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COMPETITIVENESS, VALUES, VISION

(European aspects)

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Especially after the historical transformations in 1989, which overcame the ideological schism of the continent, another process of historical magnitude was noted in Europe: the setting up, in 1993, of the European Union, its extension towards the East and the beginning of the formation of a »European society«, in place of the old fragmentations and national conflicts. This accomplishment represents a profound and beneficial turning point in the evolution of the continent, which offers reasons for satisfaction to anyone who knows the previous dramatic decades of penury, oppression and isolation in Central and East European history. The glass of European unification, initiated with the *Treaty of Rome* (1957), is therefore more than half full.

Nevertheless, the anticipation of a European identity and its experience not merely as a geographical identity, but as a civil one, has remained an open process, being mediated, in the reality of life on the continent, by eminently economic and political processes. Sometimes, situations are full of promise, especially during periods of economic revival and of affirmation of the unity of action of European countries. Conversely, circumspection and a touch of pessimism prevail during periods of recession and political misunderstanding. During such periods, the following question is asked: has Europe overcome its old »crisis«, that Nietzsche used to place in the process of human personalisation in Europe[1], that Husserl saw as a crisis of meaning, a synonym of

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[1]   See Andrei Marga, *Nietzsche's Europe,* in *Topics in Mathematics, Computer Science and Philosophy,* Presa Universitară Clujeană, 2008, p. 1-22.

Europe's »self-oblivion«[2], that Heidegger placed in the misunderstanding of fundaments[3] and Horkheimer and Adorno in the »abbreviation of reason«[4], in its European understanding and, more recently, that Joseph Ratzinger[5] placed in the »narrowing of reason« mostly under conditions of the maximum expansion of science and technology?

We have many factual indicators showing that the glass of European unification is more than just half full, but also that old and new problems persist. In the mid - 1990s, Stanley Hoffman talked about the »crisis of the European Union«[6], the indicator of which would be, first of all, the small majority by the Treaty of Maastricht was voted for in the countries of the union, as well as other indicators, such as the backwardness of the monetary union; the commercial differences within the union; the difficulties of the social policy, of integrating the European East; the emphasis, at certain moments in the unifying process, only on intergovernmental action. According to Stanley Hoffman, the European Union remains covered by disjunctions it cannot overcome: between politics, which is still national, and the economy, which is no longer national; between the economy, which has become common, and diplomacy and defence, where the union still hesitates; between a consolidated West and an unstable East. The way out of the situation, according to the same analysts, is delayed by the absence of a leading elite and of effective leaders who, having a comprehensive overview of the facts, being capable of transcending the given frontiers of reality, could inspire, just as in the '50s and '80s, a new dynamics to European unification.

The theme of the absence of an elite capable of overcoming, through their analyses, the horizon of a situation often appears when there is a feeling of crisis and the risk of becoming a common place. On the other hand, the need for European unification and impulses in its direction have always been acutely felt during the periods of European crisis. The developing unification project is, in fact, the outcome of a situation in which Europe, as a whole, has been

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[2]   See R. Philip Buckley, *Husserl, Heidegger and the Crisis of Philosophical Responsibility*, Dordrecht, Boston, London, 1922.

[3]   Ibidem

[4]   Max Horkheimer, Theodor W. Adorno, *Dialektik der Aufklärung*, Fischer, Frankfurt am Main, 1967.

[5]   Joseph Kardinal Ratzinger, *Wendezeit für Europa? Diagnosen und Prognosen zur Lage von Kirche und Welt*, Johannes Verlag Einsiedeln, Freiburg, 1992; Benedikt XVI, *Glaube und Vernunft. Die Regensburger Vorlesung*, Herder, Freiburg, Basel, Wien, 2006, p. 29-32; Benedikt XVI, *Gott und die Vernunft. Aufruf zum Dialog der Kulturen*, Sankt Ulrich, Augsburg, 2007, p. 124-140.

