, because it was dominantly controlled by the bourgeois, which presented its own group interest as being public. The other groups (for ex. proletariat, women) created their own public space in their fight for influencing the creation of public interest. Yet, the existence of parallel public spheres is not justified from an analytical perspective, the groups and social actors are members of the same sphere. Also, within this sphere the private and group interests are represented by „interpretative activists” (Stamotov 2002), who not only participate in the process of interest-formulation, but explain the messages to the group they are part of.
- *locations or spaces* – the public sphere in Habermas' conception appears in the civil society, in coffee shops and private clubs. The organizing rules and structural characteristics of these groups influenced the internal structure of

the public sphere. Habermas argued that these structures were open, the social status of the actors involved was not an issue. The critics demonstrated the limits of this openness and proved that important aspects of the public sphere are the structural and institutional characteristic of its locations.

- *strategies of exclusion* – the first three aspects of the public sphere control the rules of participation of the social actors. The exclusion of some social groups or actors is done with the help of discursive and structural strategies of exclusion.

The location of structural and discursive processes of exclusion is the main objective of critical theory which can offer solutions for the inherent problems of the Hungarian public sphere in Romania by deconstructing the dominant conceptions of the public interest.

## **II. Elites, intellectuals and the post-socialist transition. Critical literature review**

This chapter presents the most important literature on post-social transition in Central and Eastern Europe and on the post-communist public sphere. The first part describes classic sociological elite-theories (Pareto), which presented the social structure of the newly forming elites, comparatively in several countries, showing the different pathways and developments they took. These theories link the elite-change to democratization and the path chosen by the Central and Eastern European countries.

The second part focuses on the discursive aspects of the transition and the structural aspects of the post-socialist public sphere. It argues that the newly forming elites are filling with different political concepts with new content, such as left–right, communist–anti-communist or nation. Moreover, the debates on the future political, economic or social developments are not practical or pragmatic, but are taking a more normative stance.

The third part concentrates on the special relationship of intellectuals to transition, arguing that after the fall of Communism intellectuals could not and did not form a homogenous category: after the common enemy disappeared they have become the ideology-creators of smaller social and political groups. These findings explain how the intellectuals auto-marginalized themselves from political power.

The fourth part presents the Romanian literature on transition. By keeping the above-presented categories it focuses on the differences of the Romanian transition from the Central and Eastern European patterns. It is clear that the social scientists dealing with the

Romanian transition were not interested in how transition affected the Hungarian community. The Romanian authors were not interested in the evolution of the Hungarian political community, DAHR appears only oversimplified and stereotyped, they did not focus on the internal debates an evolution of the organization.

The last part analyses the Hungarian political and sociological literature in Romania, presenting the different approaches and explanations of the post-socialist developments of the Hungarian minority. The theories on the Hungarian public sphere can be divided in two broad categories. The first can be named the political community paradigm, while the second the independent Hungarian society paradigm. A third wave of writing focuses on transition through the prism of elite theories.

1. Bíró A. Zoltán and Papp Z. Attila argue that the minority elites differ from the majority elites because they hold positions in more social spheres parallelly: at the same time they can be media actors, politicians, and members of the civil and cultural society. Furthermore, minority elite do not fight for power as its majority partner does. This can be explained by the fact that after communism minority elites had different power-definition, meaning mostly the control over the symbolic and cultural capital of the community. Second, the political, cultural sphere and the other social spheres are not autonomous in the case of a minority community, DAHR as the most important political organization appears not only in the political sphere, but in the cultural sphere and the civil society as well. Third, in the case of the Hungarian minority in Romania one cannot talk about an autonomous and working economic sphere, the economic elite integrates in the majority economic sphere of the country. In conclusion, although the transition was an elite-driven process in the case of the Hungarian minority as well, it cannot be explained by classic elite theory.

2. As for the two paradigms, those who look at Hungarians in Romania as a political community, study DAHR and its politics, while those who envision an independent Hungarian society in Romania, analyze on one hand the development of society in general and civil society in particular, and on the other hand the masses-elite relationship.

