

THE PARADIGM AND PARADIGM SHIFT IN THE SOCIOLOGICAL RESEARCH METHODOLOGY OF THE SOCIAL IMPACT OF DOMINATION AND VOLUNTARY SERVITUDE (I)

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ABSTRACT: THIS ARTICLE IS A BRIEF PRESENTATION OF A SOCIOLOGICAL RESEARCH STUDY, MUCH MORE EXTENSIVE, ON THE SOCIAL IMPACT OF THE EXERCISE OF POWER, DOMINATION AND VOLUNTARY SERVITUDE. THE GAP BETWEEN THEORY AND PRACTICE, BETWEEN THEORY AND PARADIGM, SHOULD BE ELIMINATED BY SUPPORTING PARADIGM SHIFT. THE PROPOSED METHODOLOGY IS NOT ONLY A CRITICAL ANALYSIS OF THE RESEARCH WORK, BUT THE FORMULATION OF SOME PROPOSALS FOR THE IMPROVEMENT OF THIS ACTIVITY. THERE IS SHOWN A NOVELTY CHAIN OF DEDUCTIONS AND INTERCONDITIONALITIES BETWEEN OF DOMINATION AND VOLUNTARY SERVITUDE, IN THE CAUSAL ANALYSIS OF THE THREE VARIABLES INCLUDED IN THE SCIENTIFIC RESEARCH APPROACH. THERE ARE NOT SPARED EVEN THE SUBORDINATE METHODS AND TECHNIQUES. THE PURPOSE OF THE PAPER IS TO "HIGHLIGHT ENDANGERED VALUES, TO DISCOVER WHO AND HOW THREATEN THEM, TO CONTRIBUTE TO PUBLIC CONFLICT RESOLUTION OF THE SOCIAL STRUCTURE." THE PAPER WANTS TO BE A FLEXIBLE METHODOLOGICAL STUDY AND OPENLY, ANTI-IDEOLOGICAL ONE.

KEY WORDS: PARADIGM, THEORY, METHOD, SOCIOLOGICAL RESEARCH, POWER, DOMINATION, VOLUNTARY SERVITUDE, REPRESSION.

INTRODUCTION

A brief overview of the specialized literature, of the theories about power in the state-dominated society, of the political power and the exercise of state power enables us to find a significant rearrange of the issue of such subjects, in conditions of changes occurred in relations between state and societies and between them and the global society. One can even speak of an obvious gap between theory and practice, between theory and paradigm, between paradigm and social realities which are constantly changing. That is why, we notice, in this respect, an imperious need to change the paradigm, which can only be the work of the entire scientific community to which we signal modestly only a few landmarks of movement and social action that can be subjected to scientific research and "*science movement*" in general. Our concern is subordinated to the basic principles issued by the historian and sociologist *Thomas Kuhn*, who

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points out that, before any research project, we must have in mind the distinction between theory and paradigm or conception. The paradigm is thus defined in two respects: one comprising a "common option" at the level of scientific community such as "disciplinary matrix" that guides scientific work, and another, the "standard example" of solving some problems.²

The French sociologist *Raymond Boudon* believes that "the notion of theory implies that the sentences subject to verification are deduced from a number of primary sentences." The notion of theory "covers a broad sense and one restricted. In the narrow sense, it corresponds to the concept of hypothetic-deductive system of sentences. In the broad sense, it covers in addition to notion of theory in the narrow sense, at least three paradigms, namely: theoretical paradigms, formal and conceptual".³

1. THE SCIENTIFIC KNOWLEDGE AND SOCIAL VALUES

The paradigms not only differ in terms of the concepts used and according to the values to which are subordinated.

The value, defined by the American anthropologist *Clyde Kluckhohn*, is an explicit or implicit conception of what is desirable, distinctive for individual or group, that influences the choice of the modes, means and aims of the action.