[6]   Stanley Hoffman, *Europe's Identity Revisited*, in »Daedalus«, Spring, 1994, p. 1.

and is put in peril. Irrespective of the fact that the theme of the absence of an elite is a convenient reflex in this situation or that it has real coverage, one thing is visibly imposed: *the weakening, in some realistic considerations of the given empirical situations, of visions anchored in values and capable of motivating actions to change situations*. In fact, people are so absorbed by insertion in the extremely mobile contexts of professional, economic and institutional life, and politics, that the aspiration to change what there is fades. If this aspiration can be called »utopian« and if the opposite of the »utopian« approach is in some sense a »historical« approach, then we can accept the thesis that a »horizon« has been opened and has become influential over the world, a horizon that »combines« historical and »utopian« contents. Habermas said, in his famous discourse held in the Parliament of Spain (1984), that »Heute seiht es so aus, als seien die utopischen Energien aufgezehrt, als hätten sie sich vom geschichtlichen Denken zurückgezogen. Der Horizont der Zukunft hat sich zusammengezogen und den Zeitgeist wie die Politik gründlich verändert. Die Zukunft ist negative besetzt; an der Schwelle zum 21.Jahrhundert zeichnet sich das Schreckenspanorama der wertweiten Gefährdung allgemeiner Lebensinteressen ab: die Spirale des Wettrüstens, die unkontrollierte Verbreitung von Kernwaffen, die strukturelle Verarmung der Entwicklungsländer, Arbeitslosigkeit und wachsende soziale Ungleichgewichte in den entwickelten Ländern, Probleme der Umweltbelastung, katastrophennah operierende Großtechnologien geben die Stichworte, die über Massenmedien ins öffentliche Bewußtsein eingedrungen sind. Die Antworten der Intellektuellen spiegeln nicht weniger als die der Politiker Ratlosigkeit. Es ist keineswegs nur Realismus, wenn eine forsch akzeptierte Ratlosigkeit mehr und mehr an die Stelle von zukunftsgerichteten Orientierungsversuchen tritt. Die Lage mag objektiv unübersichtlich sein. Unübersichtlichkeit ist indessen auch eine Funktion der Handlungsbereitschaft, die sich eine Gesellschaft zutraut. Es geht um das Vertrauen der westlichen Kultur in sich selbst«[7].

How can we explain the fact that, under the conditions of late modernity in Europe, a »non-transparency« and a fall in a voracious exploitation of the present, which discredit the possibilities of the future, are produced? Habermas observed that modern society disposes of determined resources, from which it extracts the capacity to organise and configure the future. There would be three such resources: »money«, »power« and »solidarity«. The late modernity,

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[7]   Jürgen Habermas, *Die Krise der Wohlfahrtsstaates und die Erschöpfung utopischer Energien*, in Jürgen Habermas, *Die Neue Unübersichtlichkeit*, Suhrkamp, Frankfurt am Main, 1985, p. 143.

which is being lived nowadays in Western Europe, has reached »non-transparency« in the politico-social form of the »social status«, since it has exploited only the resources of »money« and »power«. It can open a new horizon and, therefore, it can break through »non-transparency«, going towards the exploitation of the »solidarity« resource[8].

However, we cannot ask whether the interpretation given by Habermas embodies sufficiently comprehensively the »resources« that feed modern society and whether it offers a sufficient way out of the »non-transparency« situation. I personally believe that the very important resource of »solidarity« is closely related to another resource characteristic of modernity, the »perceived meaning of life«. Modernity has not been and cannot be without a consciousness, significantly spread from the social point of view, of the meaning of life that is marked by the human being; given the situation, the exploitation of the »solidarity« and of the »perceived meaning of life« resources can reopen the horizon towards the still unfulfilled possibilities of situations and, therefore, they can defeat »non-transparency«.

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In recent years, against the background of a perceptible crisis of cultural resources, systematic knowledge of the role of a leader and of successful leadership has been developed. Many assumptions of traditional political philosophy are being reconsidered. It is thus rightfully considered that *leadership* is a process by which a person persuades others to accomplish objectives and directs an organization in a way that makes it more efficient and coherent, while *leaders* are persons who carry out this process by applying procedures, personal decisions, values, knowledge and skills[9].

Our current language – especially when it is not connected to the evolution of specialized research – tends to mix *bosses, managers* and *leaders*, as if they are the same thing. Even *Dicționarul explicativ al limbii române* (1998) is not exempt from confusions. Here, the word »boss« means »a person that leads«, »manager« is one who exercises »the activity and the art to lead«, and »leader« means »chief«. Obviously, the distinctions, resulting from the new organizational culture, are escaping the linguists. The fact that the English language makes a distinction between »boss«, »manager« and »leader« is of course not

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8   Ibidem, p. 147-163.
9   See G. Yukl, *Leadership in Organization*, Prentice-Hall, Englewood Cliffs, New Jersey, 1994.

an excuse, and it is not mandatory to adopt definitions from a particular language, but it is a cultural duty to share the semantic delimitations, since these compress knowledge.

