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**INTERNATIONAL MULTIDISCIPLINARY SCIENTIFIC CONFERENCE ON  
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## MCDSARE: 2018

### EDITORIAL - International Multidisciplinary Scientific Conference on the Dialogue between Sciences & Arts, Religion & Education

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#### ***Abstract***

In the context of the current international framework, *Ideas Forum International Academic and Scientific Association* - IFIASA Journals and Conferences joins the effort in bringing together researchers and scientists from all over the globe, facilitating the professional development and encouraging dialogue, creativity and exchange of ideas. The aim of IFIASA Conferences is to create and develop a scientific network, provide the framework for improving and shaping methodologies while continuously exchanging connections and establishing partnerships.

**Keywords:** IFIASA; Ideas Forum International Academic and Scientific Association; researchers, international scientific conference, transdisciplinarity; life; world;

#### **INTRODUCTION**

The 3rd edition of *Ideas Forum International Academic and Scientific Association* - IFIASA was an event with multidisciplinary character, whose general objective was to promote scientific excellence, encouraging original research.

*Ideas Forum International Academic and Scientific Association*- IFIASA provides a platform for the latest scientific, theological, philosophical and moral-educational research, encouraging approaches from different areas and points of view. The aim of the IFIASA is to organize and promote scientific and educational activities in humanist and social sciences on an international level.

*Ideas Forum International Academic and Scientific Association* is an independent academic publisher with an editorial team that comprises many of the world's leading researchers. IFIASA organizes conferences, workshops, and publishes high quality academic international journals.

Through its accessible scientific research results, IFIASA contributes to an on-going educational process in the contemporary society. We do this by offering a multiplicity of events, publications, professionalization and career services as well as lobbying for social-scientific interests on an international level. The Proceedings Volume of the 3rd IFIASA *International Multidisciplinary Scientific Conference on the Dialogue between Sciences & Arts, Religion & Education*- MCDSARE 2018 contain scientific articles in the social sciences and humanistic fields, without a precise disciplinary border. The main topics covered by the researchers are: Philosophy, Sociology, Communication, Social Work, Theology, Anthropology, Applied Philosophy, Ethics, Applied Ethics, Bioethics, History, Religious Studies, Arts & Architecture, Psychology, Educational Sciences, Politics, European Studies, International Relations, Public & Private Law, Management, et alia.

**ABOUT THE INTERNATIONAL MULTIDISCIPLINARY SCIENTIFIC CONFERENCES ON THE DIALOGUE BETWEEN SCIENCES & ARTS, RELIGION & EDUCATION**

Since 2015, IFIASA International Conference has become one of the most important conference on the social sciences and arts in Romania. IFIASA organizes conferences, workshops, and publishes high quality academic international journals.

The aim of MCDSARE is to create a debate conference concerning the great challenges which the contemporary society addresses to social sciences, theology, philosophy and education. The main topics covered by the researchers are: Philosophy, Sociology, Communication, Social Work, Theology, Anthropology, Applied Philosophy, Ethics, Applied Ethics, Bioethics, History, Religious Studies, Arts & Architecture, Psychology, Educational Sciences, Politics, European Studies, International Relations, Public & Private Law, Management, Marketing, Economy. The MCDSARE by IFIASA conferences is opened to all researchers and professors, educational policies makers, strategists, scientists, university postgraduate and undergraduate engineering and students.

Conferences organized by IFIASA: The 3rd *International Multidisciplinary Scientific Conference on the Dialogue between Sciences & Arts, Religion & Education*/ Theme of the Conference: Identity, Harmony and Reality- IHR For You 2018 May/June, 2018, Targoviste/Galati, Romania, Volume 2/2018; The 2nd *International Multidisciplinary Scientific Conference on the Dialogue between Sciences & Arts, Religion & Education*, Theme of the Conference: Relationship between Man, World and Technique / 20-21 November, 2017, Targoviste, Romania, Volume 1/2017; The 1st *International Multidisciplinary Scientific Conference on the Dialogue between Sciences & Arts, Religion & Education*, Theme of the Conference: Relationship between Man and Cosmos from Science and Religion perspectives / 10-11 May, 2016, Targoviste, Romania, Volume in Icoana Credintei.

**REPRESENTATIVITY AND COLLABORATIONS**

Within the IFIASA Conference, our co-organizers and partners – Valahia University from Targoviste, and University Dunarea de Jos Galati, Romania, organised the sessions of the International Conference *Identity, Harmony and Reality- IHR For You 2018*, Targoviste 22 June 2018, Faculty of Orthodox Theology and Education Sciences, coordinated by Professors PhD. Marin BUGIULESCU, Marian VILCIU, Florea STEFAN, and Galati, 26 June 2018, Faculty of History, Philosophy and Theology, Dunarea de Jos Galati University, coordinated by Professor PhD. Ion CORDONEANU. During the 2 days of the Conference, participants presented their papers in scientific sessions, plenary presentation, symposia and thematic, and one member of the International Council of IFIASA presented the brief papers of the virtual participants.

The *International Multidisciplinary Scientific Conferences on the Dialogue between Sciences & Arts, Religion & Education- MCDSARE* in 2018 succeeded in gathering scholars, professors, theologians, philosophers, or people eager to align themselves with the trends of a knowledge-based society and the dialogue between science, art, religion and education. The modern tendency of our contemporaries, regardless of the field in which they operate, is to discredit fields such as philosophy or political science and to give a growing power to science. Because the discrediting of some study branches like the ones quoted (just because the short term seems to have a low utility) is a dangerous path, we have proposed to redefine such an approach. The scientific papers in this book provide a paradigm on the relationship between different branches of science, the relationship between religion and science, or between religion and education. The current publishing volume only invites to a presentation of the importance of these links among different scientific or artistic branches, the argumentation of each participant regarding his position in his own field, a greater deepening of the connection between different scientific fields, the trans disciplinary approach of some themes or theories that may seem scientific but are also part of a type of art (such as, for example, the work of a theologian, or philosopher or thinker). The academic and scientific content presented in the *International Multidisciplinary Scientific Conferences on the Dialogue between Sciences & Arts, Religion & Education 2018* presents the opportunity to examine the altogether truth-claims found in academic spaces, as well as the methods laid out by every discipline and the meanings that derive from them. This is both the aim and the scientific mission of our IFIASA.





**MCDSARE: 2018**  
**International Multidisciplinary Scientific Conference on the**  
**Dialogue between Sciences & Arts, Religion & Education**

**TEACHING ENGLISH COLLOCATIONS**  
**AS MARKS OF LINGUISTIC AND CULTURAL IDENTITY**

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***Abstract***

Starting from the general view that collocations represent one of the most important tools that speakers can use in communication in order to manifest their linguistic and cultural identity, the present paper aims at demonstrating that teaching collocations should not be limited to highlighting their linguistic specificity, but should also take into consideration pointing out their cultural markedness. Moreover, since collocations are agreed to be restricted according to the context in which they are used, teachers should consider gradually moving from practicing collocations in general contexts to practicing collocations in specific contexts meant to raise the learners' awareness of the various identities they may acquire when using such fixed lexical patterns. If emphasis is laid on both the linguistic and cultural specificity of collocations and on the possibility of using them according to a certain identity which is envisaged, learners may become more aware of how important the correct and appropriate use of collocations is in both their native language and in any foreign language they might learn. As a result, learners are likely to pay more attention to collocations, to use them more correctly, thus developing their native and foreign language - collocational competence.

**Keywords:** collocational competence; communicative competence; cultural identity; linguistic identity;

**1. INTRODUCTION**

The present paper is the result of over a decade of constant research on various types of fixed lexical patterns in English, Romanian and Italian, in general, and on collocations, in particular. Irrespective of the approach envisaged (from the perspectives of lexicology, phraseology, semantics, stylistics, psycho-linguistics, methodology or translation studies), special attention has been devoted to the linguistic and cultural specificity traceable in this type of fixed lexical patterns. In addition, distinction has been made, in a significant number of research articles and papers, between collocations used in general and in domain-specific contexts with a view to prove that membership to a given professional community facilitates the understanding and the appropriate use of collocations specific to the domain envisaged, as well as their transfer from one language culture into another.

As far as the teaching of collocations is concerned, relevant lexical and grammatical collocations have been explained, practiced and tested in a series of practical and optional courses of English language over the years, giving me the opportunity to constantly adapt my teaching methods and strategies to my students' needs and interests.

## **2. PROBLEM STATEMENT**

People communicate their thoughts, feelings and attitudes by language, and words are agreed to be the main tool used by speakers in the process of communication. Whether used in isolation, or combined in various more or less fixed lexical patterns and grammatical structures, words often make reference to facts, ideas or events which are shared by different people. In such cases, communication across languages and cultures is easier to achieve, and meaning is more accessible to both the sender and the receiver of the message, irrespective of their mother tongue and of the language code they use in communication. Communication across languages is also facilitated when speakers use words which are neutral in their denotations and connotations, which are not stylistically marked and which have similar or identical representations in different language cultures.

On the contrary, when the words or lexical patterns used in communication convey culturally-marked, symbolic meanings or refer to cultural values, assumptions, attitudes and beliefs which are not shared by the people involved in the process of communication, it may be difficult or even impossible to gain insights into the worldview or system of cultural values referred to. In such cases, the interlocutors should ascertain the cultural symbols embedded in words and should try to decode the semantic content of such cultural words by making assumptions about each other's intentions, desires, or goals. Since appropriate topics are determined by culture, interpreting the speakers' intentions of communication is mainly conditioned by cultural norms. Under the circumstances, culture may be considered to liberate individuals from anonymity, and to constrain them by imposing a structure and a series of principles of selection on them. This point of view is made explicit by Kramsch (1998) who states that "the members of a community do not only express experience", they also create experience through language. Through verbal and non-verbal aspects, language embodies cultural reality. Language is a system of signs that is seen as having itself a cultural value. Speakers identify themselves and others through language and they view their language as a symbol of their identity" (Kramsch 1998: 3). Since language and culture are symbols of an individual's identity, it is logical that people might be distinguished in terms of their linguistic and cultural identity.

Intercultural communication traditionally means communication between people originating in different cultures, having different nationalities and speaking different languages, thus between people with different national, cultural and linguistic identities. Nevertheless, intercultural communication is considered to apply to individual cultures, as well, because "communication across different groups with different knowledge and values may be conceived as being intercultural, even within the same linguistic and cultural community"(Dumitraşcu 2009: 463). Consequently, the conclusion may be drawn that one and the same individual as a representative of a specific nation, culture and language may be attributed various identities at different times (e.g. national, cultural, linguistic, social, professional, political, sexual, etc.) depending on the approach and circumstances envisaged.

Since each of these identities is visible in communication, special attention should be devoted to raising the learners' awareness with respect to the various identities they may acquire when communicating, in both their native language and in a given foreign language they might choose to learn.

Starting from the general view that words are the basic unit used in communication, many teachers consider that 'incorporating lexical insights' in their language classes strictly means teaching new isolated words. The situation is quite different and recent studies in language teaching have demonstrated that, irrespective of the language envisaged, it is more useful for learners to store larger lexical units in their mental lexicon from the very beginning. This is because most words have a clear meaning only when used in specific lexical combinations, or, to put it differently, the lexical patterns in which words occur are essential to the meaning of those words and cannot be separated from them. In addition, learners who store strings of words, rather than individual words may "compose lengthy

utterances with the minimum effort” (Hunston and Francis 2000: 271) and are likely to remember those lexical patterns for a longer period of time. To be more explicit, since most languages are made up of prefabricated strings, storing fixed lexical patterns is likely to have a long-term result for learners, ensuring their fluency and accuracy in the foreign language studied.

Moving one step forward, teaching collocations in context may prove even more useful. In doing this, teachers should guide their learners to notice and appropriately analyse the “relations between lexical items above the sentence level, across conversational turn boundaries and within the broad framework of discourse organization” (McCarthy 1984a: 14-15, in Carter 1998: 220-221). Such a teaching approach would help learners understand the complexity and multifaceted nature of collocations, as well as their role in achieving cohesion and coherence in communication.

Regarding the cultural and domain-specificity of collocations, teachers should bear in mind the fact that unaware non-native speakers of English are always “caught” with collocations. That is why teaching English collocations is a difficult task which is greatly conditioned both by the teacher’s lexical knowledge and by his/her ability to make lexical information accessible and interesting to learners. In approaching collocations, I consider that teachers should constantly integrate these fixed lexical patterns in their English language classes moving gradually from simple to complex and from general to domain-specific contexts.