Willy nilly, the paradigms include value judgments and reflect the values to which the researcher has adhered. As a general and objective working principle, the German sociologist *Max Weber* was demanding in the paper "Attempt on the sense of axiological neutrality in the sociological and economic sciences", as the researchers of the social life should give up moral, ethical or political values in their studies. The only permissible and desirable values are the social ones, Weber supporting the concept introduced by him concerning "the ethics of responsibility" in his lecture "Politics a vocation and a profession", which must guide the entire scientific research activity. Although more sociologists thought that research deprived of values is a myth, *Peter Berger* considers the sociology as a "discipline of detachment", the sociologist being qualified to assess the empirical evidence, providing a picture of reality as it is not such as it should be.⁴

In sociology, there is still no unique paradigm, but alternative theoretical structures, every major sociological theory tending to formulate its own methodology. For example, *Émile Durkheim* formulated rules of sociological method suitable to his conception of society and *Max Weber* has built a methodology for the study of social phenomena in direct accordance with his own "sociology interpretative". Therefore, we cannot support, nor prove the existence of a unique methodology of sociological research. In the sociological researches methodology they have been developed as the main methods of empirical data collection: the social investigation, the social document analysis, the observation and experiment.⁵

2. THE METHODOLOGY OF EMPIRICAL SOCIOLOGICAL RESEARCH

The method (gr.*methodos*) represents the most active theoretical aspect of science that marks out the path of acquisition of knowledge. This is the definition given by dictionary of philosophy (1978, p.457). After their reactivity, the methods can be classified into: *experimental methods* (the sociological experiment), *quasi-experimental methods* (the investigation, the opinion poll, etc.) and methods of observation (the observation, the study of

² Thomas Kuhn, *Structura revoluțiilor științifice*, (București: Editura Științifică și Enciclopedică, 1976), 232

³ Raymond Boudon, *Texte sociologice alese*, (București: Editura Humanitas, 1990), 105-106

⁴ Septimiu Chelcea, *Metodologia cercetării sociologice, Metode cantitative și calitative*, (București: Editura Economică, 2001), 40-41

⁵ Cătălin Zamfir, Lazăr Vlăsceanu (coord.), *Dicționar de sociologie*, (București: Editura Babel, 1993), 353-355

documents, etc.). After the occupied place in the empirical investigation, the methods can be: *for collecting of the information* (the investigation, the field study), *for information processing* (quantitative methods, qualitative methods), *for interpretation of research data* (comparative methods, interpretative). To the same methods are subordinate more techniques. For example, the surveys can be based on questionnaire or by interview. The questionnaires can be applied with the help of the operators or may be individually or collectively self- managed. The process represents the manner of action in the use of investigation tools.

The methodology is the integrated science of the methods and has two sides: the critical analysis of the research activity and the formulation of some proposals for improving of this activity.

Paul Lazarsfeld distinguishes six main *themes of the methodology*:

- Delimitation of the object of study in empirical researches;
- Analysis of concepts;
- Analysis of research methods and techniques;
- Analysis of the relationship between research methods and techniques;
- Systematization of data obtained in empirical research;
- Formalization of the judgments.

In the empirical research it starts from theory through the abstraction of the study object from the complexity of the phenomena and relationships in which they are located. The methodology pursues the classification of the meaning of concepts, the correctness of their defining and the analysis of language used. There are taken into consideration the analysis of the research methods and techniques, the putting in relation of methods, techniques, processes and tools of investigation, respecting the rules for making of the questionnaires, construction of the scales and the samples, etc.. The choice of the research methods depends directly on the nature of studied phenomena, the accessibility of methods and techniques, the existence of appropriate investigative tools. Verifying the manner in systematization and processing of data collected after the research on the field (the composition of data series, the reuniting of numerical information in statistical classes, the validity of applying tests and statistical coefficients depending on the level of measurement with which is operated), and the attempting of formalizing of statements, all of these outline the field of interest of methodological studies.⁶

Lazăr Vlăsceanu considers that the sociological research methodology is an analysis of the methods and techniques applied in the achievement and finalization of sociological research. There is no a general methodology, the analyses focusing on the level of particular methodology.