The political community paradigm has at its roots nationalism studies, the consociational model of democracy and political fragmentation theory. The first focuses on how the minority community is created, the other on the participation of DAHR at government and the Romanian-Hungarian relationship, while the third on the internal conflicts of the Hungarian political sphere. Beyond their explanatory power all theories contribute to the discourses on public interest of the Hungarians, in many cases the studies

have subjective statements about one or other political actors, or formulate normative solutions for the situation of Hungarians in Romania. Furthermore, many of the cited authors explain the studied processes approaching the Hungarian community from inside, without taking into account the context in which it works, through which they reconstruct its independent image.

The Hungarian society in Romania paradigm sees the Hungarian community independent, arguing that the identity-politics of the Hungarians has two levels: the elite-level and the level of the masses. Beyond this paradigm within the Hungarian community several mental, ideological, local and professional traditions can be identified which guarantee their autonomy within the Hungarian society in Romania. The post-communist transition revived these spheres and created the bases of a functional society. However, the Hungarian elites in order to keep their power, reached for identity politics and nationalist discourse. Identity politics was not interested in the needs of the society as a whole and it generated cleavages between the society and its elites and conflict between the ethnic and professional discourse. The adepts of the autonomous society do not explain how the Hungarian community is constructed, it is not clear how the elites can keep the power under these conditions.

### **III. The spaces of the Hungarian public sphere in Romania after 1989**

As presented in the first chapter, an important element of the public sphere is the space where it works. The critics of the model developed by Habermas believe that this element is the one that controls both the internal structure of the public sphere and the conditions of participation of the actors. In my opinion the most important space of the Hungarian public sphere in Romanian is the Democratic Alliance of Hungarians in Romania, a political organization, which proposed not only to represent the Hungarians in Romania politically and culturally, but to construct the Hungarian civil society in Romania. Furthermore, most of the messages appear in the press. In other words, the institutionalization of DAHR is in tight relation with the interest-formation of the Hungarians in Romania and the selection of social actors who can participate in the development of the public sphere. The objectives of the 3<sup>rd</sup> chapter are to describe the structural characteristics of DAHR, and its internal mechanisms that could influence the development of the public sphere of the Hungarians in Romania.

In this chapter I use a research technique developed by Michal Krzyzanowski and Ruth Wodak in a study dedicated to Central and Eastern European transition. In this study they proposed the usage of a theoretic and methodological model, which helps in deciphering one of the most problematic concepts: social transition. In their opinion social change can be analyzed both from the perspective of modernization and social change. The major difference between the two approaches is that modernization defines change as a cyclical process, while social change is linear, with a well defined beginning and end.<sup>2</sup> The two authors propose the combination of the two approaches, social transition being a linear process of cyclic events, where each decision has its own cycle (antecedents and consequences). Furthermore, all of the events related to a process are related to decision-cycles as well (Krzyzanowski–Wodak 2009. 19-34).

In the spirit of the above-presented methodology the chapter presents the structural development and institutionalization of DAHR taking into account the key events, decisions and their antecedents and consequences (see figure 1). By analyzing the Alliance’s documents, I believe that the decisions were taken at the Congresses of the organization, therefore the chapter focuses on these, presenting the institutional background and power-consequences of each and every one.



*Fig. 1 - The cyclic and linear model of social transformation in the case of the Hungarian public sphere in Romania*

The first point is the foundation of DAHR. In 1989 the founders of DAHR believed that they could develop an organization which – similarly to Habermas’ conception on the public sphere – would be open and inclusive. However, after the revolution the Hungarians from Romania clearly were divided into two levels. On the first level there were the

<sup>2</sup> Transition is presented by many authors as social change where a country should reach capitalism and liberal democracy in a linear fashion.

members of the cultural elite, who possessed the needed (cultural and symbolic) resources to participate in the formation of the public sphere. On the second level one could find the members of the Hungarian community in Romania. In the formation of DAHR only the first level took part, members of the elite could present their conceptions and arguments on the future of the community freely. In most cases these debates were polarized, two major groups appeared who had different visions. The polarization effected the structural organization of DAHR as well: in 1990-1991 two centers of power were formed, and the organization did not have a clear hierarchical structure. The actors present at the second level could not participate actively in these debates, they could follow the situation in the press, which focused on this polarization. The central topic of the debate was the relation of the Hungarian community to the Romanian and Hungarian state.

