



Lumea moderna este sclava notiunii de progres. Atasamentul fanatic fata de ideile moderne: democratie, welfare state, corectitudine politica, etc este permanent argumentat prin progresul (sau prin echivalentul sau putin mai critic insa gol de continut – dezvoltarea durabila) care a caracterizat societatea in secolul XX. Tragediile care au defint secolul trecut, de departe cele mai mari si inspaimantatoare din istorie (cele doua razboaie mondiale, bomba atomica, terorismul, multiplele genocide la care cetatenii au fost supusi de statul modern, etc) sunt toate puse in paranteza, si de multe ori justificate, precum in cazul lui Roosevelt sau Churchill, in numele progresului. Numai ca in ultimul timp, nu numai conservatorii, ci si alti intelectuali, in care a supravietuit o farama de onestitate si un fragment de spirit critic, incep sa-si puna un semn de intrebare.

Un exemplu in acest sens este Gideon Rachman, care in [Financial Times](#) , compara lista celor mai importanti ganditori declarati de The Foreign Policy, cu una echivalenta aferenta anului 1861. Lista din 2010 este deschisa de Bill Gates si Warren Buffett (pentru eforturile filantropice), apoi se claseaza Barack Obama (alegeti dumnevoastra pentru ce). Pe sase se situeaza ministrul brazilian de externe (?!), urmat indeaproape de David Petraeus, “the American general and also, apparently, the world’s eighth most significant thinker”.

“It is not until you get down to number 12 on the list that you find somebody who is more famous for thinking than doing – Nouriel Roubini, the economist. But, as the list goes on, genuine intellectuals begin to dominate. There are economists such as Joseph Stiglitz, journalists (Christopher Hitchens), philosophers (Martha Nussbaum), political scientists (Michael Mandelbaum), novelists (Maria Vargas Llosa) and theologians (Abdolkarim Soroush).

But now compare it with a similar list that could have been compiled 150 years ago. The 1861 rankings could have started with Charles Darwin and John Stuart Mill – On the Origin of Species and On Liberty were both published in 1859. Then you could include Karl Marx and Charles Dickens. And that was just the people living in and around London. In Russia, Tolstoy and Dostoevsky were both at work, although neither had yet published their greatest novels.”

Scris de Florin Rusu
Marți, 31 Mai 2011 12:12

E adevărat că mulți dintre cei prezenți pe lista lui Rachman pentru 1861 s-au remarcat mai ales prin efectele nefaste ale ideilor lor asupra civilizației și sunt, într-un fel, responsabili pentru modul cum arată lista din 2010, însă nimeni nu le poate nega calitatea de gânditori. A-l compara pe Barack Obama cu Marx e ca și cum l-ai compara pe sergentul Bill Jones cu generalul, cum se numea ?!, ah, da, David Petraeus.

Dar ce explicații oferă Rachman? Primele două sunt tipice pentru înțelegerea noțiunii de progres din societatea modernă. *“The first is that you might need a certain distance in order to judge greatness. Maybe it is only in retrospect that we can identify the real giants. A second possibility is that familiarity breeds contempt. Maybe we are surrounded by thinkers who are just as great as the giants of the past, but we cannot recognise the fact because they are still in our midst.”*

A treia și a patra însă ating esența problemei. *“Another theory is that the nature of intellectual life has changed and become more democratic. (...) And then there is a final possibility. That, for all its wealth and its gadgets, our generation is not quite as smart as it thinks it is.”*

Ultima ipoteză ataca însăși noțiunea de progres. Iar [Benjamin Jones](#) merge mai departe într-un studiu privind “evoluția” progresului tehnologic:

“Great achievements in knowledge are produced by older innovators today than they were a century ago. Using data on Nobel Prize winners and great inventors, I find that the mean age at which noted innovations are produced has increased by 6 years over the 20th Century. I estimate shifts in life-cycle productivity and show that innovators have become especially unproductive at younger ages. Meanwhile, the later start to the career is not compensated for by increasing productivity beyond early middle age. I further show that the early life-cycle dynamics are closely related to variation in the age at Ph.D. and discuss a theory where accumulations of knowledge across generations lead innovators to seek more education over time. More generally, the results show that individual innovators are productive over a narrowing span of their life-cycle, a trend that reduces, other things equal, the aggregate output of innovators. This drop in productivity is particularly acute if innovators' raw ability is greatest when young.”

Total se rezumă la regresul spiritual înregistrat de omul modern. [Educația publică cu accentul ei pe specializare și dispreț față de valorile civilizației occidentale clasice](#) nu le distruge numai pe acestea, ci chiar și propriul sau autodeclarat

“Progresul” distruge inclusiv spiritul inventiv

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raison de vivre -
inovatia tehnologica.

[Tyler Cowen](#)

analizeaza observatiile lui Benjamin Jones si

[Tim Harford](#)

si concluzioneaza:

“One implication is that greater specialization makes innovation much harder — hardly anyone has a good grasp of the whole. Another implication is that we must rely more on particular kinds of experimentation to make progress on hard problems.□ This is all taking Michael Polanyi and Hayek and Whitehead and Ortega y Gasset and turning the heat up a notch; we are increasingly alienated from a knowledge of the whole and yes that matters.”

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