The classes of component elements of sociological methodology are:

- a) The fundamental theoretical statements admitted as reference for the paradigmatic structure of a theory;
- b) The methods and empirical data collection techniques (observation, experiment, investigation etc.)
- c) The techniques and procedures for processing of data and empirical information, of ordering, systematizing and correlating them for substantiation of decisions concerning their theoretical significance;
- d) The methods of analysis, interpretation and theoretical construction or reconstruction based on the empirical data to assist preparation of descriptions, typologies, explanations and theoretical predictions.⁷

⁶ Chelcea, *Metodologia cercetării sociologice...*, 48-52

⁷ Chelcea, *Metodologia cercetării sociologice...*, 53-54

3. THEORY AND PARADIGM IN THE SOCIOLOGICAL APPROACH OF THE POWER, DOMINATION AND VOLUNTARY SERVITUDE

The scientific knowledge of the social processes, individual and group behaviors is always achieved within framework provided by the theories recognized as true by the scientific community at a given time. These theories become paradigms precisely because they have recognition of the scientific community and become valid after a process of changing the old paradigm which is no longer current. Even though the term "*paradigm*" has multiple meanings, the most frequently it is used in the sense of *model* or "*pattern*".

Thomas Kuhn launches this new concept in his paper *The Structure Scientific Revolutions*, considering paradigms as "*exemplary scientific achievements*" shared by the scientific community. Paradigmatic knowledge is a "*tacit knowledge*". A theory (gr. *theoria*) can be considered an "*intellectual construction by which a certain number of laws are associated with a principle from which they can be derived rigorously*."⁸

In the narrow sense, the theory is a set of statements with truth value on relations between phenomena. The sociology as a science is a multi-level theoretical structure, complex, comprising studies and *great theories*, such as *the structuralism, functionalism, phenomenology*, etc., *middle-level theories* as the theories of social mobility, of small groups etc., as well as *theories with minimum level of generalization*.⁹

We approach briefly in the following, in correlation, the concepts of power, domination and voluntary servitude, categories of functional paradigm represented by the theory of causal analysis. Their applicability will try to demonstrate the cause of obedience and disobedience of social groups in direct relation with the exercise of power and domination. The model of initiation of such a ways of sociological investigation is the one taken over by *Raymond Boudon* from *Pitirim Sorokin*, based on a series of fundamental sentences from which we will take only the initially ascertaining sentence regarding the social stratification: "*Every society is stratified*."¹⁰ From here we can launch a chain of sentences affirmative, explanatory and conditional, prefiguring a system of conception which comes to reveal a social and political reality unnoticed by any theory and not being constituted itself into any paradigm so far. The string of concepts or the elements of the system of conception, inter-conditioned "in cascade" prefigures notional "*the vocabulary*" in which will be expressed the explanatory sentences. The sentence or the sentences considered primary precede the *conclusion sentence* which is obtained by deduction. At this theoretical, final moment, one can speak of *a theory*. If this conclusion is checked, not on the simple path of deduction, but after proof of reality, then we can speak of a *paradigm*, with the express condition that the entire theoretical and practical approach meets the acceptance and "common option" of the scientific community in the field. This procedure in scientific research meets the essential elements indicated as required by *Raymond Boudon*. The French sociologist believes that the term of "*paradigm*" can be used to denote "*the language in which are formulated the theories or, possibly, major subassemblies of the theories issued in the framework of a discipline*."¹¹

The explained social phenomenon, that one of social and political relationship between domination and servitude, in the exercise of state power, is, and in the case of the present study, described as "*result of the juxtaposition or composing of lots of actions*." It has a volitional component, taking the form of an intentional behavior act and aiming to achieve a well-defined purpose. The paradigm as worded belongs to the family of *interactionist paradigms* and when

⁸ Paul Foulquié et Raymond Saint-Jean, *Dictionnaire de la langue philosophique*, (Paris: P.U.F, 1962), 723

⁹ Chelcea, *Metodologia cercetării sociologice...*, 32-35

¹⁰ Boudon, *Texte sociologice alese*, 106

¹¹ Boudon, *Texte sociologice alese*, 202-203

"social phenomenon is regarded as a result of previous elements and events, the paradigm belongs to the category of deterministic paradigms."¹²