After 1993 the structural transformation within DAHR diminished the gap between the two levels, as it made possible not only the rational debate on the future of the community, but introduced a model of self-government which would have allowed a more active participation of the community. The governmental participation of DAHR however undermined the model of self-government, and had two effects on the public sphere. First, the number of actors participating at the decision and debates was reduced, and second, those who attacked the decisions of the presidency and the politics chosen by the organization were gradually brushed aside. These actors in the end formed their own public sphere, however without real resources they could not develop an effectively working Hungarian counter-public sphere.

The radical change and unification of the Hungarian public sphere in Romania was caused by the institutionalization of the counter-public sphere. This new space was not only polarized, but the distance between the actors has grown even more. The nature of the polarization changed as well: while in the 90s the differences were mostly caused by generational conflicts, after 2003 these are gradually substituted by other types. The participation at government of DAHR changes the generational divisions into ideological ones focusing on DAHR politics and objectives.

As for the conclusions of the chapter, the cyclic model underlines the fact that the structural changes of the Hungarian public sphere in Romania are directly or indirectly linked to the changing political context controlled by the Romanian and Hungarian political sphere.

#### **IV. The changing public interest in the Hungarian public sphere in Romania**

A second important aspect of the public sphere is to analyze how the public interest developed and how it changed. A private or group-interest influences the definition of public interest when it is formulated in a generalizing way, as the interest of the whole community. This process of public interest formation can be influenced by the locations and the structure of the public sphere as well, because those control the apparition and the power of the actors involved.

In the previous chapter I presented the most important structural characteristics of the Hungarian public sphere in Romania. It has two levels, one active which is almost identical with DAHR and later with the space of the three political parties and one passive one. The estrangement of the two levels influences the development of the public interest as well. The formation of the public interest is influenced mostly within the first level, despite the group-interests formed within the second one. This chapter focuses on the internal mechanism of public interest formulation and on the successes and failures of some private or group-interests that were formulated.

The chapter can be divided into three parts. The first focuses on the interest-types that were formulated within the community: ethno-politics, social-engineering, the pluralism of group-interest and democratization. The second treats the different ethno-political models of interest-formulation, while the third develops an analytical framework for the presented models, which explains not only the success or failure of some, but the changing aspects of the public interest as well.

1. In 1989 DAHR formulated its objectives in terms of ethno-politics, proposing to represent the Hungarians in Romania in their fight for individual and collective minority rights. The other types of interests – democratization, the pluralization of group-interests and the importance of social engineering – appeared in the 90s, but none of them could have become dominant. The first two were formulated in opposition with ethno-politics and tried to promote alternative objectives for Hungarians in Romania. The adepts of democratization contested ethno-politics and argued that Hungarians should fight first for the democratization of the country and then for their own rights, which can be achieved only in a democratic Romania. These actors were also looking for relations with the Romanian democratic opposition. The failure of this type of interest can be explained by lack of support within the Hungarian community and by the incompatibility of the political context. Although DAHR was looking for relations with the democratic opposition these

attempts were sabotaged by the nationalist policies of the Iliescu lead Romanian government, which influenced many times the decisions of the opposition as well, leaving DAHR in a marginal position. Similarly, the adepts of the pluralization of group interests lacked internal support as well. Most of the authors supporting pluralization presented their ideas only in a theoretical perspective, others became active participants of the political debates. Those who developed pragmatic programs did not become decision-making actors of the organization. The different debates on group-interest and democratization stopped in 1996, when DAHR decided to enter into the governmental coalition, which correlated with the objectives of the adepts of democratization and politicized the resource allocation in such way that the debates on pluralization and the importance of group-interests has become futile.

As for the adepts of social engineering these were marginalized after 1996 as well, when the problems raised by them were transferred in the competence of the local councils dominated by DAHR. The adepts of social engineering have criticized the leadership of DAHR, because of their predominant focus on ethno-political objectives, which in their opinion overshadowed the possible programs that would take care of the day-by-day problems of the Hungarians in Romania. Moreover, they condemned DAHR that it lacks programs that would allow the construction of a free and independent Hungarian civil society in Romania. The failure of this model can be explained by two facts. First, DAHR leaders defined differently social engineering, believing that it means the institutional development of the Alliance and not the strengthening of local civil sphere. Second, the adepts of social-engineering would have liked to implement their programs without cooperating or becoming member of the political elite. As a response, the political elite did not want to participate in this project leaving gradually the involved intellectuals behind.