Among the teaching strategies suggested by specialists in the field, mention should be made of Morgan Lewis’ view (2000: 19) who suggests that collocations may be more easily remembered and more safely translated if teachers guide their learners to preserve something of the context and to keep recorded lexical chunks that are as large as possible. Moreover, the fact is pointed out that mistakes related to words collocability should not be merely corrected by teachers. Giving further examples of collocations could be a much more useful tool for both correcting the mistakes and improving the learners’ collocational competence. In other words, teachers should not correct, but collect collocations. For example, the wrong association between the verb ‘to give’ and the noun ‘an exam’ in the collocation \*to give an exam (as a linguistic calques, due to its interference with Romanian) should not be merely corrected by providing the lexical pattern to take an exam, but it should be immediately effaced by further examples such as: to re-take an exam, to pass an exam, to fail an exam, to go in for an exam, to scrape through an exam. Moreover, integrating some of the problematic collocations in accessible contexts (e.g. I took the English exam yesterday, but I didn’t pass it. I failed it.) may become very useful for developing learners’ collocational competence and for raising their awareness with respect to the obvious linguistic and cultural differences existing between the two languages in contact.

Another useful strategy which could be used in teaching collocations would be that of replacing longer explanatory structures by semantically equivalent collocations with a view to help learners understand that using such fixed lexical patterns in communication helps them be more precise. Thus, collocationally unaware learners who tend to use longer explanatory structures such as: good possibilities for improving one’s job might be guided to appropriately replace such structures by a collocation with the same semantic content: i.e. excellent promotion prospects. By constantly integrating this type of synonymy practice in the English language class, teachers will guide learners to understand that they may communicate more efficiently when using collocations.

However, synonymy is not very helpful in the case of those words which have little meaning unless used in collocations, e.g. to make vs. to do or wound vs. injury. In such cases teachers should avoid explaining the difference between the two synonymous words and should provide contextualized examples for each of them to clarify their semantic content and collocational restrictions. Contextualization is also useful in the case of words which have unclear meaning unless used in collocations: e.g. I can’t see the point in buying this car; The point is that she is divorced; This is definitely a very good point to make; He always makes a point of forgiving the others. The teaching strategy suggested in such cases makes it clear that learners should be guided to avoid explaining isolated polysemantic words, and to explore their meanings by contextualizing them, instead.

Woolard (2000) does not agree with this view. He considers that teachers should avoid explaining the meaning of a word by providing synonyms, by paraphrasing or by contextualizing it. Instead, he suggests that teachers should highlight the chunk of language, i.e. the collocational pattern, in

which the respective word occurs and activate the respective chunk by further practice. For example, instead of trying to explain the meaning of the noun ‘view’ by providing a synonym, i.e. ‘opinion’, by paraphrasing it with ‘what somebody thinks of something’ or by contextualizing it e.g. What is his view regarding environment protection? (Woolard 2000: 31), teachers should highlight the collocational patterns in which the respective word occurs, e.g. to have/ hold/ take/ express/ put forward a view, a(n) conflicting/ idealized/ conventional/ radical/ moderate view, etc.

Choosing relevant and accessible key words in teaching collocations is also a very important strategy. Teachers should select vocabulary items bearing in mind the fact that “words have different degrees of lexicalization, and that different types of vocabulary may need different co-textual reference, thus different teaching techniques” (id.: 33). For instance, a highly lexicalized and domain - specific word such as ‘penicillin’ will occur in few collocations, whereas less lexicalized words such as ‘drug’ or ‘medicine’ will have a better collocational representation.

Specialists such as Woolard (2000) and Hill (2000) believe that teachers may raise the learners’ awareness with respect to collocations if they intentionally use mis-collocations. Such an approach may help learners understand that “learning vocabulary is not just learning new words; it is often learning familiar words in new combinations” (id.: 30). Moreover, students may become more aware of collocations if they are guided to notice them, on the one hand, and to find further examples of similar collocational patterns, on the other.

An aspect not to be ignored in teaching collocations is that teachers should make the most of what their learners know. To be more precise, instead of focussing on the brand new words, teachers should make the relatively new words accessible or lay stress on the practice of common and familiar words. The words which learners are familiar with are called ‘available words’ by Richards (1974: 76-77, in Carter, 1998: 235) and they “are considered to be known in the sense that they come to mind rapidly when the situation calls for them”. Familiarity with a word is “a factor of the frequency of experiencing words, their meaningfulness and their concreteness” (ibid.). By working with familiar words, teachers may improve their learners’ collocational competence, thus making them more communicatively competent in the foreign language they study.

### **3. DISCUSSION**

Having made an inventory of the most common strategies used in teaching collocations, the fact should be pointed out that different age groups and different levels of linguistic competence require different approaches and different teaching strategies. Nevertheless, creative teachers may adapt most of the teaching strategies mentioned above to their learners’ age and linguistic competence, and by doing this they start working on the learners’ collocational and communicative competences from early stages.

If we consider elementary learners of English, the strategies used in teaching collocations should envisage working with familiar words, practicing synonymy and antonymy between words used in different collocations and integrating as many collocations as possible in relevant sentences. Teachers may choose to practice collocations in texts, as well, but the selected texts should be short, accessible and relevant for the general use of collocations in familiar situations.

With intermediate learners of English, teachers may gradually move from simple to more complex exercises such as: practicing synonymy and antonymy between collocations, integrating acquired collocations in short texts, identifying and distinguishing between collocations used in general and in special contexts (biology, geography, history, etc.). Even though rather difficult, teachers may choose to guide intermediate learners towards a careful exploration of the words’ co-text and of their relations with other words. Such an approach will help learners notice and record similar co-texts and relations between words (e.g. to receive criticism for/over + v- ing) and will help teachers emphasize the fact that lexical and grammatical collocations should not be considered in isolation, as they often combine in more complex collocational structures.

Intermediate learners may be gradually trained ”to observe and note collocations in reading and writing” (Conzett 2000: 79-80). The collocations identified in reading might be easily integrated by

teachers in writing short texts as a means of practicing and storing the fixed lexical patterns envisaged. Of course, the written tasks should be appropriate to the learners' age and linguistic competence.

Regarding advanced learners, they should also be encouraged to work with collocations while reading and /or/writing, but both the reading and the writing should include more complex examples of collocations. Such learners may be initially asked to identify and collect key words and collocations related to a given topic in a text and then to integrate them in a well-structured and coherent written essay. By combining identification of key words and collocations in a text with their further integration in a written text, teachers facilitate the learners' writing task and are likely to improve the correct use of collocations in specific contexts. For example, the task of writing an essay on education may be greatly facilitated if learners are initially challenged to find words closely related to the topic (e.g.: school, education, qualification, teacher, courses lectures, etc.) and then to write down the collocations corresponding to each of the words envisaged. The writing assignment will only be a matter of integrating the selected collocations in a structured and coherent text. When working with texts, the teacher's selection of appropriate examples from various domains is very important because it helps learners become aware of the frequent use of collocations in various fields of activity.

Last, but not least, since collocations are linguistically and culturally marked, teachers should help learners of all ages and levels of linguistic competence remember collocations by constantly 'recycling' them in various types of exercises. Specially designed grids and vocabulary exercises, as well as building up illustrative sentences, and creating collocation games designed for each group of selected collocations are just some of the tools that teachers have at their disposal to help learners develop their collocational competence.

#### **4. CONCLUSIONS**

Linguistic and cultural identity may be expressed in different ways and achieved at different levels in communication. Sometimes the cultural specificity of language is traceable at the levels of morphology and syntax, whereas in other cases grammatical specificity is doubled by the use of culture-specific lexical items denoting realities which lack an equivalent in other language cultures. Given the obvious limitations imposed by such grammatically- and culturally-marked words, specialists agree that their appropriate use is an essential criterion in ascribing speakers membership to a certain linguistic and cultural community, or, on the contrary, in excluding them from that community. Out of the numerous linguistic instances bearing an obvious cultural imprint, collocations represent a valuable resource in identifying and differentiating among various linguistic and cultural identities.

Given the linguistic and cultural specificity of collocations and their high frequency, teachers should constantly adapt the strategies used in teaching them. With elementary learners the teachers' main objective should be to gradually increase the number of individual words and of simple lexical patterns introduced and practiced, at the intermediate level learners should be introduced to a larger number of new words and to more complex collocations, whereas in the case of advanced learners teachers should envisage adding both to the semantic content of individual words and to the collocations specific to each and every meaning of the polysemantic words introduced and practiced. To put it differently, "the more advanced the learner becomes and the more emphasis is placed on production, the more teaching of words in a network of semantic associations should be activated" (Carter 1998: 240).

Although some might think that the appropriate use of English collocations is merely a matter of learning lexical chunks, specialists in the field have proved that things are not as easy as they might seem. Non-native speakers of English may become collocationally competent if vocabulary teaching is constantly combined with independent vocabulary learning and with a lot of practice.

Teaching English collocations is extremely important because it facilitates the learners' access to more routinized aspects of language production and to the essential skills of maintaining discursive relations through language use. Moreover, teaching such word combinations in discourse may prove incredibly useful because it "encourages appreciation of the syntactic, semantic and pragmatic functions of lexical items at all levels" (id. *ibid.*).

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**CORPUS**

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## MCDSARE: 2018

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## ABSURDIST BLACK HUMOUR IN EDWARD ALBEE'S WHO'S AFRAID OF VIRGINIA WOOLF?

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### *Abstract*

Nourished by the ideas of the Theatre of the Absurd that relied on the loss of logical language and on ridiculing conventionalised and stereotyped speech patterns, which were considered to represent a barrier between us and what the world is really about, Edward Albee developed a view of the theatre that was unconventional, if not defiantly radical, by means of the language used, incoherent, frightening and strange but, at the same time, somehow humorous and hauntingly poetic and familiar. In *Who's Afraid of Virginia Woolf?*, Edward Albee is concerned with the failure of communication and the sexual substructure of modern society, by rejecting logic for a type of non-logic, which is stylistically transposed in a unique manner, giving birth to the play's black humour. Edward Albee's play observes the trends of drama related to this period that induces a kind of sick laughter, mocking and self-deprecating. His black humour shares the general traits of this trend, i.e. the debasement and dehumanization of man, a rising lack of moral values that results in a dark humour that laughs at the irrationality of the world, to which he also adds his personal tinge, i.e. the themes of lack of communication and lack of individuality, which are brilliantly rendered linguistically in his play, *Who's Afraid of Virginia Woolf?*.

**Keywords:** black humour; linguistic stylistics; Theatre of the Absurd;

### 1. INTRODUCTION

The origins of the Theatre of the Absurd are rooted in the avant-garde experiments in art of the 1920s and 1930s. At the same time, it was undoubtedly strongly influenced by the traumatic experience of the horrors of the Second World War, which showed the total impermanence of any values, shook the validity of any conventions and highlighted the precariousness of human life and its fundamental meaninglessness and arbitrariness.

On the other hand, black humour involves a connection between seemingly incompatible ideas and emotions. The term black humour captures the image of death in connection with the origins of merriment (Simpson J.A., 1989). These terms represent implausible combinations: joy and tranquillity are conjoined with confusion, frustration and despair. In this sense, black humour embodies a paradox. It explores two philosophically extreme positions: that death is everything and death is nothing. This profound absurdity distinguishes black humour from other forms of humorous expression. The experience of black humour

emerges from the intricacies of human beliefs and behaviours surrounding death and through the diverse rituals that shape experiences of loss. Black humour is an attempt to articulate the tension between the haunting absence and disturbing presence of death. In black humour, topics and events that are usually regarded as taboo, specifically those related to death, are treated in an unusually humorous or satirical manner while retaining their seriousness; the intent of black humour, therefore, is often for the audience to experience both laughter and discomfort, sometimes simultaneously.

In the present paper, we are going to analyse a specific type of black humour, i.e. absurdist black humour, and demonstrate that it is the unifying thread of Edward Albee's *Who's Afraid of Virginia Woolf?*.

## **2. PROBLEM STATEMENT**

One of the most important aspects of absurd drama, which may also be considered central to the black humour present in 20th century drama, is its distrust of language as a means of communication. It seems that words fail to express the essence of human experience, not being able to go beyond its superficial meaning; it seems to have become nothing but a vehicle for conventionalised, stereotyped, meaningless exchanges.

Absurd drama uses conventionalised speech, clichés, slogans and technical jargon, which it distorts and breaks down. By ridiculing conventionalised and stereotyped speech patterns, the Theatre of the Absurd tries to make people aware of the possibility of going beyond everyday speech conventions and communicating more authentically.

Absurdist playwrights consider that this conventionalised type of speech acts represents a barrier between us and what the world is really about. They strongly believe that the loss of logical language brings people towards a unity with living things. (Esslin M., 2001)

Most absurdist dramas are lyrical statements, very much like music.

Nourished by such ideas and influences, Edward Albee developed a view of theatre that was unconventional if not defiantly radical. Even if the play under analysis in the present paper, *Who's Afraid of Virginia Woolf?*, would not be strictly classified as belonging to the movement known as the Theatre of the Absurd, there are, however, many elements of this play which are closely aligned with or which grew out of the dramas classified as being part of the Theatre of the Absurd.

Although the movement which became known under the name of the Theatre of the Absurd was not a consciously conceived movement, it has never had any clear-cut philosophical doctrines, and each of the main playwrights appeared to have developed independently of the other, it does have features that differentiate it from other experiments in drama.

The playwrights most often connected with the movement are Samuel Beckett, Eugène Ionesco, Jean Genet and Arthur Adamov. The early plays of Edward Albee and Harold Pinter fit into this classification, but they have also written plays that move far away from the Theatre of the Absurd (Esslin M., 2001).