The chain of deductions and interactions between *domination* and *voluntary servitude*, in the present causal analysis, knows the following structure:

1. *Every state society is stratified.*
2. *The stratification of society includes a dichotomous equation, the permanence of existence of an dominant elite, holder of the power, on the one hand, and the dominated society, on the other hand.*
3. *The servitude is a result of the exercise of state power and domination. It can be caused by coercion, in which case we distinguish "the forced servitude" or an act of individual will and/or group that can be influenced by power, in which case the obedience to power takes the form of "voluntary servitude".*
4. *When the domination in the exercise of state power is excessive and the abuse of power and the discretionary power are manifested unlimited in the power structures, the balance, social relationships and social progress are disrupted, to the same extent.*
5. *In the event that the state power is exercised dictatorial, the premises are given to the collapse of the power organism, phenomenon that can have repercussions to the whole social system.*
6. *When the domination in the exercise of power state tends to register growing values, the voluntary servitude, as a form of benevolent submission to the state power, decreases in proportion, tending towards zero.*
7. *The voluntary servitude is, at the same time, a determinant and a determined of the social will and the social will is related to the dynamics of voluntary servitude.*
8. *When the voluntary servitude knows a regressive trend, to minimum, then the zero point on the scale of voluntary servitude is **the threshold of the revolt.***

The scientific research has its origin in the objective process of social practice and should aim at solving real situations. The scientific researchers are those who refer the matter to, formulate it in scientific terms, treat it in methodological terms and clarify variants of solutions and their implications.

The great scientist and physicist *Albert Einstein*, creator of the theory of relativity, stated:

"the formulation of a problem is often more important than its solution."

T K Oommen, President of the International Sociological Association (1990-1994), noticed, sooner than others, the decline of the national state, type of state from which it has been linked to the emergence of sociology as a independent discipline. Rightfully we wonder now if our study on the state and state power is not an obsolete and void one, given that the disappearance of the national state is more than obvious. But equally well, we can frame the science of sociology itself in the same terms. Is it really this thesis a "swan song"?! This is what *Oommen* says: *"If the Western Europe is the cradle of the nation - state, the same it is its cemetery. The construction of sociology as an autonomous discipline was related to the emergence of nation - state. Regardless of the theoretical and ideological orientations, sociologists have accepted the nation-state as natural unit of their analysis. Nowadays, with the supposed eclipse of the nation - state, the civilization appears as a unit of analysis. Some have even proposed "the World Society", as a framework of legitimate analysis of sociological thought. Can sociology survive in spite of the borders changing of its units of analysis? Are we witnessing the very end of sociology?"*

¹² Dumitru Otovescu, *Sociologie generală*, ediția a V-a, (Craiova: Editura Beladi, 2009), 99

From this perspective, the present thesis can only be a parallel between the political decision of power and the end of sociology. We remain to notice a fact: the ideological and evolutive / involutive sociological changing is not a natural thing of history and social development. Political leaders too often appealed, appeal, and will certainly appeal to the sociological research after taking important decisions, interpreting the sociological conclusions in the sense of the decisions taken. The researches in the domain of sociology can influence political decisions but, unfortunately, many times, political decisions influence the research results, especially in cases where a particular experiment is commanded by power.

Peter Berger, professor at Boston University, believes that contemporary sociology presents four acute symptoms of chronicity trend:

- ✓ *the limitation*, the misconception that you can make generalizations about the world;
- ✓ *the triviality* in methodological plan by imitating the natural sciences;
- ✓ *the rationalism*, through impermissible expanding of rationality of sociology on the world and
- ✓ *the ideologisation*, through the position of attorney of sociologists and sociological orientations of party.

Immanuel Wallerstein, President of the International Association of Sociology (1994 - 1998), speaking about sociology and the useful knowledge, reminded that: "*Max Weber urged us, nearly a century ago, to make an effort to create a neutral science (wertfrei) ... So-called truth is only a mask for a particular ideological position. Nobody holds monopoly on truth*". The genius of Romanian poetry, *Mihail Eminescu*, author of political studies as brilliant as in the sociological field, too, said vehemently that "*not we are masters of the truth but the truth masters us*".