If we accept Aristotle's argument that the presence of »reasoning spirit« *(nous)* allows an organization to achieve its goal (and it is impossible not to accept it today, when organizations that let themselves be dissolved in the chaotic movement of components are not competitive), then the distinction between bosses, managers and leaders is worth employing. It is not a mere verbal distinction; on the contrary, this distinction allows us to shed light on critical situations within institutions, companies, corporations, in which there are bosses and infighting between those who aspire to become bosses, but in which there are no managers, and where leaders have not yet arrived.

Today, in research on organization, a *leader* is considered to be different from a *boss*. A »boss« is at the top of an organization, and the actions of his/her staff depend on his/her decisions, his/her power depending on position, whereas a »leader« also has authority, but authority granted by the ability to understand the organization within a context, to orient it according to new directions, and to make these convincing for everyone else. A »manager«, in his/her turn, is something else. As compared to the boss, the »manager« has the advantage of having enough knowledge about the functioning of the organization and about competences and, as compared to the »leader«, the »manager« works within a given frame of strategic options. Only the »leader« can take the responsibility for changing major options.

Is there a need for leaders in organizations, companies, corporations? It is a fact that there are »bosses« aplenty, and that the fight to become a boss is a given, as soon as there is an open possibility. »Managers« are fewer, because the creation of a real decisive manager involves strenuous effort to learn and acquire the necessary abilities. With »leaders«, an organization is not only efficient, but also durable, not just existent, but also competitive, not only conspicuous, but relevant as well; especially in the context of globalization, in which, as Robert Reich argues[10], success on the markets depends not on the »high volume« of the product, but on its »high value«. The intelligence incorporated in a product, therefore, and in its production implies qualified managers and valuable leaders (who do not lead only physically, but who are »leaders in ideas, in actions«).

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[10]   See Robert B. Reich, *The Work of Nations*, Vintage Books, Random House, New York, 1992, p.82.

The immediate question relates to the *leaders' selection*. »Bosses« are the result of one's access to a position; but neither a »manager« nor a »leader« is created because they have leading positions. Actually, many »bosses« are lousy managers, and they will never get to be leaders. On the other hand, the passage from »boss« to »manager« or »leader« is not made through the simple effort of the person in question (»positions do not create leaders«); the wise saying »May God spare you from the ungifted hardworking person« is here a warning.

So how are leaders produced? Starting from recent research, we have to make three connected observations. The first refers to the fact that a leader is not self-proclaimed, but that he/she is acknowledged, and that leadership is not primarily ceremonial, but a position of hard work. The traditional work of Cartwright and Zander (*Group Dynamics: Research and Theory*, 1968) right-fully considered *leadership* as consisting of actions of »setting group goals, moving the group toward its goal, improving the quality of interactions among the members, building the cohesiveness of the group, and making resources available to the group«. The second observation is that a leader is made, not born. Miraculous endowments for leadership, a type of mysterious predestina-tion, exist only for the naïve. A leader is the result of a learning process in at least three dimensions: knowledge that can be used from the technical point of view, interaction abilities, and self-reflexivity. The third observation is that we move in an environment of profound changes concerning the image of a leader. A leader »is made« through »continuous work and study«, and he/she does not rely on the success obtained (»Talent needs to be nurtured«). Both the traditional theory of a leader (»chieftain«, »prince« etc.), as a result of special »traits« (»the trait theory«), and the modern theory of a leader, as a product of exceptional circumstances (»the great events theory«), have lost their attrac-tiveness when compared to the conception of a leader as a result of continuous learning (»the transformational theory«).

Recent American research provides us with a true »*Leadership Decalogue*«, which deserves to be mentioned: to be technically proficient; seek responsibility and responsibility for your actions; make sound and timely decisions; set an ex-ample; know your people and look out for their well-being; keep your workers informed; develop a sense of responsibility in your workers; ensure that tasks are understood, supervised and accomplished; train as a team; use the full capa-bilities of your organization. These commandments condense an entire vision of man and the world, which is person-oriented, democratic and pragmatic.

It must be observed that leadership is inseparable from *values*. Any deci-sion or action of a leader has inevitable ethical consequences, so that – as the

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mission statement of the *Harvard Business School* says – »the teaching of ethics has to be here explicit, not implicit, and the community values of mutual respect, honesty and integrity, and personal accountability support the learning environment«.

The need for leaders in institutions operating in our complex environment has been felt for several decades. Today, this problem should be solved by taking into account the context of globalization and that of its inherent multiculturalism. On the agenda of formation we find today in some universities »*global leadership*« and, of course, »*intercultural leadership*«, which cannot be left out of the university programs. I would like to make four remarks concerning these two themes, from the point of view of university formation.