Edward Albee earned an international reputation as an innovative American dramatist, a great successor to such famous people as Eugene O'Neill, Arthur Miller and Tennessee Williams. He is credited with creating a distinctly American kind of absurdism, influenced by such European playwrights as Samuel Beckett, Eugène Ionesco and Harold Pinter.

The plays that comprise this movement, including *Who's Afraid of Virginia Woolf?*, forsake the theatre of coherently developed situations, they most often than not forget settings that bear an intrinsic, realistic or obvious relationship in the drama as a whole, they disregard language as a means of logical communication and the cause and effect relationships found in traditional drama. In these plays, black humour is achieved by means of the settings and situations that often make the audience vaguely uncomfortable – the world itself seems, by means of the language used, incoherent and frightening and strange – but, at the same time, somehow humorous and hauntingly poetic and familiar. Black humour in this type of drama differs from black humour evoked in 20th century novels in that it is more allusive, more subtle and concealed, as absurdist dramatists write from a “sense of metaphysical anguish at the absurdity of the human condition.” (Esslin M., 2001, 32)



The Theatre of the Absurd seeks to wed form and content into an indissoluble whole, so as to gain a further unity of meaning and impact. This theatre has, as Esslin pointed out, “renounced arguing about the absurdity of the human condition; it merely presents it in being – that is, in terms of concrete stage images of the absurdity of existence.”(Esslin M., 2001, 38)

Apart from such similarities as violation of traditional beginning, middle and end or the total refusal to tell a straightforward connected story with a usual plot, the disappearance of traditional dramatic forms and techniques, Edward Albee, in his *Who's Afraid of Virginia Woolf?*, is also concerned with the failure of communication and the sexual substructure of modern society, which is stylistically transposed in a unique manner.

Edward Albee obviously rejects traditional logic for a type of non-logic, which gives birth to the play's black humour.

Edward Albee's play observes the trends of drama related to this period that induces a kind of sick laughter, mocking and self-deprecating. His black humour shares the general traits of this trend, i.e. the debasement and dehumanization of man, a rising lack of moral values that results in a dark absurdist humour that laughs at the irrationality of the world, to which he also adds his personal tinge, i.e. the themes of lack of communication and lack of individuality, which are brilliantly rendered linguistically in his play, *Who's Afraid of Virginia Woolf?*.

### **3. FINDINGS**

In Edward Albee's play, *Who's Afraid of Virginia Woolf?*, each character exists in his own private ego. Each makes a vain attempt to determine another character to understand him, but as the attempt is contrived, there is even more alienation. The technique used is the presentation of a series of seemingly disjointed speeches. The accumulative effect of these speeches means expressing the failure of communication in modern society.

The Theatre of the Absurd, and implicitly, *Who's Afraid of Virginia Woolf?*, does not offer solutions. Nothing is ever settled, no conclusions or resolutions are either reached or offered because the play is essentially circular and repetitive in nature, both in point of action and in point of the language used. From the very title of the play, it is obvious that *Who's Afraid of Virginia Woolf?* has been construed as an absurdist black joke with a deliberate twofold meaning. Therefore, if perceived as a semantic incongruity, due to the pun upon the words wolf and the name of the famous writer, Virginia Woolf, the title provokes laughter and if only the name of Virginia Woolf is taken into account, it stimulates meditation, and the underlying tone becomes serious. As a result, the seriocomic title of the play becomes extremely suggestive and represents an anticipatory technique for its black humour (Gussow M., 1999, 30-33). The mere reference to the name of Virginia Woolf could function as a portent because George and Martha are playing a dangerous game, which could drive either or both of them into madness, madness being a well-known motif for black humourists. The fact that the name is changed to Virginia Woolf is also significant from other points of view, too. On the one hand, Virginia Woolf wrote in the style of stream-of-consciousness, which tried to mimic the thought patterns of her characters, and one might be afraid of her because she tries to understand the intricacies of the human mind and heart and, at the same time, her writing is very complex and intellectual, therefore, one might be afraid of not understanding her. On the other hand, Virginia Woolf tried to reveal the truth of human experience, emotion and thought: all of the things that the couples in the play try to cover up. The title is also a parody of *Who's Afraid of the Big Bad Wolf?* from Disney's *The Three Little Pigs*. Some unknown person sang the parody at the party that the characters attended earlier, and it was apparently hilarious. Nevertheless, Albee never explains in what context the tune was sung. It is like the audience/readers are given the punch line to a joke but not the set-up. However, the title is a joke whose meaning the audience does not know. The characters are up there on the stage laughing it up, while the audience is left wondering just what is so funny. This fact transforms the seemingly harmless joke into black humour. Albee seems to say, by means of his play, that life is a big black joke, which is reflected at the level of language and style in his play, whose meaning is ultimately unknowable (Gussow M., 1999, 34).

In Edward Albee's *Who's Afraid of Virginia Woolf?*, black humour becomes part of an extremely elaborated language game, which obviously violates the Gricean cooperative principle, and the maxim of quality, in particular.

Grice's cooperative principle may be broadly defined as "a rough general principle which participants will be expected to observe, namely: make your conversational contribution such as is required, at the stage at which it occurs, by the accepted purpose or direction of the talk exchange in which you are engaged." (Grice H.P., 1975, 45)

In other words, the cooperative principle sustains that all talk exchanges are not a mere string of incoherent remarks, they are most often than not based on cooperative efforts and, last but not least, each participant recognizes in the respective talk exchanges a common goal or at least a reciprocally accepted direction.

Nevertheless, in Edward Albee's play, the cooperative principle and the rules that lie behind it are not self-evident because most so-called conversations in the play are, on the one hand, totally uncooperative, and, on the other hand, they clearly lack a reciprocally accepted direction.

Therefore, the further analysis of *Who's Afraid of Virginia Woolf?* will be mainly performed from a pragmatic point of view, focusing on instances of non-observance of the above-mentioned principle but it will also rely on other co-factors that contribute to the play's absurdist black humour.

As Enikő Bollobás rightly asserts in her article *Who's Afraid of Irony? An Analysis of Uncooperative Behaviour in Edward Albee's Who's Afraid of Virginia Woolf*, Edward Albee's play relies on some "uncooperative principle" and has a reputation for almost lacking any action, because nothing really happens besides endless talking.

In *Who's Afraid of Virginia Woolf?*, Albee presents an all-night drinking bout in which a middle-aged professor and his wife verbally lacerate each other in brilliant colloquial language. After a long stretch of time where families were pictured as perfect and happy, George and Martha share the name of America's founding and most famous couple, George and Martha Washington; thus, Albee also implicitly extends his portrayal of this faulty marriage to all America. The illusions and tensions under which they hide and snipe at each other are paradigmatic of a larger phenomenon in the nation itself.

Game-playing evolves as the central metaphor of the play and the variety of the games suggests the many ways one can shield oneself from reality. They are spread over all three acts (Act One: Fun and Games, Act Two: Walpurgisnacht, Act Three: The Exorcism), yet as the play progresses, the games become more serious and less fun.

Indeed, the audience witnesses "a modernist game" (Bollobás<sup>E., 1981, 324</sup>), as Bollobás calls it, whose rules are principles of uncooperative behaviour.

There are a variety of games used such as Humiliate the Host, Get the Guests, Hump the Hostess, Bringing Up Baby, Killing the Kid, each introducing new rules to define the new game, yet none of these rules discloses any possible way of cooperation.

Notice how all the names of the games from the play contain an alliteration, giving a lyrical but, at the same time, ironic tone to the whole play. From this point of view, of the poetical devices that are used throughout the play, *Who's Afraid of Virginia Woolf?* observes the trend of The Theatre of the Absurd.

For all of the play's savagery and bleak outlook, *Who's Afraid of Virginia Woolf?* is often very funny, George and Martha are so verbally skilful that their exchanges often make the audience laugh at the same time they feel the pain the two characters inflict, giving rise to a genuine form of black humour.

Albee's ability to evoke laughs out of the darkest situations is one of his hallmarks. Black humour is manifest by means of many forms in Edward Albee's play, perhaps the most obvious and also the most important being irony.

Irony belongs, together with hints, insinuations, metaphors, to the class of indirect speech acts as defined by Searle (Searle J.R., 1969). In an ironic exchange, the speaker's utterance meaning and sentence meaning come apart. Or, as Allwood puts it "intended communicative content and apprehended content differ," i.e. the speaker communicates something more than the opposite of what is literally expressed.

Also, common background assumptions are of great importance when dealing with irony. Allwood asserts that

“A can communicate something about his relation to a certain situation by concurrently communicating the conventional content of a certain linguistic expression and intending that B, through his familiarity with the situation, and the conventional content of the expression should draw the conclusion that A does not mean what he is literally saying.” (Allwood, J., 1976, 135)

On the other hand, as a form of uncooperative behaviour, irony violates the Gricean maxims of quality: it says something, but in fact means something else.

Ironic speech acts may be compared to lies as far as the truth value is concerned. Both irony and lies are examples of uncooperative behaviour and they both violate Grice’s cooperative principle. However, the difference between them is that lies do not have implicatures while irony may imply a number of things such as the opposite of the literal meaning, the intention of the speaker to leave the listener in doubt or the speaker’s distance from the situation.

Albee’s play abounds in both instances of irony and in lies, sometimes being almost impossible for the audience to distinguish between them:

Martha: Our son does not have blue hair... or blue eyes, for that matter. He has green eyes... like me.

George: He has blue eyes, Martha.

Martha: Green.

George: Blue, Martha.

M: Green! He has the loveliest green eyes... they aren’t all flaked with brown and grey, you know... hazel... they’re real green... deep, pure green eyes... like mine.

Nick: Your eyes are... brown, aren’t they?

Martha: Green! Well, in some lights they look brown, but they’re green. Not green like his... more hazel. George has watery blue eyes... milky blue.

George: Make up your mind, Martha. (Albee E., 1962, 50-51)

The above conversation has absolutely no connection with reality. Apparently reality changes according to the wish of Martha. The first thing that strikes the reader both in this fragment and in the entire play are the suspension points. The suspension points represent a graphic mark that may paradoxically symbolize, on the one hand, the characters’ interrupted thoughts as the characters themselves are interrupted, incoherent, discontinuous beings, and, on the other hand, the continuous babble of the characters, who keep uttering word after word in a nonsensical and absurd dialogue; from this point of view, by using the suspension points, the author seems to suggest that this babble never ceases, even when the characters pause and do not speak.

The language in the fragment is extremely simple, the only so-called adornment brought to it being the modifiers *the loveliest*, *real*, *deep*, *pure*, *watery*, and *milky*, which although are meant to make the nuances of colour more clear, they ironically succeed in bringing more confusion to the fragment as a whole.

After the initial argument between George and Martha, in which George states that their son has blue eyes and Martha contradicts him and asserts that their son has green eyes, the climax of the fragment is brought by Nick, who uses a tag question *Your eyes are... brown, aren’t they?* in which all the expectations of the readers fall apart. The tag question is skillfully used by Albee in order to emphasize the brown colour of Martha’s eyes as opposed to blue or green.

In the next retort, Martha manages to ruin all expectations and rules of logic by mixing colours completely. The final question is: are the characters ironic or simply lying or both? The answer would probably be that irony and lying beautifully combine in Albee’s play to give rise to black humour.

Irony is achieved by means of a number of ways in Edward Albee’s play, *Who’s Afraid of Virginia Woolf?*, all meant to enhance the overall black humour. According to Bollobás (Bollobás E., 1981, 329), there are three ways used by Albee to obtain irony.

The first and most common way to obtain an ironic proposition is by using the negation of literal meaning as in the example: “Martha: I never joke... I don’t have a sense of humour. I have a fine sense of the ridiculous, but no sense of humour.” (Albee E., 1962, 51)

In this retort, the intended meaning that should be understood by the audience is that Martha always jokes and has the finest sense of humour, because all her actions in the play lead to this idea. This clash between literal and intended meaning, as expressed by the words Martha utters and her real actions, leads to irony. Here, the negation of literal meaning is achieved by the use of the negative adverb *never*, the negative word *no* and the negative auxiliary *don’t*.

Another instance of this type of irony is the use of a verb in the affirmative, *to bring out*, and of a superlative, *the best*, when, in fact, the intended meaning of the verb is in the negative and the real superlative George wants to use is the worst:

Martha: It’s the most... life you’ve shown a long time.  
George: you bring out the best in me, baby. (Albee E., 1962, 124)

The second way to obtain irony, which evidently violates the maxim of quality, is by using “an intentional expression of insincerity.” This statement is supported by Brown, who says that “only illocutionary acts with sincerity condition can be ironically performed.” (Brown Jr., Robert, L., 1978, 10) Ironic operatives such as marrying, appointing, nominating cannot be performed exactly because they lack the sincerity condition. On the other hand, illocutionary acts that express intention, desire, belief, pleasure, also have sincerity conditions. Otherwise, they should be perceived as ironic as in the next retorts:

George: What made you decide to be a teacher?  
Martha: Oh... well, the same things that... uh... motivated you, I imagine.  
George: What were they?  
Nick: Pardon?  
George: I said, what were they? What were the things that motivated me? (Albee E., 1962, 31)

George’s question, *What were they?*, is ironic because the sincerity condition is blatantly infringed. The violation of the sincerity condition is supported by the repetition of the question three times, the third time the cataphoric pronoun *they* being explicited by a paraphrase in order to stress the above-mentioned condition. In fact, George wants it known that he lacks this condition.