Robert Lynd wrote, in a context that many scientists in the field of the social, under the cover of some neutral researches, pursued and described the world in a manner that was dictated by the power of their country, striving to strengthen the *status-quo*.

4. THE SCIENTIFIC KNOWLEDGE OF SOCIAL LIFE

The first great precursor of the empirical sociological investigation, *Aristotle* (383-322 BC), wrote in the first book of *The Metaphysics*, that philosophy was born out of astonishment. The same thing can be said of sociology, too. According to disputatious sociological orientations from America of the years 1950-1960, the sociology should be concerned with primarily the interrelations and interdependencies of the society components such as the social classes, the fundamental forms of labor, the forces of major socialization. Of these, in the development of this study, it is not so interested in the structure but especially the social change and the mechanisms that lead to it. The domination and servitude may be the subject of the individual- society reports, the society - state, of the mutual influences between man and society and between society and state power. This study is not broken from the present reality but, on the contrary, tries to find scientifically based answers about the society which we are building and the type of state power that dominates this new social and political structure. We intend to find differences between the totalitarian society, which we left it by revolution, and the new society in which we live. Some similarities will not be avoided and in this respect we shall take the main landmark just theoretical and ideological basis on which it underlies the democratic- liberal society namely, the promoting, guaranteeing and respecting of human and civil rights. The way in which transition evolves from totalitarianism to democracy, a transition of economic decline and civilizational involution, how the prerogatives of power are exercised, like the coercion and excessive social control, which involves the discretionary power and abuse of power in the current conditions, these are just some of the social issues at which the

thesis is trying to answer. The Romanian society is in an advanced state of "planned" disorganization and the old norms and values are overturned, no longer correspond and no longer can guide people in a world of unequal competition without solutions, in an anomic society, of the conflicts, corruption and increased criminality.

What C. Wright Mills said, half a century ago about the western society, "*our epoch is that of anxiety and indifference*" is of the greatest actuality for post-communist modern society. In this society the democratic principles and of the market economy ones were implemented deficient, without having sight that the aim of edification of any society that proposes as first aspect the social justice, is to provide the general welfare and, at least minimum, conditions of subsistence. The substrate of this feeling of insecurity, says Mills, in "*The Sociological Imagination*", is the apparently impersonal changes from the structure of the societies, considered in the broad sense of the word: "*Is there surprising any more that simple people feel they cannot keep pace with the evolution of a society with which they are confronted so brutal? In the attempt to defend themselves, they fall in the moral indifference and are becoming obsessed with the feeling that they bear the yoke*".¹³

Behold, therefore, that *the servitude*, a word that is neither expressive nor explicitly has in the language of common perception a synonym very popular, namely "*social yoke*". Under this aspect, the liberal state is a state of the social abandonment. The "*minimal*" state does not provide even minimum living conditions, not to mention the welfare, which is characteristic only of a limited number and privileged class. The state is, in fact, the exponent of this class toward which was polarized by profiteering and onerous transactions the entire wealth of society. For the most part of the population, that does not have any minimum capital, the only possibility of existence remains the sale of workforce in favor of the big owners of the means of production. In this regard, *Septimiu Chelcea* says "*socio-human research should highlight the threatened values, to discover who and how threaten them, to contribute to resolution of the public conflict of the social structure*".¹⁴

Is the modern servitude, only voluntary?

