

## After the transition

*“Due to change having been approached from the point of view of the winners-losers relationship, transformation as a real process was not a reformation per se, but a dislocation of the internal mechanisms for the relocation of the external ones.”*

The big transformation for the countries of Central and Eastern Europe (CEE) persists as a problem for which there are no decided solutions, and not only on the economical side. After almost two and a half decades, the trajectory that was followed without hesitation was proven to have a cumbersome finality. Thus, the optimism for deliverance stood corrected, the traction power of the system being proven profoundly asymmetrical in European terms.

Covering the arguments by their positioning comes less and less from common sense, with the background noise of the ideological confrontation being the one restarting to cover the nuances in the configuration of public opinion. By the evolution of things it is hard to tell what the result will be, as the invoking of freedom is becoming much too abstract on the background of the sine die postponement in recovering the gaps in development.

The fault line between the frenzy of freedom and the development deficit cannot be covered much longer by the enthusiasm stimulated by promises. With the simple judging of the previously and currently used means being not – paradoxically for freedom – a preoccupation exercised in the open, the risk of limiting the pool of adherents to the employed model of change is being exacerbated.

The model might not have been completely adequate. Some less than orthodox, yet growth generating examples of change, strengthen the feeling of failure. In the CEE, where compliance to the market system was done mechanically in the initial phase, in a manner similar to changing the wheels on a Formula 1 car during a mid-turn, was followed in a second phase by a covering of the market flows, following the principle of communicating vessels.

Somewhat unexpectedly, yet unavoidable when the approach to change was done according to a winners-losers type of relationship, transformation as a real process was not a reformation per se, but a dislocation of the internal structures for the relocation of the external ones. Instead of the emergence of the market as the

regulating mechanism of the restructured economy, the market made by the global actors was extended. The economic agents and the social factors which acted as wealth generators by making functional the indigenous wealth producing potential became at most secondary in nature. The direct consequence was not the eradication, but the change of direction of these dependencies.

At first the heroism of change was truly functional, but the result in real life was a derailment from the track of development. Modernity's break towards maturity, which seemed to be the promise of transition, was diminished by going through a new experimental path in private property in which the costs of change were fatally multiplied. Fixing the past has turned into a burdening of the future under the guise of an insistent ethical motivation. In fact, post-communist economies have become – by way of politically induced de-capitalization – the new frontier of the consolidated markets. Companies with special strategies for expansion, many of them belonging to murky geostrategic projects, set the rules of the game.

It is certain that for the CEE inhabitant the result at the 1/1 scale of post-communist transition is too different from the expectations and too insignificant to rekindle the motivation. For the critical mass, whose function is gaining importance, the freeze-frame has become the lucid method for evaluating successes and failures. And there aren't any signs that this is happening exclusively in order to reopen the horizon which would resonate with a real project for returning to the winning path of modernity. It is hard to dispel the belief that the CEE inhabitant's hopes are being abandoned anew in a grey area by those who were the initial recipients of the drive for change.

The impression of failing the great transformation comes from something impossible to understand in the Occident: the memory of the experiment. The CEE countries have a common dependency to the path, the emotion of violent change is instantly awakened, it indistinctly blocks and moderates initiatives which were insufficiently explained to be understood. The suspicion of something else destroys rational debate. Communication is caught between the excess of emotion and the mistrust of statements, even the well-intended ones.

If we are to point out, in everything that surrounds us, the most useful thing in traversing a world of doubt, then that is the habit of rejecting the ideal. Doubt, raised to the level of state policy, is specific to the communist detour towards which the CEE population was pushed in the second half of the last century. In Central and Eastern Europe, morality has only the form of the nicely shaped word, rolling over the instinct of conservation. Double talk is overlaid on hopes and needs. The former pertain to the experiencing of the ideal states of mind,

repressed after proven to be deceitful, with the latter being the ingredient for the life which must be lived under any conditions, at any price, as a survival-of-the-species model.

The recent memory of the social experiment shapes attitudes, behaviours and mentalities towards assimilating the crisis. The resilience to shocks has become so great that everything is borderline placed. Whether advancing or retreating from the project, changing the direction of travel has an equal chance of yielding a winner or a loser. Ending this draw of history is possible only by synchronizing perspectives. The West and the Rest were alternatives built on the logic of adversity! Why does it continue to be so after the transition?

Marin Dinu



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