In another ironic metaphor, “I’m not trying to tear him down. He’s a God, we all know that” (Albee E., 1962, 26), George assaults his father-in-law, even if, at a superficial level, he praises him.

Another instance of ironic judgement, which is even more complex and multifaceted, is the following, which violates the sincerity condition of the speech act:

George: Martha’s tastes in liquor have come down... simplified over the years... crystallized. Back when I was courting Martha – well, I don’t know if that’s exactly the right word for it – but back when I was courting Martha...

Martha: Screw, sweetie!

George: At any rate (back when I was courting Martha, she’d order the damnest things! I wouldn’t believe it! We’d go into a bar... you know, a bar... a whiskey, beer and bourbon bar... and what she’d do would be, she’d screw up her face, think real hard, and come up with... brandy Alexanders, crème de cacao frappés, gimlets, flaming punch bowls... seven-layer liquor things. Real lady-like little drinkies. But the years have brought to Martha a sense of essentials... the knowledge that cream is for coffee, lime juice for pies... and alcohol pure and simple)...here you are, angel... for the pure and simple. (Albee E., 1962, 21-2)

In the above sample, the sincerity condition does not refer to the belief in the validity of the judgement: the crystallization in taste is by no means a virtue and all the arguments that should be in

favour of this crystallization are, in fact, against it. These counter-arguments that would in no way honour a woman make up the irony in this fragment.

From the very beginning of the fragment, Edward Albee offers the readers a hint as far as the direction of the argumentation is going, for he uses three verbs that are supposed to be synonyms: *to come down*, *to simplify*, and *to crystallize*, but in reality they are not, because the phrasal verb *to come down* and the verb *to simplify* have negative connotations, while the verb *to crystallize* obviously has a positive connotation, meaning “to make something such as an idea more definite or precise.” Therefore, although by using the verb *to crystallize*, George tries to soften his assertion, the other verbs obviously point to the negative direction Martha’s life has taken.

Moreover, by the artful use of the phrasal verb *to come down*, which is usually most known in the syntagm *to come down in the world* (i.e. to lose wealth or position), George also implies that Martha has not only come down as far as her taste in liquor is concerned, but also as far as wealth and position, and why not, humanity, are concerned.

Furthermore, the repetition of the noun *bar*, the assertion *Real lady-like little drinkies*, which is made up of an ironically used diminutive – *drinkies* – and three modifiers – *real*, *lady-like* and *little*, as well as the enumeration of different types of alcoholic drinks, subversively stress the degradation Martha suffered over the years.

The use of the hendiadys *pure and simple*, first as an adjective and then as a noun, linguistically epitomizes the same idea of Martha’s transformation. Also, the nouns *sweetie* and *angel* give the whole fragment cohesion as they support its fine irony.

The third means of obtaining irony is by questioning the truth of a presupposition and by bringing about some kind of incompatibility between the presupposition and the suggested meaning of the sentence.

An example of this type of irony is:

Martha: What the hell do you mean screaming up the stairs at me like that?

George: We got lonely, darling... we got lonely for the soft purr of your little voice. (Albee E., 1962, 35)

In this sample, irony has two purposes. On the one hand, the illocutionary force is reversed: flattery turns into assault because there is clearly irony in George’s assertion that Martha has a little voice, which is characterised by a soft purr. On the other hand, another mechanism is also employed here: the presupposition logically implies its own negation. Normally, when George says *We got lonely for the soft purr of your little voice*, the audience takes for granted that Martha’s voice has a soft purr. Nevertheless, exactly because it is ironically used, and because of the context in which it is used, the remark implies the negation of the presupposition, i.e. Martha has no little voice with a soft purr, it is, in fact, exactly the opposite as proven by the language and tone of voice she uses throughout the play.

In the next example, irony again relies on presupposition:

Martha: Get over there and open the door!

George: All right, love... whatever love wants. Isn’t it nice the way some people have manners, though, even in this day and age? Isn’t it nice that some people won’t just come breaking into other people’s houses even if they do hear some sub-human monster yowling at’em inside? (Albee E., 1962, 19)

In the above statement, if George had limited himself to saying *Some people have manners*, the logical negative presupposition would have been ironic enough. But Edward Albee goes further, he pushes the limit towards black humour, by using a contradiction between two presuppositions: *Some people have manners* and *Some people won’t come breaking into other people’s houses* and their logical negative implications *some people do not have manners* and *some people do come breaking into people’s houses*.

Geoffrey Leech, in his book, *Principles of Pragmatics*, makes the distinction between information which is asserted and the information that is used as descriptive or identificational features of a participant of an assertion, i.e. between including predications, rank-shifted predication, which are

asserted in discourse, and downgraded predication, which takes on the status of features (Leech G., 1991, 25-28) Downgraded predication is the equivalent to a feature in function but has the structure of a predication.

In *Who's Afraid of Virginia Woolf?*, ironic presuppositions are also built by negating some downgraded predication and incorporating it into presuppositions.

Leech's rule of predication states that: "If a predication X contains within it (either directly or indirectly) a downgraded predication Y, then X presupposes Y' (where Y' is an independent assertion equivalent to Y." (Leech G., 1991, 296)

The following fragment is an illustrative example "The one thing in this whole sinking world that I am sure of is my partnership, my chromosomological partnership in the... creation of our... blond-eyed, blue-haired... son." (Albee E., 1962, 49)

By means of this mechanism, the opposite of the downgraded predication of chromosomological partnership and of the blond-eyed blue-haired son is implied, which gives rise to irony.

On the other hand, the syntagm blond-eyed, blue-haired son is not a simple mistake made by George or the author of the play. It is, in fact, a deliberate absurdity that sets the evidently ironic tone.

Albee also relies on entailment in order to obtain an ironic effect in his *Who's Afraid Of Virginia Woolf?*. In pragmatics, entailment is the relationship between two sentences where the truth of one (A) requires the truth of the other (B).

Irony in the following excerpt results from the attack of the marriage contract entailed:

George: Yes, Martha? Can I get you something?

Martha: Well... uh... sure, you can light my cigarette, if you're of a mind to.

George: No... there are limits. I mean, man can put up with only so much. I'll hold your hand when it's dark and you're afraid of the bogey man, and I'll tote your gin bottles out after midnight, so no one'll see... but I will not light your cigarette. And that, as they say, is that. (Albee E., 1962, 50-51)

George's assertion reverses a generally agreed-upon scale of values: lighting a cigarette involves much less effort from the part of the one who performs the action than comforting someone when having a nightmare. Ans, yet, George ardently refuses to perform the easier act, i.e. lighting his wife's cigarette, by using words with a great force of assertion such as the noun limits, the phrasal verb to put up with, the two modifiers only and so and the set phrase that is that. By violating regularly accepted pragmatic rules, and by refusing to perform the easier action, George also negates the pragmatic expectation of the sentence.

n fact, he does not comfort Martha after having nightmares and he does not help hiding her alcoholism and, on top of that, he would even refuse to perform such an easy action as lighting her cigarette. This reversal of values clearly leads to the ironic mocking tone of the fragment.

Irony in *Who's Afraid of Virginia Woolf?* becomes a perfect language game and "through this cruel but effective game, the ironists (i.e. George and Martha) achieve a tremendous perlocutionary effect: by the end, they will have dumped their hidden problem on the new couple through forcing them to take part in their game of exorcism." (Bollobás E., 1981, 333)

Besides the omnipresent and all-pervasive irony, which represents the foundation upon which black humour is built, black humour also comes into many other forms in Edward Albee's play.

One of them is the use of witticisms. Witticisms, by their double-intended meaning, represent such a means of creating black humour. Witticisms are witty, often biting remarks, characterised by cleverness in perception and choice of words, whose ingenuity or verbal skill has the power to evoke laughter.

Albee's verbal dexterity in point of witticisms is made up of one-liners, generally pitched by George with perfect comic timing. An example of such a witticism in *Who's Afraid of Virginia Woolf?* may be considered the following retort: "Why, Martha... your Sunday chapel dress!" (Albee E., 1962, 35)

This retort comes as a reaction to Martha after she changed in a revealing outfit. Therefore, there is an obvious contradiction between Martha's appearance, who looks more voluptuous after changing her dress, and George's words that turn the remark into a skilful witticism.

The exclamation mark is artfully used by Edward Albee in this reply. The exclamation mark is usually used in order to express a very strong feeling, be it an emphatic declaration, an interjection or a command. In this context, it is used to express surprise; but being surprised could be either a positive or a negative state. In the above retort, the exclamation mark is the only indicator of George's real state, probably that of being surprised in a negative way.

Albee also makes use of two modifiers before the noun *dress*, i.e. *Sunday* and *chapel*. He is not satisfied with only using the noun *Sunday*, he also inserts the noun *chapel* in order to make his remark even more mordant and Martha's dress even more outrageous. Also notice that the sentence is elliptical, it does not have a predicate, fact which emphasizes once again Martha's immoral and inappropriate outfit. The basic opposition is between a positive attitude represented by the literal utterance and a negative attitude being communicated.

Another instance of witticism is the following: "Martha, won't you show her where we keep the... euphemism?" (Albee E., 1962, 59)

Here, George ironically uses the noun *euphemism* instead of *bathroom*, since the whole play abounds in taboo and offensive words. The sentence may be thought of as a witticism due to the use of the noun *euphemism*, since only an educated person such as George could introduce it in discourse and, at the same time, use it in an ironic manner.

Vulgar humour and insult humour also play a very important part in building up the absurdist black humour of the play. There are numerous instances that account for both vulgar and insult humour.

Foul language like: Damn! (pp. 26, 32, 36, 42, 57), Goddamn! (pp. 16, 17, 25, 34, 41, 44), Screw you! (p. 19), screw (pp. 21, 31, 47, 116), angel tits (p. 35), Up yours!(p.73), evidently stand in contrast to the educated diction and neologisms George and Martha occasionally use such as abstruse, recondite (p. 44), malignancy (p. 47), flagellator (p. 60), to endeavour (p. 73), to name but a few, and is illustrative for the opposition that exists in black humour.

Insult humour is mainly used by Martha and George when addressing each other. Their insults are accurate, deadly, yet, most often than not, hilarious. They call each other names all through the play. Martha calls George a cluck (pp.11, 12), simp (p. 16), pig (p. 17), bog (p. 36), fen (p.36), swamp (p. 36), prick (p. 42), floozie (p. 50), flop (p. 56), cipher (p. 18), sour-puss (p. 19), muckmouth (p. 20), cochon, canaille (p. 65), son of a bitch (p. 79), bastard (pp. 83, 91), monster (p. 94), etc.

If Martha is openly aggressive in her use of language, George, on the other hand, is more allusive. In the first part of the play, he only uses names of endearment when talking to Martha such as love (p. 23), pet (p.35), darling (p.35), sweetie (p.41), although the intended meaning is obviously opposite. In the second part of the play, however, when the joke of the title sounds a refrain and darkens significantly and also the games become darker and tension accumulates, full-scale abusiveness from the part of George, too, comes out: in this part, besides the endearment names (which again mean the opposite of what they literally express), such as angel (p. 51), wife and lover (p.75), love (p. 76), sweetheart (p. 91), George also uses pejorative terms proper such as wicked woman (p. 49), a deeply wicked person (p. 49), monster, bête, putain (p. 65), satanic bitch (p. 84), a spoiled, self-indulgent, wilful, dirty-minded, liquor-ridden... (p. 94).

Notice how, even in his insults, George is more elaborate than Martha. He never uses only an insulting word when addressing Martha, with the exception of the French words, which, however, are grouped together. He always adds a modifier such as wicked or deeply or satanic. The last structure is an enumeration of adjectives, all related to Martha, with no head noun. The quintuple syntactic structure is in itself extremely complex since it contains two simple adjectives (spoiled and wilful) and three compound adjectives (self-indulgent, dirty-minded, liquor-ridden), therefore Albee most probably felt that there was no need for yet another insulting head noun, since the readers already know to whom George refers.

It is common knowledge that men are usually more straightforward and economical in using words, while women are usually more allusive and elaborate in their use of language. Nevertheless, in Edward Albee's play things happen the other way round. Martha is the one who is more straightforward and who uses much more insulting language than George does, who is more subtle, allusive and elaborate in his use of language, although the result is the same in both cases: emotional brutality.

This change of roles from femininity that turns into masculine femininity and masculinity that turns into feminine masculinity leads to a loss of identity that is a very popular theme among black humourists.