2. As for the dominant ethno-political interest it is far from being homogenous and singular, there are several strategies that promote the “right way”. I have identified three models, which had as objective the representation of the Hungarian interests in Romania, the resource-allocation for identity reconstruction. These strategies differ mostly in the way that the relationship with the Romanian and Hungarian government should be perceived and in means that can be used in order to keep the Hungarian community in Romania intact. Another characteristic of these models is that they compete with each other in order to dominate the public interest formation. The three models are the following: model of



individual integration, model of collective integration and model of organizational integration. The three models were mentioned first by Bárdi Nándor, who explained the cleavages in the Hungarian politics from Romania by the parallel existence of three models: 1) the adepts of individual integration into power, 2) the adepts of cooperation and Euro-Atlantic integration and 3) the adepts of autonomy and collective rights (Bárdi 2000). Bárdi however does not give details on how the models work and what the relationship is between the three and the Romanian or Hungarian state-politics.

The model of individual integration is similar both in its relationship with Hungary and Romania. The adepts of this model propose only pragmatic goals: founding Hungarian language schools, searching for funds, etc. The central resource of those following this model is the social network of the persons involved and the cultural and symbolic capital gathered in the past. Its major problems are its ambivalent relation to power, its conflict-avoiding and compromise-seeking attitude, which was not efficient against the ultra-nationalist politics of Iliescu. The most important critics brought up against were the ones referring to its informality and lack of transparency.

The model of collective integration covers the integration of Hungarians as a community in both the Hungarian and Romanian political sphere. In the case of Romania this means fighting for collective rights and territorial or cultural autonomy and the reconstruction of ethnic boundaries, while in the case of Hungary means exactly the opposite: the blurring of the boundary between the majority and minority sphere in order to create a joint national space and the collaboration between the actors of the majority and minority sphere based on values and ideologies.

The model of organizational integration is based on the idea that in its relationship with the Hungarian and Romanian political sphere the minority political elites should depend upon a single ethnic organization and the political representation of the Hungarians in Romania should be totally ideology-free. In the case of Romania, the central element of the model is governmental participation, which would assure the minority rights, power-positions and material resources needed by the Hungarian community. The positions and resources are redistributed by party-logic: only those are named in positions, who are loyal to the leadership of the party. The model does not assure a stable position for following goals, as there is no institutional framework for minority rights and resource allocation, each governmental change reevaluates the Hungarian political elite's position.

The interaction of the models and the influence of the Hungarian and Romanian state can be analyzed with the help of an analytical framework developed by Rogers Brubaker,

entitled “triadic nexus”. This methodological tool assures the evaluation of the models of integration in correlation with the events from the three relational fields.