5. THE INDIVIDUAL OF MODERN SOCIETY - "THE MASS MAN", ACTOR ON THE SCENE OF HIS OWN LIFE

The behavioral and moral indifference becomes in time another kind of civic disobedience. The voluntary servitude is manifested in this case as non-action, a way of saying: "I subject to because I cannot otherwise, but I remain indifferent to the manifestation of force and domination of power." For the dominated individual, this fact represents a non-active defensive reaction, which power agrees it. From the obsession of insupportability of social yoke and up to the state of indifference and the voluntary false obedience vis a vis power, it is only one step. The individual has the impression that his action is dictated by his own conscience, a subterfuge designed to provide a false liberty, and the idea of that he will be able to live so, but he is wrong. The freedom is illusory and the real state of existence is one of exhaustion of the true vital energies which become limited and with time disappear. The principle of the power action in the counter dominated society brings forth the non-action of individuals within that social oppressed mass. Sooner or later, the social non-action, as a form of civil disobedience, brings forth the reaction. The indifference for the moment gives way to hate. Paraphrasing the Marxists, *Henri H. Stahl* says that man "*author and actor of his own drama cannot fight unless it is always heated by the flame of enthusiasm, the light of hope and the fierceness of hate*", or in this case all these feelings specific human are crippled by power and replaced with the state of confusion that each individual acquires by voluntary servitude. The fight is lost, because the

¹³ C. Wright Mills, *Imaginația sociologică*, (București: Editura Politică, 1975), 31-33

¹⁴ Chelcea, *Metodologia cercetării sociologice...*, 20

victory is only of the one who does not weaken the state of clenching. By the voluntary act of servitude, the modern man is stimulated more by illusion than the truth. The individual by the acceptance of servitude becomes a defeated man, apparently consoled by illusion and which refuses the fight for truth and real freedom. His illusion is similar to acceptance of the cruel truth. This false consciousness, says *Henri H. Stahl*, this illusory knowledge of man about his personal and social life, becomes a deception of the good faith. "*Any doubt as to the truth of illusion, cancels itself the possibility as illusion could fulfill its functional role.*" Any such approaches disturb those mechanisms that are considered by power as essential for the good functioning of social life. Even *Vilfredo Pareto*, one of the most renowned sociologists, pleaded, in "*Treaty of General Sociology*", for the problems of sociology should not be known to the subjected and the sociology should not become a popularized science. As long as the sociology will be considered a science in the service of ideologies, the power, regardless of its character or orientation, it will fight against evidences of common sense. We are thus witnessing a doubling of the social, a real one, factual, which does not want known, and one apparent, which is consumed in a world of illusion. The modern man is teleported with means of ultimate generation in a virtual world, such as the Internet, where he remains captive and turns his back the real social problems for which he refuses any longer to fight. Life becomes a surrogate, an environment full of traps in which man learns to swim, a different captive life in which freedom is abandoned and replaced with state of the stabulation, where each of us is locked in a "*bubble of protection*" that separates us from the real and social life of the community, we are waiting silently the end. The individual belonging to the society is left prey to illusion that it can live in this way. In fact, he only exists.

Oscar Wilde in a few words reveals the bitter truth of this world:

"*Living is the rarest thing in the world. Most of the people exist, that is all.*"

In a similar existence of the animal world, the man vegetates waiting for the final denouement. He refuses to become for himself, his own "superman" and in the end he ceases even to be a thinking reed, because, for him, others think. He becomes a being without reactions and this because alone he cancels its will of action, which really no longer belongs to him. Losing his identity in the great dominated mass, He, the modern man, becomes for power "*the mass man*". The mass man is the opposite of "*homo religiosus*" on which the power, even through the church institution, controls and deviates him towards other purposes equally "social". Those who do not resist the social treatment will not lose the hope. The hope is the ticket that the power gives to the servile man, in exchange for the real life, for eternity. For *Emil Cioran*, the man lives only when he does nothing, because he does not work for the master.

6. THE RULES OF SOCIOLOGICAL METHOD AND THE REPRESSION

Émile Durkheim, the founder of French sociology, stated that the sociology should become an esoteric science and should be separated from the spontaneous knowledge. *Pierre Bourdieu*, in "*The profession of sociologist*" enshrines an important study on the same subject. Later, *Gustave-Nicolas Fischer* is for the distancing of the knowledge object of sociology from the level of common sense because, as argued *Bernard Lacroix*, "*the sensorial doesn't reveal us the mystery of real*". The prejudices strongly influence the knowledge at the level of common sense. Therefore, in the case of social cognition, too, the reality can be distorted or even wrong one, because the individuals and social groups that form an opinion about common interests tend to deny a reality which does not conform to their purposes and beliefs. In society, the individuals remove or filter the dissonant information or data when they fail to agree on them, they retain those consonant and consider them true. Preferred is information that confirms their opinions and not that which contradicts them. This aspect is studied and taken into account, in the practice of the exercise of power, through studies and methods unknown to

those dominated, the power manipulating the will of the masses in the interest and its own benefit. In other words, concretely, to people manipulated by power are told exactly what they want to hear but in reality the power is manifested against the interests of the many and subjected.