The dialogue of the play has a great rhythmic feel. Besides the chants and short poem-like fragments that rhyme, and the alliterations (for example superb and sublime – p. 45, test-tube-bred... incubator-born – p. 45, or the names of the games, which were mentioned earlier), Edward Albee also repeats words or phrases within speeches or dialogue exchanges to create a variety of rhythms.

#### **4. CONCLUSION**

Edward Albee's play, *Who's Afraid of Virginia Woolf?*, can be just as funny as it is emotionally brutal. These seemingly contradictory ingredients combine to bring to the surface the play's absurdist black humour.

Edward Albee's black humour is not as cruel as that of Golding, Vonnegut and Heller, it is more subtle and even elusive at times, getting closer to Swift's cynical style of writing, although Albee focuses on different themes than Swift, such as sexuality, reality versus illusion, The American Dream or love and hate. Nevertheless, Albee's black humour is not less shocking than that of the above-mentioned novelists, and mainly by means of scathing witticisms, violent obscenity of the dialogue, blatant sexuality and profane use of language, he eventually manages to bring to the foreground a fine type of black humour, more intellectual and crafted.

The desperate games, the play-acting, the barbed puns demean, toy with and, paradoxically, support each other fuse into an exposé of the uses and limits of language itself. In Edward Albee's play, the words sneer and spin into a kind of gigantic theatrical pun that most often than not triggers, at the same time, laughter and pain.

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## MCDSARE: 2018

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## ON THE HARMONIZATION OF IDIOMATIC LANGUAGE WITH SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY

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### *Abstract*

Is there such thing as harmony between science, technology and language? This could be an interesting question if it were not naïve. Languages evolve almost simultaneously with science and technology because, with new technology, new words are needed. Languages constantly adapt to the new realities, whether scientific, social or cultural. New words replace old ones when the surrounding realities ask for it, when it is necessary to name realities which have never been seen before. The same holds valid in the case of idioms. The newer generations have already forgotten many of the idioms which are still familiar to the older generation. In English, for example, to rain cats and dogs or to paint the town red are considered old and are even laughed at by very young people. In Romanian, «a fi într-o bujie» or «a-i fila o lampă» (he/she works with only one spark plug and one of his/her lamp flickers, both of them meaning to be a little crazy) no longer have a meaning to people in their early twenties or younger. New realities modify old idioms, make them disappear, or give birth to brand new ones, such as the engine is running, but there is nobody behind the wheel or he/she drives uphill with the clutch slipping. The present paper aims at showing how this happens and at giving an answer to the real question: is there a certain type of idioms which does not keep pace with science and technology?

**Keywords:** idioms; proverbs; evolution; influence; technology; science;

### 1. INTRODUCTION

As a not native-speaker of English I have always tried to keep up with what is new in English, especially in as far as idioms and slang are concerned, and I have always considered that the language used in television, especially in sitcoms, is the most vivid and up-to-date language. I started getting aware of this fact when, in such a sitcom, one of the main characters was being mocked at by the others for using out-of-date idioms, such as to paint the town red and to be in a pickle. I had fun watching him being laughed at for using "old slang" (as another main character suggested), but the same was to happen to me just a few months later, while having a casual conversation with a Canadian teacher of English. I used an idiom which I thought would make her feel like home: it is raining cats and dogs. She was

surprised to hear it and, being asked why, she simply said that nobody used it in Canada any more, except for very old people. After that eye-opening conversation I used the Internet to do some research, and this is how I found out that it is raining cats and dogs, the English idiom referred to in most studies and articles on idioms, has one big problem: nobody uses it nowadays. This is what a native English-speaking American citizen wrote on a site dealing with idioms: "I have NEVER actually heard anyone use the phrase 'It's raining cats and dogs.' It's funny, because it is such a common example of an English expression or idiom that even in the U.S. everyone thinks that it must be used somewhere, but nobody has ever heard it." He then continued giving examples of how people in his country talk about heavy rain: "It's pouring" is common. "It's a downpour" is common. And, yes, "coming down in buckets" is common." (<https://www.italki.com/question/256447>, last visited on May 3rd, 2018, at 5:12 p.m.).

## **2. RESEARCH QUESTIONS**

My conclusion was that when the reality of cats and dogs literally falling through the fetched roofs of the 16th century English houses disappeared, the idiom started dying slowly out until it became a fossil. It is well known that words become obsolete and disappear when the realities denominated by them no longer exist, but what about idioms? They are metaphors, their meaning is not literal and they are small samples of language art, therefore they should not disappear. Still, many of them do. What makes them lose ground in favor of the new ones? Doing more research, looking through more books on idioms (both in English and Romanian) and using the Internet extensively, I realized that some idioms have disappeared and others have been transformed due to a very important aspect of our lives: technology. I have found traces of its influence in the most prolific patterns which created idioms throughout the centuries, with one notable exception: proverbs. There are proverbs whose meaning is not literal (I believe that only such proverbs should be considered idioms) and whose origins can be traced thousands of years ago. What kept them alive, almost unchanged? How are those idioms which are also proverbs different from the idioms which have not reached the complexity of a proverb, in as far as their longevity in language is concerned? A possible answer is to be found in the present article.

From the very beginning, mention should be made that there are no studies or articles dedicated to the evolution of idioms according to the progress made in science and technology. There are some authors who only noticed that an idiom can have various forms according to time and place, but they do not go beyond the role of mere observers.

"A living language, like English, is constantly on the move. Trying to describe it is like trying to take a snapshot of a flowing river. As a language passes through time and space, it is altered in innumerable ways. And it is continually replenished, refreshed, and rejuvenated.

Time. A river flowing through the centuries picks up some new pebbles and discards some old. It reshapes the existing ones, polishing them to show new hues, accentuate new angles. It brings some to the surface and buries others below layers (sometimes those pebbles can pop up again!)." (Garg, 2005:1)

This phenomenon happens in every living language. For example, Liviu Groza detects more types of variation in Romanian, from phonetic variations to variations caused by changing the word order. However, reference will be made only to what the author names spontaneous phraseological changes (Groza: 38). The most numerous variations labeled spontaneous are those in which one element is replaced by a synonym. The reasons for these changes can vary, but the main reasons are the greater popularity of the replacing word in one region, on the one hand, and the fact that one individual might like the replacing word better than the replaced one, on the other. Here is one example: "a-și ieși din fire / pepeni / răbdări / țâțâni / balamale / șine". (Groza: 39) Of course, it is normal for idioms to vary, since they are not mathematical entities, but products of the human artistic talent. In mathematics, one and one is always two, but in language, what Romanians in one region name țâțâni (hinges), people in other regions call balamale (not considering register, or metaphorical meaning). To all appearances, it is not only about the region where idioms are used. According to Groza, the word țâțână comes from the Latin, titina, whereas the second one, balama comes from Turkish. Since the Romans were here first and the word țâțână does not sound as a neologism, one may suppose that the newest word is balama.

Going to the roots of some of the most common idiomatic expressions in English, Călina Gogălniceanu (2007) offers aspects of technology influence on idioms without necessarily trying to demonstrate the evolution of the idioms through technology, but rather through time. Funny bone in "with that hilarious story he hit my funny bone" (Gogălniceanu 2007: 33), for instance, evolved from the literal meaning of the nerve which runs down the inside of the elbow, named the ulnar nerve, the one which causes a funny feeling in the form of a dull pain when it is hit, to the abstract meaning of feeling like laughing or at least having fun. This happened when science gave the longest bone in the human arm a name: humerus. The already existing word in English, humorous, "ceased" the opportunity and changed the meaning of humerus bone into humorous bone, which is, in other words, the funny bone. Most probably, had it not been for science and its words from Latin, the funny bone would have remained just a bone, and the idiom funny bone would have never been created.

There are many examples of technology and science influencing idioms or even giving birth to them, through semantic transfer, such as: beat around the bush, where the technology of catching birds at night by beating the ground around the bushes in which they were hiding gave birth to idioms meaning to deliberately avoid the real issue (Gogălniceanu 2007: 14), or between the devil and the blue sea, which is believed to come from a real marine situation (Gogălniceanu 2007: 16).

What surprises me is that, obvious as this phenomenon is, I found no books or articles specifically approaching the harmonization of idiomatic language and science. There are many examples to support the existence of this linguistic phenomenon among which: a few bricks short of a load – a few cards short of a deck – a few sandwiches short of a picnic – a few screws short of a hardware store – a few fries short of a Happy Meal – a few keys short of a keyboard. Although not documented, the evolution of the pattern "a few units short of a whole" is obvious, from the ancient bricks to the very modern keys on a keyboard. Some of them may have been created during the same period of time, just for the sake of variety, but this does not change the fact that, once technology was here (screws, keys and even sandwiches), new idioms were created.

A more important aspect of the evolution of idiomatic expressions, whichever form they may take, is the influence of science progress onto proverbs, with a key question: Have proverbs, in general, changed their form and meanings over the centuries? The answer is negative and supporting arguments in this respect will be provided in what follows.

Languages evolve just like technology and adapt to the new technological realities. Let us have a look at the series of idioms previously mentioned: a-și ieși din fire / pepeni / răbdări / țâțâni / balamale / șine. The word-for-word translation is to snap out (or get out, come out) of one's common sense / watermelons / patience / hinges / railway tracks, and the meaning is to go crazy. The evolution is clear: common sense, one of the most basic senses after the five senses of the body, then watermelons (the humanity evolved and started growing their own food), patience (a more advanced way of controlling ourselves seen as a sign of evolution and even of a cultivated spirit, as opposed to the animal instinct), hinges – a sign of technology – and the last one, railway tracks, when the humanity was on its way to the glorification of technology (and on its way to becoming addicted to it – not necessarily a positive thing). But why did the evolution of the idiom based on the formula to get out of..., meaning to lose it, stop here? Where is a-și ieși de pe autostrada sa (to snap out of one's highway), or a-și ieși din rețea / a scoate pe cineva din rețea (to snap out of/to be made go out of the net), a-și ieși / a fi scos de pe cric (to snap off of/to be taken down of the jack)? Is it too soon for them? Have people lost interest in this pattern? Have they already stopped creating idioms because of the pace of life today? Is there simply no time for this any longer? Will people become, slowly but surely, the machines which have been invented for centuries?

Another intriguing aspect which made me further investigate on how science and technology influence the appearance and disappearance of language expressions was the disappearance of two Romanian idioms which I used a lot when I was a child: a-i fila o lampă and a fi într-o bujie (literally translated, one of his/her lamp flickers and he/she works with only one spark plug, both of them meaning to be a little crazy, practically the equivalent of to have a screw loose). I asked tens of university students, just months ago (the spring of 2018), whether they knew what these two Romanian idioms meant, and very few of them knew their meaning. The fact that those very few students were in their 30's is worth mentioning.

While I was aware of the fact that not having electronic devices working on lamps any longer lead to the disappearance of *a-i fila o lampă*, I did not understand how an expression such as *turn on/off the light* is still in use, since we no longer turn anything to get something working, except for some cars, but not all, since more and more cars have buttons to press in order to start the engine. Why is this happening? Is it because the English language is much older than the Romanian, therefore having a lot stronger inertia? Is it because the Romanian language is more dynamic and it gets rid of whatever does not have a correspondent in reality more quickly than English? It is neither the first, nor the second variant. The answer lies within the close connection between language and technology. The verb *turn on/turn off* is still in use because, even to this day, there are devices using a knob designed to be turned in order to decrease or increase light or sound. It is still used in cars' radios, hands free devices and light dimmers. We might not turn on and off electric and electronic devices any longer, but we still turn up and down light and sound. When this technology becomes obsolete, we will witness the death of these lexically related phrasal verbs.

### **3. FINDINGS**

Judging by how technology and science influence them, idioms can be divided into two large groups: a) idioms which underwent modifications in their lexical content under the influence of science in general and b) idioms which remained unchanged over the decades and even over the centuries.

The starting point was the observation that some of the idioms found in books or in the collective memory of the people born in the 1970's, for example, are no longer in use, even though the meaning might be known to the younger generations. Furthermore, there are idioms which the people born in the 1970's still use and which have no meaning for the younger generation. How is this possible? The distance in time between two generations is not that significant. Despite this fact, small experiments conducted personally by me showed that young people under the age of 25 (but older than 18) do not know the meaning of some idioms still used (or at least recognized) by people a little over 30.

Another fact which led to the present research was the survival of proverbs, the oldest idioms, both in Romanian and English, which have not changed their structure over the centuries (or, if they did, they suffered minor modifications). An answer was needed to this question: How come an idiom such as "A bird in the hand is worth two in the bush" is still in use and "It is raining cats and dogs" is not? Of course, the proverb underwent some modifications, but not caused by technology and not essential to its structure or meaning. The first variant seems to have been found in John Heywood's 1546 glossary, 'A dialogue conteinyng the number in effect of all the prouerbes in the englishe tongue': "Better one byrde in hande than ten in the wood." (<https://www.phrases.org.uk/meanings/a-bird-in-the-hand.html>, last visited on May 9th, 2018, at 03:02 p.m.)