The first remark refers to the need to accommodate an increasing number of *universities* with the situation of globalization and multiculturalism, taking into consideration the fact that new generations of graduates will be operating within this situation, and that universities themselves are successful if they approach their own performance globally.

The second remark refers to conceiving organizations run by competitive leaders. The metaphor of an organization as a »machine« that can be projected, measured, directed, obviously a modern metaphor re-legitimated by cybernetics, is no longer working. It needs to be replaced by a *metaphor of an organism*, which is more capable of acknowledging the circumstance that efficient organizations are nowadays networks, communities, knowledge and learning systems. Leadership includes, as the *Blackwell Encyclopedia of Management* (2007) shows, questions such as: What needs to be done? What can and should I do to make a difference? Which are the performances and results? What can and should I do for stimulating a diversity of approaches? How can I strengthen the role and the responsibility of followers? Am I the most proficient in my position? It is nowadays true that »change and global leadership are inextricably linked. The key change challenges which face global leaders are linked to the changes that are occurring as organizations move from being bureaucratic machines to being knowledge-based networks. Specifically, leaders must guide their organizations to produce results today, even as they push for transformation which will positively impact the future«[11].

The third remark is that *global leadership* today is dealing with cultural, ethnical, political representations, which are larger than those to which we

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[11]   See Caren Siehl, *Global Leadership,* in Cary L. Cooper (ed.), *The Blackwell Encyclopedia of Management*, Blackwell Publishing, 2007.

have been accustomed, and that formation for *intercultural leadership* becomes part of university curricula. It is no longer sufficient to accept cultural differences, it is necessary to know and understand them. That is why, if we accept that universities form »competences« – which means »the knowledge, general and technical skills required for superior performance« – then the formation of »*global competences*« and, at the same time, of »*intercultural competences*« should become part of university programs. The *Global Competence Development Program* and the *Intercultural Competence Development Program* become indispensable for a competitive university.

The fourth remark is that today we have available factual research devoted to establishing »*intercultural leadership competences*«, which is informative as to what needs to be done in a university. We should distinguish, nevertheless, between »intrapersonal competences« (self-awareness, flexibility, curiosity, patience, imagination etc.), »interpersonal competences« (»perspective taking«, »nonjudgmental«) »intercultural competences«(»effective communication«, »appreciation of difference«, »local-global perspective«, »understanding of how leadership is conceptualized in other cultures«)[12]. Someone who acquires »intercultural leadership competences« is required to perform specific tasks: to clarify his own notion of culture, which has to be well formed; to be able to apply it; to understand his own cultural background; to be able to analyze and evaluate intercultural situations, to be able to negotiate in these situations, and to take decisions in a multicultural environment; to motivate participants in these situations; to form intercultural teams; and to exert intercultural leadership.

2.

Data on the Earth's climate, which do not fit at all with routine indicators, have recently been made available. The planet is currently undergoing the severest climate change in the last 10,000 years. The 20th century has brought about a real mutation in terms of the relationship of humankind to its natural environment: in fact, everything has changed completely. Since 1760, the growth of the population, which had been constant for centuries, has started to accelerate. Economic activity has also accelerated, leading mankind to the usage of »animated energies«. During the last century, the world population has increased four times, the economy fourteen times, the energy consumption

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[12]   See Eileen Sheridan, *International Leadership Competencies for U.S. Leaders in the Era of Globalization*, Dissertation, 2005, University of Phoenix.

sixteen times, the industrial production forty times, the emission of carbon dioxide thirteen times, and water consumption nine times.

These growths have brought changes to the spheres in which human life is lived, changes that have to be taken strictly into consideration[13]. The lithosphere (the rocks which form the surface of the Earth, with a thickness of several kilometres) does not raise any severe problems yet, but the pedosphere (the membrane between the lithosphere and the atmosphere that actually sustains the lives of plants and organisms) is altered by hundreds of millions of tons of artificial fertilizers that leave their mark on the composition of water and food, and that ultimately find their way into our bodies. »Soil erosion« already affects one third of the agricultural surface of the Earth, while food quantity per inhabitant is today bigger than at any other time in history. The atmosphere is affected by »pollution«, and it also being »cleansed« of the microorganisms that ensured the emergence of life. »Climate change« and, finally, »global warming« come as consequences of the increase in atmospheric carbon dioxide emissions, methane and ozone, but the exact causes are subject to dispute. Agriculture, human health, and even the existence of our species will be increasingly affected. The hydrosphere is already so polluted that »a change of the hydrologic cycle« has occurred, and supplying drinking water becomes ever more difficult. The biosphere is suffering the consequences of an anti-microbial offensive, which has annihilated certain diseases, but also of the re-emergence of old diseases, thought to have been extinguished, and of the appearance of new diseases. The »agricultural system«, too, already has a lot of problems.