Following the teachings of the great French sociologist *Émile Durkheim*, we will consider some of the rules of sociological method, retaining from the beginning that the way of thinking with which we are accustomed is rather against than in favor of the scientific study of social phenomena. Therefore, we should not give importance to the first trends or impressions. The domination, in its extreme forms, implies maximum coercion and repression. The totalitarian state can be characterized depending on the applicability of this method of forced domination as well as by the forms and means used, that, most often, are inhumane and directed with brutality against citizen.

About the repression, Durkheim was doing the following references:

- The establishment of a repressive system is not a fact less universal than the existence of a criminality, nor less indispensable to public health;
- That there is no repression, it should be a lack of moral homogeneity which cannot come to terms with the existence of a society;
- The common sense, with its usual simplicity, does not conceive as a thing which recoiled could have some rationality to be useful and yet there is no contradiction in this;
- The proposed method is essentially conservative because it considers the social facts as things whose nature, no matter how supple would be, is not changed at will;
- Any offense implies an evil which it makes to the society which must be canceled by punishment, but only if it functions regularly and not selectively.¹⁵

Émile Durkheim's study, "*The Suicide. The Study of Sociology*" remains of the reference in the sociological research methodology, highlighting the role of theory in empirical investigations. This paper marks, in principle, the importance of clearly defining of the *concepts*, the need to introduce of the *test variables* in verifying the relationship between two phenomena, the value of multivariate analysis and context analysis.

It should be kept, as the element of reference of the sociological research methodology, the general postulate issued by Durkheim according to "*the determinant cause of a social fact should be sought among the preceding social facts.*"

The investigation in the social and behavioral sciences aims to discover the truth and not producing of some evidence to support some positions already adopted, just as *Martyn Hammersley* claims. That is why, in the present thesis, we declare from belief for this type of approach to research that is particularly sensitive because of interference tendencies of the centers and structures of power and guidance of the sociological research approach to their favorable position. For this, the research should be rather concerned with the production of information concerning the relationships, facts and social phenomena and not so of the issuing of the value judgments. The aim, in this case, is theoretical one but we should consider the applicative practical dimension. Based on the analysis of data collected from reality, the sociological research tends towards the formulation of laws through the study of essential variables relationships and on the basis of the rigorous analysis of the social investigation results and other methodological experiments. Our approach of sociological research aims, mainly, to highlight the social impact of the exercise of state power and the effects of domination and voluntary servitude. Using the previous scientific accumulations, a superior analysis is done of the data and present realities and concepts of value are obtained that respond to the imperatives of the present.

¹⁵ *Émile Durkheim, Regulile metodei sociologice*, (București: Editura Științifică, 1974), 35-38

CONCLUSIONS

The trend towards the truth of this paper is a desideratum, even if we know that we cannot hold the truth. This does not prevent us from looking for it. The snatches of truth can be controlled, verified and validated if we'll consider not the party spirit of political confrontations, but a well as the truth, above the petty fractional interests. The identification of the sociology with propaganda has not brought and will not bring respectability to sociology. That is why, stating these symptoms, this paper does not sin in any of these aspects of bad reputation. Neither the excessive rationality, nor the triviality or party interests do not provide the knowledge of truth. In order for the sociology to be reborn right now when speaking more than ever about the end of the sociology, it must "*return to the major problems of the classical era, to be methodologically flexible and openly anti-ideological.*"¹⁶

¹⁶ Chelcea, *Metodologia cercetării sociologice...*, 11-12 ;14-15

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