Another irrefutable piece of evidence that the evolution of technology has had an insignificant impact in the creation of proverbs is the fact that there are not too many proverbs related to technology. The most modern proverbs seem to have originated in an era where blacksmiths were very important: "Strike while the iron is still hot. In the first 200 proverbs presented in Flonta (1995), only 4 idioms seem to have been influenced by technology: Air slays sooner than the sword. The anvil fears no blows. When you are an anvil, hold you still; when you are a hammer, strike your fill. An arrow shot upright falls on the shooter's head." (Flonta 1995: 10, 12, 13) The last one can be barely considered a proverb influenced by technology, and no matter how hard one tries to find traces of technological influences upon proverb-idioms, only proverbs which survived in the same form as they were when created will be found. The intuition tells us that, being samples of written language, they were used by writers along the centuries. Once a proverb is used by writers and is made well known to an entire community, the proverb is sentenced to being frozen in time. Why a proverb such as "A new broom sweeps clean" did not turn into "A new vacuum cleaner vacuums clean"? It is because the original proverb said it all and because we still use brooms. How about "Do not put the cart before horses"? While in Romania of the 21st century we still have carts pulled by horses, in England this reality has long died out. Why has the proverb not evolved into something like Do not put the engine before the chassis? Another factor which lead to preserving proverb-idioms almost in their original shape is that knowing the proverbs of your language

shows a cultivated spirit, therefore changing them would be a blasphemy and a sign of lack of respect for the culture which produced them. Although this statement is true, changing proverbs while knowing the original is common in journalism, for example, or on blogs. Journalists change them to draw attention and, eventually, to make their readers smile, while bloggers do it for fun.

According to Flonta (1995), people started creating proverbs when they began working the land, at the dawn of agriculture. Due to the excess of food, they had the necessary time to sit and think of rules and laws by which the community should function, and those rules and laws were formulated in the form of proverbs. The first example given in the above mentioned book is a proverb allegedly known by the Sumerians 6,000 years ago: "Câteaua de pripă își naste căteii fără ochi" (Flonta 1995:2), roughly translated as The dog without a master gives birth to blind puppies. The word pripă (haste) was probably wrongly used here, the intended word being pripas, meaning without a master among other meanings. Used for didactic reasons, the proverb is what all the proverbs are: a sample of wisdom, a life lesson, in the shape of a metaphor. Of course, female dogs, having a master or not, give birth to "blind" puppies, but that was not the point of the proverb, which turns it into an idiom.

In the modern era, we have electricity, cars and other means of transportation. What did they produce, idiom-wise? In Romanian, we have *îi filează o lampă, e într-o bujie* and a very new one, which might catch, although I doubt it, because I personally heard it from a single person: (*ăsta*) *ziua fură curent* which means that the person in case has suffered a short circuit and, now, "steals" electricity (word-for-word translation: that person steals electricity during the day). Since I could not find it in any Romanian dictionaries of idioms, I did what any other person with enough computer knowledge would do: I googled it. I found only three websites which mention this idiom in the first 40 websites brought to me by Google, one of them giving the definition: "Mulți cred că e vorba de curentul ăla de care ai nevoie ca să faci lumină, dar de fapt că „fură curent” se spune despre o persoană care exagerează, aberează sau e nițel nebună." (Many people think that it is about the electricity you need to have light, but, in fact, we say that a person steals electricity when that person exaggerates, talks nonsense or is a little crazy.) (<https://www.kissfm.ro/article/9110/Cele-mai-amuzante-expresii-din-limba-romana>).

There was a comment on another website: "Nu-i normal omul ăsta, fură rău curent și n-are toate țiglele pe casă. Pericol public." (That man is not normal, he steals a lot of electricity and he does not have all the tiles on the roof. Public danger.) (<https://portalsm.ro/2017/12/fotovideo-smecherasul-care-distruso-terasa-cu-masina-comis-o-din-nou/>, last visited on June 12th, 2018, at 10:42). The proverb have all the tiles on the roof means have a screw lose.

Only one or two sites are not enough, but they represent a start. I have heard, from the same person, a few months later, a variant of this idiom: (*Ăsta*) *ziua fură curent, iar noaptea dă la masă* (That person steals electricity during the day and is in short circuit at night). Could that person be the one who actually came up with the variant? The question is worth asking because the above mentioned variant cannot be found anywhere, not even on the Internet. At this point the question should be asked if idioms are the product of a collective author or, on the contrary, they are produced individually and then spread with the chance of becoming popular?

The evidence that technology influenced idioms in both Romanian and English is overwhelming and I would have been surprised if it had been any different. There is one noticeable fact that has to be brought to our attention: most idioms are negative, talking about craziness, ugliness, stupidity etc. Trying to find ten idioms about craziness and ugliness, for example, and then ten idioms about being sane and beautiful revealed the fact that there are a lot more idioms describing negative facts, features, attitudes etc. This fact may show an inclination of people towards humiliating other people, but it may very well be our need to present negative things in a funny way, so as to sugar coat the reality. How many idioms related to technology are there in Romanian and in English, regarding craziness or stupidity? If we count the Romanian ones, including the lost *e într-o bujie* and *îi filează o lampă*, there are 5: *nu are toate țiglele pe casă*, *fură curent* (*ziua fură current, iar noaptea dă la masă*), *îi lipsește o doagă* (he/she misses a stave) and the two mentioned above as being already forgotten. In English, there are many more such idioms: a few bricks shy of a load, a few cans short of a six pack, the elevator doesn't go all the way to the top, the lights are on but nobody's home, half a bubble off plumb, a few sandwiches short of a picnic, one more brain-cell and he could be considered dangerous, a few French fries short of a happy meal, working with

an unformatted disk, not the sharpest knife in the drawer, got a screw loose, lights are on but no one's home, he's/she's not firing on all cylinders, he's/she's a 75 watt bulb in a 100 watt world, drives uphill with the clutch slipping, gates are down, the lights are flashing, but the train isn't coming, he's/she's so dense, light bends around him/her etc. (<https://www.webmasterworld.com/forum9/7910.htm>., last visited on June 12th, 2018, at 11:09).

#### **4. CONCLUSION**

The conclusion can be drawn that idioms in the form of proverbs stopped evolving hundreds of years ago, being preserved almost as they were when created, with few changes, but not under the influence of modern technology. There are no "The phone in the hand is worth two in the store" or "It is the early buyer who catches the promotion" etc., whereas idioms which are not proverbs, belonging to the spoken language, have evolved permanently. The same idea is pointed out by Flonta (1995) who states that: "E interesant că, în timp ce se asistă la o diminuare a folosirii proverbului în secolul trecut, fenomen care continua și în secolul nostru, publicarea de culegeri de proverbe în toate limbile a luat o mare amploare tocmai în aceste două secole: proverbele românilor sunt culese și publicate în monumentală lucrare a lui J. Zanne (1895-1912), iar Institutul de limbă finlandeză al Universității din Helsinki finalizează, încă înainte de 1930, culegerea și clasificarea unui număr record de circa 1.425.000 de proverbe, pentru a nu da decât aceste două exemple" (Flonta, 1995: 3).

In addition, it is obvious that the written language strives to preserve the language of its decade, with its rules and laws, while spoken language, free and spontaneous, still gives births to new idioms, even though the frequency with which these idioms appear is not high. The only reason for which idioms do not change as fast as they are created is that many of them are not accepted/used by enough people and on a large enough territory to become national. Examples such as «ziua fură curent și noaptea dă la masa», a se încălța cu fesul (to put the cap on your feet, an idiom strictly used by one of my cousins, and which means to be stupid, clumsy) or a face ca drujba în ciot (to make like a chainsaw in a stump, an idiom brought to my attention by a colleague of mine, learned from her mother, meaning to be highly agitated), are definitely inventive, but have not made it to mass usage. Maybe, in the future. Who knows?

It has been shown that idioms are prone to be changed and "upgraded" by technology except for those complex idioms in the form of proverbs, and the conclusion has already been drawn: proverbs are bound to stay unchanged due to the fact that they belong to the literary, cultivated language. What has to be determined in the future is how much we use proverbs in our daily conversations.

Without having solid evidence, I tend to believe that proverbs have become items in a museum of language history. We know them, we like to look at them, but we do not use them any longer to illustrate our thoughts. When is the last time you used one? The other idioms are more popular and, being part of the spoken language, are still used on a large scale. Will they become what proverbs are today? Will communication continuously become more efficient and these metaphors be forgotten in the process? Will they even be forbidden in the future? Forbidding them seems to be a stretch, but there is at least one movie in which this fact is a reality (a fictitious reality, if there is such a thing).

Of course, a science-fiction movie, about our world in the future: *Demolition Man*, 1993, with Sylvester Stallone, Wesley Snipes and Sandra Bullock. It is a movie about "a police officer (who) is brought out of suspended animation in prison to pursue an old ultra-violent nemesis who is loose in a non-violent future society." (<https://www.imdb.com/title/tt0106697/>, last visited on June 12th, 2018, at 11:31). Below are some representative fragments from the script.

1990's Captain Healy: 'Dammit, Spartan. I'm sick and tired of this "Demolition Man" shit! You're not supposed to come down here, you're not supposed to apprehend Simon Phoenix single-handedly, and you're not supposed to blow anything up!'

John Spartan: 'It wasn't me this time, he dumped the gas and had the placed rigged to blow.'

Captain Healy: 'Yeah right, and you had nothing to do with it. I know you've been trying to nail this psycho for 2 years. But try to remember a little thing like official police procedure. Now where are the hostages?' (<https://www.imdb.com/title/tt0106697/characters/nm0434676>, last visited on June 11th, 2018, at 11:34 a.m.)

After 60 years:

Chief George Earle: 'I monitored your disheartening and distressing comments to the warden this morning. Do you really long for chaos and disharmony? Your fascination with the vulgar 20th century seems to be affecting your better judgment. You realize you're setting a bad example for other officers and sworn personnel.'

Lenina Huxley: 'Thank you for the attitude adjustment, Chief Earle. Info assimilated.' (<https://www.imdb.com/title/tt0106697/characters/nm0348409>, last visited on June 11th, 2018, 11:36 a.m.).

Aware of the fact that a society in which everything is by the book and nothing is left to its fate does not allow too much freedom in... anything, the language used by the people in the future, in this movie, lacks creativity. Once again, the absence of idioms shows that they really are a product of our creativity, of a ludic sense:

Lenina Huxley: 'Ah, smoking is not good for you, and it's been deemed that anything not good for you is bad; hence, illegal. Alcohol, caffeine, contact sports, meat...'

John Spartan: 'Are you shitting me?'

Moral Statute Machine: 'John Spartan, you are fined one credit for a violation of the Verbal Morality Statute.'

John Spartan: 'What the hell is that?'

Moral Statute Machine: 'John Spartan, you are fined one credit for a violation of the Verbal Morality Statute.'

Lenina Huxley: 'Bad language, chocolate, gasoline, uneducational toys and anything spicy. Abortion is also illegal, but then again so is pregnancy if you don't have a licence.' (<https://www.imdb.com/title/tt0106697/characters/nm0000113>, last visited on June 11th, 2018, at 11:45)

Is future going to be like that? Are people going to be so obsessed with finding ways of communicating efficiently that idioms will be forgotten? Personally, I do not think so, and neither do the authors of the Demolition Man script, because, in the movie, the people living underground use idioms, eat meat and militate for freedom. The end of the movie gives hope that normality will be re-established and people will stop talking like robots.

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**HOW TO BE HAPPY IN ROMANIA — FACETS OF  
ROMANIANNES**

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***Abstract***

The paper was inspired by a collection of essays by 17 Romanian and foreign authors, mainly philosophers and writers, each holding various views on Romania and analyzing the possibilities to attain happiness in the heterogeneous, contrast-prone, often alienating post-1989 society. In a synthesizing approach, deconstructing and analyzing the stereotypes in current use, revealing uncomfortable or flattering aspects of daily life in today's Romania, the aim of the paper is to single out the dimension of the multi-faceted concept of "happiness" in a society that has not yet found its way out of the tangled web of a tormented history, but is yet striving to reach its rightful place in the European context. The approach is based on imagological concepts such as "self", "other", "national character", "ethnotype", a.s.o..

**Keywords:** happiness; Romanianness; stereotype; mental construct; imagology;

**1. INTRODUCTION**

The present paper was occasioned by the recent publication of a collection of 17 essays by Romanian and foreign authors on the topic of achieving happiness in Romania, a territory with a tormented history, constantly targeted by the surrounding empires throughout its history, bravely fighting to preserve its role as a "Latinity island in a Slavic sea", proudly claiming its rightful place in the European Union, and permanently struggling against its "minor culture" status. The premise that most of the authors (writers, journalists, philosophers) start from is that happiness is a matter of perspective, to be considered through the lens of the "Mioritic soul" (Lovatt, 1999, 3), being closely linked to the features of the Romanian ethnotype.