The importance of the full magnitude of human intervention in the environment has been correctly underlined by John McNeil, in *Something New under the Sun* (2000). This approach inevitably undermines trends we already know. For instance, McNeil implicitly disproves Heidegger's a priori skeptical diagnosis, from *Die Frage nach der Technik* (1955), arguing that technical and economic development has saved humankind from worldwide hunger. When he admits that the »gamble« of humanity, which dominated the last century, does not justify the ideology of progress inherited from previous centuries, but that it demands a deep meditation, the American historian actually extends the warnings of Jose Marti and H.G. Wells who, as everyone knows, were the first to ask whether the great development of human activities was possible without »degrading« the environment. However, compared to Heidegger, Jose

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[13] See John McNeil, *Something New Under the Sun. An Environmental History of the Twentieth-Century World*, Penguin Books, London, 2000, p. 10.

Marti and H.G. Wells, John McNeil brings the salutary answer of a far-reaching historian (even though his world prestige is only growing now!). Evidently, the theorems of philosophy always need a historical check.

The »collision« apparent in the ecologic indicators from *Something New under the Sun*, though, is even more important. In his argument, McNeill adopts Pythagoras' idea about the »harmony of the spheres« as an explicit »paradigm« of his analysis. In a very ingenious way, he emphasizes a brilliant intuition, assuming the necessity of harmony among the lithosphere, the pedosphere, the hydrosphere, the atmosphere, the biosphere, and mankind's activities and initiatives powered by interest and values. In the 20th century, humanity reached a profound disturbance of the correlation among the above-mentioned spheres, and today's problems, and those of tomorrow, are mostly its outcomes. These problems are not old and unimportant, since »in the 20th century, humanity has rearranged the atoms and has altered the chemistry of the stratosphere«. The connection between the »spheres« has been affected in a risky way, and thus individuals have become for the first time »significant ecological agents«[14].

Punctual action is encouraged today as a solution. However, as the 2006 *State of the Future* declaration concludes, humankind has the resources to approach the global challenges to which it gives rise but, unfortunately, it is not yet clear how much vision, goodwill and intelligence will have to be concentrated on these challenges. And such persistent vagueness affects not only humankind's relationship with the environment, but also relationships within humankind itself. For instance, not even today can the international community provide proper solutions, answers that could change the situation significantly, to recurrent conflicts, recidivist aggressors, or stable poverty. For now, one may draw a conclusion which is obviously not the solution: »There is a growing hunger around the world to do what is necessary for our common future, but there is a lack of an efficient leadership, with details for the actions. We have a competition between the growing proliferation of dangers and our growing ability to improve the human condition«. Which one of these two growths will be bigger? It remains an open question, without a certain answer.

3.

Anyone who tries to build an opinion about our current intellectual life is faced with two facts: on the one hand, globalization, the spreading of communication, connects people from all around the world, from different cultures,

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[14]   Ibidem, p. 21.

and also internalizes solutions and, on the other hand, when people take reference points of evaluation and behavior, they relate, first of all, to their own culture. Thus, despite the pressure of creating a global identity, a lot of people come up with particular identities (ethnic, religious, gender etc.). In *Philosophy as Cultural Politics* (2007), Richard Rorty expresses, in a very coherent philosophical manner, the individuals contextual anchorage (to their own, particular, cultural standards) and the rejection of universal reference points. Rorty makes our entire reality dependent on our own cultural arsenal. We have become, he says quite contentedly, »commonsensical finitists«[15], and the only thing we have left is to promote a »tolerant conversability«[16], without assuming any other intrinsic nature of reality. Contextual relativism is thus inevitable.

Even granting this intelligent philosophy the merit of expressing, better than any other one in the Modern Era, the possibility of a different conceptualization having a series of facts as its object, we cannot shun a deeper insight into the unacceptable consequences of relativism. The spokesmen of great trends, thinkers with different platforms, from Karl Popper[17] to Habermas[18] and to Joseph Ratzinger[19], have evoked them convincingly. Relativism is quickly converted into a dogma that contradicts its principle (»all is relative«) and stimulates the destruction of the unity of humankind, with all the implications that result from this. Relativism does not adequately take into consideration the human process of learning, which does not reduce itself to information, but which means a change of thinking frames or »boxes«[20]. Relativism, by its own principle, does not take into consideration the natural *telos* of conversation, of speaking in general – that of obtaining understanding between different rival points of view[21].