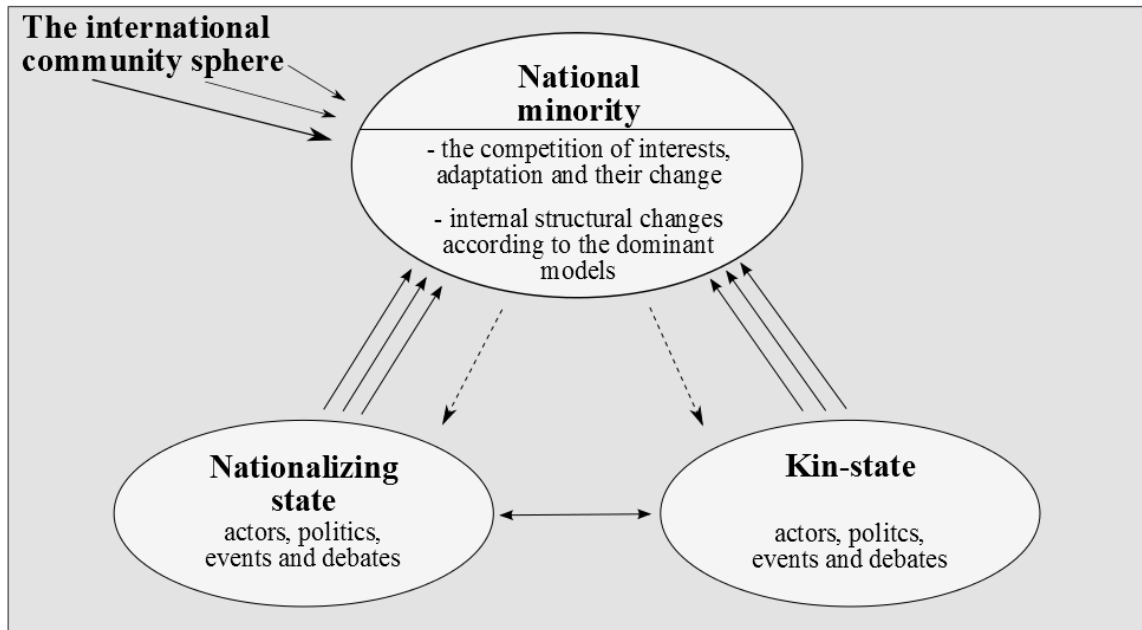


Fig. 5 - The national minority sphere within the "triadic nexus" (Brubaker 1996)

The relation between the events and decisions coming from Romania or Hungary and the interactions of the models can be underlined by analyzing the relationship between the changing power-relations within the minority sphere and the dominant public interest definition. While in the relationship with Romania we looked at six types of interests, in the case of Hungary there are only three. For example democratization appeared more accentually in 1990-1991 and 1994-1995, when collaboration with the democratic opposition became possible. After 1996, the dominant model was the organizational integration, democratization becoming a part of it. Group-interests were debated mostly in 1992, when the Hungarian public sphere in Romania was dominated by debates on pluralism. The adepts of group-interest opposed the collective integration model. Social engineering was present mostly in 1990, 1991 and 1994, when its ideas appear frequently on the public agenda.

The most important change was generated when DAHR entered government which changed radically not only the methods of public interest formulation but the way how it can be influenced. It is important to mention that the participation of DAHR can be explained only by the change of mentality within the Romanian political sphere, as the governmental coalition would have had majority even without the participation of the

Hungarian party. The Romanian politics after 1996 is dominated by the Euro-Atlantic integration and an approach in the Hungarian-Romanian relations.

As for the relationship with Hungary, there is clearly a relation between the governmental changes and the reevaluation of public interest within the Hungarian community in Romania. The model of individual integration was determinative in 1990, between 1998 and 2002, and after 2007. Mostly it is related to Fidesz and its relationship to the internal opposition of DAHR, and the two newly formed Hungarian parties, the Hungarian People's Party of Transylvania and the Hungarian Civic Party. The model of collective integration appears in 2001, when the so called "Status law" appeared and becomes influent after 2010, when the Hungarian law on citizenship is changed. The model of organizational integration appears in 1996, when DAHR becomes member of the Romanian government and after the Permanent Conference of Hungarians is founded in Budapest. The model is dominant between 2004 and 2009. As for the competition of the models, the governmental changes in Hungary and Romania influence decisively the strategy-formulation and public interest-formulation possibilities of the Hungarian political elite in Romania.

The analysis underlines that the Hungarian public sphere in Romania is influenced by events and decisions coming from the other political spheres, mainly the Romanian and the Hungarian. In this context an important resource for acquiring power would be the recognition of these changes, and the adaptation to them.

## **V. Strategies of exclusion used in the Hungarian public sphere from Romania.**

### **Discursive aspects**

A third element of public sphere is the description of the strategies of exclusion. These are structural and discursive characteristics, which contribute to the exclusion and discreditation of other actors within the public sphere. In my opinion, these processes are the main motor of public interest formation. In the third chapter I demonstrated that the institutional framework of DAHR can be considered a mechanism of exclusion, as the structural modifications of the Alliance controls the modalities through which an actor can or cannot influence the formation of the public sphere. Since its foundation, DAHR excluded most members of the Hungarian community to participate in this process, as the local organizations were founded by a small group of people. Later the internal election system could have been a solution to widen the participation level, but these were never

implemented. After 1996 the new structure followed party logic, the Alliance had become hierarchical and homogenizing. After years of internal conflict, members of the internal opposition left DAHR, forming several counter-organizations and parties. Their decision pluralized the political life of Hungarians in Romania, but closed even more the possibility to influence public interest from the outside, civil society or other social spheres.