According to the preface written by Oana Bârna (2017, 6), who states that the 17 essays "form together an irregular polyhedron: each facet reflects a way of living happiness in the midst of unhappiness". One of the contributors, the writer Ioana Pârvulescu prefers to focus on the fact that "[Romanians] are apparently ready for anything, except happiness [...] in our world people pay large amounts to be insured in case of fire, floods or accidents, but in case of happiness they are left uncovered" (id., 41). Another contributor, Niculescu, who has lived a longtime in London and thus may regard



Romanians and happiness from a double standpoint (inclusive, and extraneous) at the same time, opines that “ [...] if you survive all the collective and individual unhappinesses and you are neither jaded, nor revolted, angry, apathetic, then you may say that you are a happy individual in Romania. Only, as someone once said, a happy individual in an unhappy world is more unhappy than that unhappy world” (id., 59). From a similarly double perspective, the insider turned foreigner by marrying a British citizen and settling in England, Rosser Macarie uses the same dichotomic approach : “How to be happy in Romania? Simple: by turning your back to being unhappy in Romania” (id., 138).

This perpetual oscillation between the absolute poles of the happiness scale, without any intermediary grey nuances to consider, seems to be a constant in the Romanian approach to happiness. Therefore, one may not but wonder whether Romanians as an ethnotype have certain peculiarities that render them more inclined to feel and perceive happiness in their own special manner.

## **2. PROBLEM STATEMENT**

Clearly, in the light of the recent developments in geopolitics and the animated European and global context, largely affected by migration and conflicts, the notion of ethnotype and its influence on the possibility of achieving happiness in the geographical space and the socio-economic circumstances assigned to a particular ethnic group have started to gather interest among researchers of all types, from psychologists and sociologists, to culture analysts and linguists alike.

Happiness has always been quite an elusive concept, difficult to define and therefore resisting research. Subjective par excellence, the researcher’s task becomes even more complicated when it is applied to the scale of a whole nation, bringing in considerations regarding ethnicity and national identity. Despite its declared empirical character, the present paper attempts to find the various facets specific to happiness in a Romanian context, i.e. in relation to the traits pertaining to national identity and ethnicity, in the light of the concepts proposed by imagology.

## **3. RESEARCH QUESTIONS**

This study aims to examine the components of two extremely difficult concepts resistant to analytical description, i.e. Romanianness and happiness in the light of imagological constructs like Ethnicity, or rather Ethnotype (the representation of national character), Self vs. Other (auto-image vs. Hetero-image), as well as all the surrounding stereotypes. The material to be analyzed is Gabriel Liiceanu’s text, entitled *The Paradoxical Equation of Romanian Happiness [Ecuatia paradoxala a fericirii romanești]* (2017, 20-31), as the opening essay in the previously mentioned collection written by a prominent contemporary philosopher currently living in Romania. Approached from an insider’s perspective, his contribution might shed some light on how present-day Romanians construe and perceive happiness.

Thus, the main questions driving this particular piece of research are:

- What are the main characteristics of Romanianness?
- How do they relate to happiness in Liiceanu’s vision?
- What are the possible imagological explanations for this view on happiness?

## **4. PURPOSE OF THE STUDY**

In trying to provide answers to the research questions above, our attempt aims at highlighting a possible connection between what identifies us as Romanians, as an ethnotype, the sum of everything that constitutes our “Romanianness”, and the happiness degree we experience as a people. The key constructs that are made use of, Romanianness and happiness, both extremely hard to define, are tackled from the perspective of the hypothesis that “everybody experiences happiness in their own way”, and therefore, there may be a detectable link between being Romanian and being able to perceive happiness in a special, uncommon, unique manner. The two constructs, however distant they may seem at first sight, may be seen in correlation by means of imagological concepts.

## **5. RESEARCH METHODS**

### **5.1. Research Design**

As the present study is an empirical, non-experimental study, it is mostly based on specialized literature review, with a special focus on imagological research, which forms the bulk of the references used. Imagology, which has been around since the 60s, seems to be most suitable in the context of the present paper, as, according to Leerssen (2016, 19), “ [...] imagology is a working method, not in sociology, but in the humanities; the aim is to understand not a society and social dynamics, but rather a discursive logic and a representational set of cultural and poetic conventions”.

This study is also descriptive and based on observation and analytical deconstruction, trying to uncover the characteristics of Romanianness and if and how they affect the happiness of the inhabitants of Romania, according to Liiceanu.

### **5.2. Research constructs**

The most relevant constructs chosen for the present study belong to the field of imagology, an interdisciplinary field par excellence, which may provide helpful insights into the manner in which happiness is perceived in Romania. Starting from the multi-dimensional analytical model (Hofstede et al., 2002, 39), a people’s cultural identity may be construed on the basis of the following poles of multiple axes:

- Power distance;
- Collectivism/individualism;
- Femininity/masculinity;
- Uncertainty avoidance index;
- Long-term/short-term orientation towards time and traditions;
- Indulgence/restraint.

In this general theoretical background, the all-embracing notion of Ethnotype, the representation of national character, as seen by Leerssen (2016,16-118 passim) invokes Self-Other oppositions, focuses on the exceptional and the difference, “single[s] out a nation from the rest of humanity by ascribing a particular character to it, i.e. a temperamental or psychological predisposition motivating and explaining a specific behavioral profile” (17), in constant change according to historical circumstances, and prone to valorization.

## **6. FINDINGS**

According to research in the field (Hofstede-Insights, n.d.), when applying the imagological grid to the Romanian ethnotype, the following characteristics of Romanianness seem to become salient:

- Romanians tend to favour high power distance, i.e. they are generally deferential to superiors and readily accept that power is not equally divided among the members of a certain community; when compared to the Western nations, the power distance index is high, as Romanians view superiors as benevolent autocrats and tend to be told what to do in the workplace rather than take initiative and stand out among other employees.
- As far as the collectivism/ individualism scale dimension is concerned, Romania is considered as a collectivist type of society, where family or group values reign supreme and loyalty to the community of origin trumps all. However, there is room for a more nuanced approach in this regard; the bumpy transition from the Communist dictatorship to the more liberal and capitalism-prone post-1989 society seems to have created a clear-cut gap between the older generations, who have lived most of their life under totalitarianism and were forced to embrace collectivism as a means of oppression, and the more distinctly individualistic, independent younger generations, especially the so-called Millennials.
- Romania is seen as a moderately feminine society, i.e. the motivation behind people’s actions is liking what they do rather than being the best at what they do; success in life is defined in terms of quality of life and not status; negotiation is favoured over conflict.

However, historical pressure and the turn of the millennium has also been at work in this respect, slowly starting to increase the masculine dimension of the country — status has begun to be rather ostentatiously displayed (huge house, powerful, noisy car preference for overtly branded products, etc). In addition, the arrival of important Western corporations that have opened branches on Romanian territory have also brought along the masculine-type organisational culture, stating that success means achieving the highest possible position in the corporate hierarchy, and standing out is better than blending in.

- The issue of avoiding uncertainty, or in other words the attitude about the future (i.e. can it be controlled or not?) and the approach to unknown, potentially threatening situations, reveals that Romanians score high in this area, being thus highly motivated by security and stability, often resisting change and innovation, having an intrinsic need for rules and regulations (even if paradoxically they seem not to be very thoroughly observed) and constantly keeping busy as a means of subduing anxiety. The political and economic instability in recent years has led to the reinforcement of these characteristics, making many Romanians insecure about their future and increasing the levels of emigration as a means of creating financial certainty.
- In Hofstede's terms, orientation describes "how every society has to maintain some links with its own past while dealing with the challenges of the present and future". Romanians seem to be placed in the middle of the scale between short and long-term orientation, with a slight preference for the latter. In layman's terms, that means that the typical Romanian is somehow torn between revering time-honoured traditions and turning to more pragmatic modern values (e.g. saving money, focus on education as a means to be prepared for the future and land a better job, etc).
- In point of indulgence, viz. the degree of impulse control, Romanians place high value on restraint, which apparently makes them prone to cynicism and pessimism, viewing desire gratification as somewhat wrong. This particular approach is most likely closely linked to the powerful influence that the Christian Orthodox church has in our country, reinforcing the religious notions of "resistance to the sin of self-indulgence" and "refusal to be led into temptation".

Interestingly enough, these polar dimensions of Romanianness tally in with the more psychologically oriented approach proposed by David (2015), who considers the following as the eight prototypical features of the Romanian ethnotype:

- a) Family is at the core of everything; family needs support, and offers support;
- b) Patriotism and hatred for Romania somehow go hand in hand;
- c) A 'love-and-hate' relationship with foreigners;
- d) Spirituality goes deeper than you imagine;
- e) Conflict avoiders, but loving conflict;
- f) A lot of passion, warmth & friendship
- g) A bit of victimization and fear of conspiracies;
- h) Creativity and outside the box thinking.

It is easily noticeable that some of the features overlap with and reinforce Hofstede's dimensions— a) and f) clearly support the feminine dimension, d) strengthens the restraint inclined culture, g) fits with uncertainty avoidance, etc. However, what is striking is the ever-present duality and paradoxical oscillation between extremes: love/hatred, patriotism/ bashing one's country, conflict avoidance/ conflict promotion, etc. This perpetual pendulation is intuitively perceived as an intrinsic obstacle to achieving happiness, as it opposes the very core of the feeling.

In addition, Sibii (2011, 16) proposes a quite intriguing view of Romanianness as made up of self-stereotypes: "Romanianness is to be found in stereotypes and, more precisely, in self-stereotypes. While devoid of a history per se, such self-stereotypes do have an identifiable trajectory: they are predicated on certain mental images, on certain prototypes (i.e., characters that metonymically stand in for wider

categories). The Romanian self-stereotype, therefore, cannot be traced back to an origin, but it can be studied in terms of its constitutive images". Thus, the researcher focuses on certain facets of the Romanian self-stereotype, i.e. the Byzantine, Orthodox, and Balkan components. The Byzantine influence is embodied by the stereotyped decadent, rotten Eastern roots of the Romanian people, a source of endless derision and contempt in Cioran's writings. It seems that the inheritance of Byzantium to be found in present-day Romanianness is adaptability, creativity, as well as a total lack of moral principles. The orthodox component is even more interesting, as it is intertwined with the Balkan character defining the nation, thus giving birth to the famous Homo Balkanicus:

"With the Romanian perception of Byzantinism and Orthodoxism, therefore, we have the beginnings of the stereotypical Homo Balkanicus: an individual who obeys his leaders (regardless of the source of legitimization for their authority), who perceives faith less as a vertical relationship with the Divinity than a horizontal relationship with his kindred, and who sees no reason to take moral responsibility for his wrongdoings. It is this skeleton that the Romanian perceptions of the Balkans further build on" (Sibii, 2011,19). In keeping with the same vein, the Orthodox church is seen as rather pertaining to the legal-political than the religious dimension, as it is a means of ensuring conformity, and not necessarily unity in faith; in Barbu's words (2004,107), "[...] Christianity, in its Eastern formula, does not appear, in the eyes of the Romanians, as a *belief* (a term presupposing personal fidelity), but rather as a 'law' (term involving submission in the public sphere). [...] to the Romanians, Christianity was above all the law given by the Roman emperors (*lex*), not a manner of worshipping a God (*religio*) or to show him faith (*fides*)" (our transl.)

In a nutshell, the stereotyped features to define Romanianness in these auto-image attempts of Balkanic inspiration are adaptability, immorality, duplicity, fatalism, laziness, a rather lax belief in God as an indiscriminate forgiver of all sinners, aggressiveness, scepticism, fondness for humour and [auto]irony. When comparing these self-stereotypes to the hetero-stereotypes according to Hofstede's imagological grid, it is easily noticeable that for the most part they match; the high power distance is visible in the fatalism and relation to God, the moderate long-term orientation is recognizable in laziness and adaptability, restraint is seen in scepticism and pessimism, and the high uncertainty avoidance tallies in with duplicity and immorality. The only obvious mismatch is the aggressiveness that Sibii considers as a typical trait of Homo Balkanicus, a typically masculine trait, which contradicts the statistics that place our country among the more feminine ones; however, the paradoxical nature of Romanians is at work even here, as conflict, as previously mentioned, is both shunned and loved.

In the light of all these ideas, the notion of happiness, simply defined as both a "state of mind, and a life that goes well for the person leading it" (Happiness, 2011) might prove hard to attain in the present-day Romanian context. According to the contemporary philosopher, researcher, writer Gabriel Liiceanu, considered as the main disciple of Constantin Noica, and one of the most important "hermeneutical voices" of today, Romanians as an ethnotype have the vocation of unhappiness. He opines that "any Romanian, living the drama of insignificance, can only be unhappy", being part of a "people raised with the habitude of unhappiness", in a space that is "historically consecrated to unhappiness", and where "the future is being periodically stolen from us and no dream seems allowed" (21). The excerpt may be interpreted in the light of two imagological constructs: first and most importantly, long term orientation, apparent in depicting the gloomy, uncertain, unstable future ahead, and second, power distance, which makes Romanians not stand out and take initiative, in a quiet acceptance of their fatefully predestined role in this part of Europe. The idea of an unfair history, full of obstacles that have contributed to the present "historical slough" (22) poses the problem of happiness as the sense of accomplishment deriving from withstanding the hostility of the world, and standing tall in the "suffering of the insignificant [people]" (ibid.). The issue of collectivism vs. individualism underlies the entire argument, as in Liiceanu's opinion, it is hard to equate personal/ individual happiness and the happiness of a people as a whole. In keeping with the less than auspicious social and political events of the present, he appears however to consider that at community level, happiness is directly linked to good governance, one of the nine indicators officially used to describe the gross national happiness index (Gross National Index, n.d., 2).

