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**« Insécurité, précarité et vulnérabilité :
formes de translations et de
transpositions de concepts, attrape-
tout et apparentés »**

Abstract

During the past twenty years the socio-economic studies about the poverty and social inequalities (Sen 1982, 1987 et 1997) have been replaced in France by the investigations about the social exclusion (Paugam 1996 a). New psychological-ethical-philosophical concepts have been invoked like, disaffiliation, marginalisation or deprivation. They were used to typify and explain these process and completed by other notions such as dignity, insecurity, precariousness, vulnerability (which are also very large and woolly and aim to characterize either the results or the

causes (or both of them) of this process (Thomas 2003). In this communication we shall analyse the English, American, and German theoretical and linguistic translations of the not so French (and not so new) concepts of *insecurity* (Beck 1988, Wacquant 2004, Castel 2003), *precariousness* (Pitrou 1978, Butler 2004) and *vulnerability*. These both notions are often associated in the French social science's language with several - implicitly correlated - typically French neologisms/new notions: *disqualification* (Paugam 1991), *precariousness* (Butler J. (2004), disaffiliation (Castel 1995, 2000) and at last *précarariat* (on the model of the German word of Proletariat (Castel 2006).

Between 1975 and 1990 the European thinkers of the changes of the social State were focused in developed countries under the notion of poverty linked to low wages and marginality. In the 1990 the focus was put on the so named "new

poverty” in France, on the social inequalities and ways of life of working poor in the rest of the Europe. Simultaneously some theories about the supposed paths leading to the exclusion were explored. Those theories assumes that, for the working classes, social and economic insecurity, life course’s uncertainty and the frailty of the familial network were the combined factors, making them precarious and vulnerable and creating the infernal spiral of exclusion which causes for them, the going down or the slipping from poverty to misery (*nude life* according to Agamben), from segregate integration to the complete social disqualification /disaffiliation.

Our working hypothesis is that these so-called concepts of insecurity, precariousness and vulnerability have migrated during the past fifteen years at the same time through many scientific disciplines (from political philosophy and

law theory to economics and sociology going through clinical psychology and social psychology, sometimes even to psychiatry and medicine) They travelled and were translated with the French theory and vocabulary of exclusion from one discipline to another as well as through almost all the European developed countries first then they were diffused and applied to the developing country. For example social exclusion was almost used by several English and German sociologists and the European Union’s administrators of the poverty’s indicator.

After this outreach, they are now coming back to France and to sociology, charged with the implicit senses of all these successive definitions and named with other words like “the without” the outcasts (Elias, Scotson 1996, Bauman 2004), bringing back visions of the deprived human being lacking in decency and dignity. Moreover these concepts are

often travelling through the world, but hidden under other words, that are less idiomatic than the French ones, such as marginality, deprivation (Townsend), under classes, hyper-ghetto, working poor, insecurity, an even nowadays precariousness. These news ideas, put into indefinite and elusive neologisms, are building step by step a new social-democratic philosophy but if this notion are crossing they don't always meet each other.