Today, Relativism can be overcome if it is faced not only with arguments brought against it, but also with alternative concepts. We have so far several proposals at our disposal: such as re-establishing the motto »unity in diversity«, to weigh in a »view from nowhere«, to exploit the new continent of »com-

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[15]   Richard Rorty, *Philosophical Papers*, Vol. 4, *Philosophy as Cultural Politics*, Cambridge University Press, 2007, p. 88.

[16]   Ibidem, p. 103.

[17]   Karl Popper, *The Open Society and Its Enemies*, Princeton University Press, 1966, Vol. 2, p.369.

[18]   Jürgen Habermas, *Nachmetaphysisches Denken*, Suhrkamp, Frankfurt am Main, 1988.

[19]   Joseph Kardinal Ratzinger, *Wendezeit für Europa? Diagnosen und Prognosen zur Lage von Kirche und Welt*.

[20]   Hilary Putnam, *Reason, Truth and History*, Cambridge University Press, 1981, cap. 8.

[21]   Jürgen Habermas, op. cit., p. 179.

munication«, to articulate »fallible absolutism«, to consider the unavoidable consequences of Relativism[22]. I believe that Relativism cannot be overcome without accepting two assumptions. The first is passage from the classical »universalism of norms«, which is challenged by cultural diversification, to a »universalism of generative structures« – a universalism of those conditions that make a certain performance possible. The second assumption acknowledges the need to move from descriptions, poems, oral expression, dialogue, essays, journals, aphorisms, epistles, to mathematical exposure to theories, knowledge systems and comprehensive visions[23]. Nowadays, we need not only knowledge, in its general meaning – which, of course, remains indispensable – but also visions capable of realizing what is the meaning of actions, of institutions, of life, of society, of the world, and what is the meaning of knowledge within them.

4.

A remarkable physicist recently reminded us that, due to several factors – competition in research, the pressure from society to transfer scientific knowledge, the search for funds, the unstable work situation – the new generations engage in more factual research, finding solutions for problems in the short term, without committing themselves to far-reaching projects. We may add that this is the situation not only in the field of scientific research, but it is connected to a more comprehensive orientation of culture towards facts, the immediate, customs, and to a predisposition towards what lies at the origin of the fact, of the immediate, of the custom, which implies a reduction of the appetite for theory, system, project. In the 80s, Habermas identified as one of the consequences of this orientation the apparent »exhaustion of Utopian energies (Erschöpfung der utopischen Energien)«[24]. The dominant direction in today's culture is that of exploiting what is given, rather than asking what is possible. Moreover, a »negative futurism« is developed: »let's leave things the way they are, because it may be not so good«.

Anyway, the physicist I quoted, Paolo Blasi, after having analyzed the application, salutary of course, of the *Bologna Declaration* (1999), draws this conclusion: »the challenge of the European society today is to go beyond 'the knowledge society', and to evolve into what could be called a 'wisdom soci-

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[22] Andrei Marga, *Relativism and Its Consequences*, pp. 321-329.
[23] See Andrei Marga, *Introducere în metodologia şi argumentarea filosofică*, Dacia, Cluj, 1992, pp. 35-45.
[24] Jürgen Habermas, *Die Krise des Wohlfahrtsstaates und die Erschöpfung utopischer Energien*.

ety'. Knowledge is a conscious use of information; 'wisdom' means choosing one's behavior based on knowledge and shared values, in order to enhance the well-being of all and the awareness that personal actions have social consequences«[25].

Indeed, this is an effective and pressing problem. Let us put in motion wisdom capable of enlightening people about their own responsibility. I believe that Blasi, a refined physicist, is too optimistic when he speaks about the »restoration of some medieval values – the quest for truth, the unity of knowledge, the openness to the unknown and to other cultures«, since simple »restoration« has grown improbable for reasons of the new situation's complexity. Still, Paolo Blasi is right when he considers that today's universities have the responsibility of setting a larger and greater goal than producing and transmitting knowledge, in the projection of a »developed and peaceful world«.

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[25]   Paolo Blasi, *The European University – Towards a Wisdom-Based Society*, in »Higher Education in Europe«, Vol. 31, Number 4, December 2006, p. 407.