The chapter focuses on the discursive aspects of exclusion, presenting its most important characteristics through case studies. The main research method used is critical discourse analysis (CDA). It is important to mention, that the case studies presented are not the exclusive examples, but in my opinion these are the most important ones. These are the following: democracy definition within the Hungarian community, the competition on defining concepts of unity and pluralism and last but not least the transformation of the opposition from opponent to enemy.

In the Hungarian public sphere there are several definitions of democracy, but there is a clear cleavage between the one used by people at power and at opposition. While the former uses its procedural definitions in order to legitimate their definitions, the latter uses a deliberative definition in order to legitimate their claims of inclusion and to unfold the abuses of those in power. Furthermore, the invocation of democracy rarifies the discourse as well, as some people merge into one another the democratic claims of DAHR and the organization's internal democratic nature.

Exclusion appears in the concepts of unity as well. First of all, unity is used on different levels and different context, which are intentionally mixed and confused. This confusion maintains uncertainty and excludes the other definitions. The different models and types of interest have developed different concepts of unity, which are used in parallel in order to discredit the political adversary.

Similar processes can be detected when the discursive oppositions are analyzed. The most important discursive strategies are zero-sum games and the construction of false opposing dichotomies. Both strategies contribute to the discreditation of the opponent, while in many cases this is directed toward the person, not the presented opinion. Another central element of the strategies of exclusion is the enemy-creation, when not the idea, but the person needs to be destroyed. In this context even the appeal for dialog appears as a mechanism of exclusion.

## Conclusions

In conclusion, the formation and functioning of the Hungarian public sphere in Romania is influenced by two interrelated processes, which can be named external and internal factors. As for the external factors the central elements are the located models and types of interests, and the competition and interaction of these in the presented structural framework. The dominant model in the past 22 years was ethno-politics, understood as the political representation of Hungarians in Romania and struggle for minority rights. Although in the 90s other models were formulated as well, these disappeared or have been integrated by ethno-politics. Moreover, one needs to underline that ethno-political interests are not homogenous, several strategic discourses and models of integration can be specified, which have same objectives, but present different possibilities related to the relationship of the Hungarian community in Romania to the Hungarian and Romanian political sphere.

In other words, the Hungarian and Romanian political sphere influences not only how the public interest is formulated, but the changes within the internal structure of the Hungarian public sphere in Romania as well. Furthermore, the interest-formation and the internal structure are in interaction: if one model becomes dominant, its adepts change the structure in which it was formulated in order to consolidate its hegemony.

There are two types of internal factors, which I called strategies of exclusion. First, the internal structure of the public sphere itself becomes a mechanism of exclusion, because it controls the power relations and resource allocation within the sphere. From this perspective, the major decision in DAHR changed the internal power-relations, legitimizing some actors, while marginalizing others. Second, the discursive characteristics of interest-formations become mechanisms of exclusion. The presented strategies – democracy-definition, the changing concept of unity and pluralism, discursive oppositions – determinate not only which actors can speak in the name of the community, but the actual power relations as well.

An important effect of the mechanisms of exclusion is that they gradually abolish the consensual elements within the community, the only functioning one being the belief in ethno-politics. This consensus however is attacked both from the outside and inside. First, since the minority sphere is stuck in the “triadic nexus”, one cannot talk about an independent and autonomous community, but about one that is influenced by the events

and processes of the Hungarian and Romanian political sphere. What is more, in this construction its sole existence can be questioned. Second, the analysis of the mechanisms of exclusion demonstrated that chosen discursive strategies are processes of erosion, as these undermine the consensual elements of the perceived Hungarian public interest in Romania. The presented strategies questioned objectives, strategies, but without touching the idea of ethno-politics.

These processes appear on the second level of public sphere as well, as they create a permanent state of risk and suspense within the community. Moreover, the polarization of the public sphere leads to further alienation of the competing actors, fragmenting the whole political elite in the end.

In other words, a new strategy is needed, which not only consciously recognizes the influence of the external factors, but reformulates its discourse, discharging the effects of the used mechanisms and strategies of exclusion, shifting toward a more tolerant and consensus-oriented language.

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