The inherent limitations of a predestined geopolitical and historical context in Eastern Europe are adequately embodied in the dichotomy he discusses, Happiness and prison, by bringing forward two

notable cases: the Noica case and the Steinhardt case. The former, revolving around the tragic destiny of the great thinker Constantin Noica, who spent most of his life in communist prisons and never got to be acknowledged as the great philosophical mind that he was in his lifetime, introduces the idea of the paradoxical spiritual liberation provided by confinement in prison, seen here as the embodiment of “apriori closed spaces”, the mythical Scylla and Charybdis, or any other physical, material obstacle that can only be surpassed by a “spiritual detour” (25). Imagologically speaking, such a paradoxical situation may be explained by the high values assigned to constructs like individualism, femininity, long-term orientation, as well as low values assigned to indulgence. The escape proposed by Noica is typically cultural in nature, of the purest Western extraction, i.e. the “paradise of culture”, the treasures of the spirit amassed along centuries, the emergency exit into a “miraculous and enchanted realm” where the “terror of history” (26) could not reach. Salvation through spirit and culture accedes to the level of a genuine mystique, delivering the individual from the miserable reality, and making the hidden beauty of culture available to the individual. In this case, spirituality is the perfect illustration of the specific trait of the Romanian ethnotype, as previously mentioned.

In Nicolae Steinhardt’s case, managing to be happy in the midst of “prison, suffering and death” (27) is even more overtly related to the human being’s ability to rise above the pain and hardship in all their forms and to find happiness in the fighting spirit and resilience in the face of adversity.

The conclusion of the essay is typically intellectualist, exalting the power of “the Book” as a “spiritual body” hiding the “mystery of the spirit in the abyss” (29), and providing the definition of happiness as “the convergence towards splendour” (31). However, pessimism is still pervasive in the final lines of the essay, which qualifies the happiness thus defined as a “way to escape solitude and unhappiness” (ibid.).

It is quite obvious that the vision upon happiness is shaped by the religion-oriented conceptions of salvation and delivery from this miserable earthly existence by a superior spiritual entity. Since spirituality and restraint seem to be two key features of the Romanian ethnotype, it is no surprise that Liiceanu founds his view on these two constructs. Likewise, the permanent oscillation between the extremes on the axis of happiness is also a characteristic of the Romanian people; happiness cannot exist outside the comparison with unhappiness. It should be noted nevertheless that in point of long-term orientation, which epitomizes the very relation of the being with the past, present and future challenges, Romanians are quite moderate, situated in the middle of the axis; escapism seems as a general solution to all problems of the less than ideal existence.

## **7. CONCLUSIONS**

All in all, it is quite difficult to manage to concentrate all the aspects of Romanianness in one single coherent ethnotype, since representations may vary according to reference point and historical context. Despite the less flattering self-stereotypes of duplicity, immorality, scepticism, and laziness which originate in the Byzantine and Balkanic roots of the Romanian people, Romanians may also take pride in their innate creativity, adaptability, warmth, hospitability, and passionate nature. In any case most hetero-stereotypes seem to converge towards depicting Romanians as highly spiritual, and with a profoundly religious penchant which pervades all the areas of life and thus their view on happiness. In a context shaped by high power distance, high uncertainty avoidance and low indulgence, escapism and the refuge in the world of ideas appear to be the answer to the gloomy existence marked by the scourge of political oppression, poverty and instability. Liiceanu’s essay considers the two traits, i.e. spirituality and escapism, as essential in attaining happiness in Romania. In his opinion, happiness is the convergence towards splendour, the only means of negating solitude and unhappiness. The possible imagological explanations of this view may relate to the high power distance and uncertainty avoidance, as well as the low indulgence levels, characteristic of a deeply spiritual people with a “Mioritic soul”.

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**PASSING THROUGH STORY.**  
**POLIMORPHISM AND DISCOURSIIVE STARTEGIES**

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***Abstract***

The story, a product tributary to both inner and outer reality, communicates a world due to a crisis of the inner object by restructuring its own reality and putting in place a significance generating matrix, a space that cannot be reduced to its narrative voice, text or reader. The purpose of the story is not an intrinsic attribute of the object, it is a sum of attitudes towards the new reality that is communicated and a reinstatement of some structures which practically generates a return to the creationist act. The narrative is built, synchronically and diachronically, upon the event and its actualization, recognizing a model which is validated within the system of literariness. The story as tale refers to the category of fantasy analysed as a fascination with the image, constituted on the model of accessing a superior status, while the story as parable builds significances taking into account the consciousness level. The stake of these two attitudes towards the act of telling is, in the story, the reinstatement of the fictional as contextual reality and, in the parable, the programmatic development of the texts with sapiential role.

**Keywords:** poetics; text rhetoric; fictional discourse; mythic and historic; story; parable;

**1. INTRODUCTION**

The story communicates a world, an attitude of transferring a reality restructured according to a significance generating matrix, a place where the imaginary becomes inner reality. A triad of the imaginary space is revealed: the one of the author's through the voice of the narrator, the one of the textual rhetoric meant to signify and the one of the reader (audience) organised through discourse, within the multiple context of personal development and their expectancy horizon.

An analysis of the discourse type presupposes to include the terms into the epic genre [according to the Fr. *épique*, Lat. *epicus*, Gr. *epikos*], into prose, which comprises the totality of literary productions with a narrative nature that transmit successively suggestive information always in a personal order (that of the narrator's) in terms of perspective and technique. The reader/audience can achieve textual decoding in two ways: along the vertical axis, operating an analogy with the mythical, archetypal reality, or along the horizontal axis, as a condition of historicity of the epic in the case of the knowing ego which generates his/her account out of something.

## **2. PROBLEM STATEMENT**

Story / fairy tale versus parable / apologue – equivalent or correlative terms?

The terminology explained by DEX (1998, 2002) admits main interpretations such as:

- **STORY**, stories, noun, species of (popular) epic in prose which accounts for fantastic events of some imaginary characters fighting against evil characters where the good is triumphant; fairy tale; narrative comprising possible or real facts.

- **FAIRY TALE**, fairy tales, noun, (popular) narrative with fantastic, supernatural elements; story.

- **PARABLE**, parables, noun, allegorical story with a religious or moral; apologue; allegorical expression, statement that contains a certain meaning; fable, allegory under which there is an important truth hidden: the parables of Christ. To speak in parables, not to say directly what you mean.

- **APOLOGUE**, apologues, noun, that which may serve as lesson for someone, as a model to follow, as term of comparison; that which may serve as an object to imitate or as inspiration in terms of shape, aspect, etc.; model, example.

There is an obvious semantic overlapping of the concepts story / fairy tale and parable / apologue, the latter being constructed as figures of thought and as figures of speech at a semantic level with a didactic purpose, to put across moral and religious truths. By means of parables, a superior significance is decoded, a revealed truth, a necessary and sufficient condition being to go beyond the level of interpreting the text in connection with the immediate reality and moving to a superior level, by superinterpretation, into a mediated reality of faith, where the reader/audience is guided through discourse. The perspective upon the first pair, story / fairy tale, refers to literary fiction regarded as a fallen religious model, it is an abandoned myth which is no longer invested with the necessity of a religious vision [1. Corin Braga (coordinator), *Morfologia lumilor posibile: Utopie, antiutopie, science-fiction, fantasy (The morphology of possible worlds: utopia, anti-utopia, science-fiction, fantasy)*].

Umberto Eco's theory [2. *Interpretare și suprainterpretare (Interpretation and superinterpretation)*] that any object enters a relation of analogy, contiguity and similarity with any other object is the theoretical basis which ensures the coherence of the text and maintains the dialectical link between *intentio operis* and *intentio lectoris*. The phrase *intentio operis* asserts the admittance in the text of a model reader that was taken into account on an intentional level by the author of the text, but also the existence of a semiotic strategy [3].

Umberto Eco, *Interpretare și suprainterpretare, (Interpretation and superinterpretation)* through which the work is re-actualised in the reading act performed by the concrete reader who is tributary to his/her living circumstances, to the expressions of a certain linguistic code, as well as to his/her own capacity of understanding the text.

Accepting the poetic function in the analysis of the epic text, not only for the lyric one, determines in the 20th century a new distribution of the literary field in order to allow the figurative language to express a reality that transcends the known one, that brings mystery in the literary area and even allows for the removal of knowledge on an empirical model as in the case of the imaginary worlds constituted without the interference of the real into its own order.

By studying the relation between the objective reality and the artistic one, we identify the story/fairy tale as a strictly fictional technique which transforms the real into imaginary or creates possible worlds where everything is contextual reality, while verisimilitude becomes a phrase [4. *Morfologia lumilor posibile: Utopie, antiutopie, science-fiction, fantasy (The morphology of possible worlds: utopia, anti-utopia, science-fiction, fantasy)*] re-signified by explaining the fictional universes which can be "realistic", mimetic (but nonetheless imaginary) variants of our primary world, or "fantasist" variants which invent of "instate" other worlds, different from ours; a number of techniques of conceiving new worlds are emphasised such as: amplification or addition, reduction and exclusion, opposition and contrast. The fairy tale's coordinates: the supernatural (magical objects), the atemporality (*in illo tempore*), the aspatiality (the realm beyond), the dream (means to achieve the hero's goals), and the metamorphoses (successive embodiments) subsume the fictional to the category of literarity, they do not circumscribe it to the reality with its attributes: veridicality and verisimilitude.



### 3. RESEARCH QUESTIONS

#### The story as a model of a possible world *versus* revelation and inspiration

The fictional presupposes its own space with specific laws of construction more or less connected to the empirically known reality, a space that textualizes models, axioms and discursive strategies in order to persuade the interpreter of the text. Introducing the information discovered along the functions of the language, we are able to synthesize and easily oppose these types of text in order to extract the reality behind the writing, the mechanism that generated the narrative.

We will isolate and decode the poetic function separately because it is the only referential demonstration as a uniquely constituted message and uniquely manifested through interpretation, based on the textual cohesion/logic, respectively on the message's unique actualization through decoding. Thus, we generally establish a path of understanding the message on the basis of several features of the above-mentioned models: story / fairy tale and parable / apologue.

<b>ms</b>	<b>Story / fairy tale</b>	<b>Parable / apologue</b>
The expressive function (the masks of the textual ego)	The emitter can be affectively marked by interrogative or exclamatory utterings, by a strongly subjective discourse with personal insertions and evaluations of the narrated topic, or it can be objective, displaying events successively unfolded in an ascending order of the narrative tension till the denouement.	The emitter uses an encoded language to put across his/her teaching, counting on the audience's curiosity and reflection. He/she illustrates general principles in the shape of a familiar communication, in clear utterings, referring to a known reality behind which the intentional reality is hidden.
The referential function (the area of rational investigation)	The investigation area is mainly imaginary; it allows for reality to be re-signified from the perspective of some infinite possibilities of revelation of the universe; the validation of the model resides in its uniqueness, by extracting the model from the myth and actualising it in the folklore background ( <i>the unconscious collectiveness</i> ).	The investigation is performed on a figurative, metaphorical level, substituting one meaning of what is known with another hidden one which operates a deep, abstract semantic transfer. It is circumscribed to the quality of resembling another reality with the purpose of enunciating a truth of faith.
The metalinguistic function (intertextuality)	The textual semantic coherence is ensured by the use of common language, its orality, direct address using folklore expressions. Popular narration can be connected to historic reality but the deep level significance aims at <i>reducing to unity</i> [5. Vladimir I. Propp, <i>Morfologia basmului</i> (The morphology of fairy tales)], a paradigmatic reduction with the purpose of isolating the model.	The terrestrial reality is gradually reduced in favour of a spiritual abstractization; the decoding of the message resorts to a creative vision, to the capacity of textual dialogue. The discourse is structured for homiletic purposes integrated in a real context where one is given the key to interpret generally valid truths.
The persuasive function (orienting the discourse)	It denotes the capacity of the message oriented towards a receptor that actualises the information at the level of regular or fantastic account through events that gradually build the action till anti-climax. The non-reductiveness of supernatural extracts the imaginary world from the laws of logic and creates an autonomous world.	It does not only illustrate a teaching, but it makes an allegorical comparison with the purpose of impressing and determining the audience to look for a deeper significance. The homiletic lessons are simpler and express the intention to render aspects regarding human flaws and the way to fix them.

#### **4. PURPOSE OF THE STUDY**

The aesthetic principle (the poetic function)

Any text is constituted as an independent instance which communicates itself through reading. The poetic function is projected upon it for the purpose of exploiting the semantic expression and level from an aesthetic perspective. The language as a system of signs has limited variants of combinations to reflect the visible reality and the invisible one. However, for a pertinent analysis, the dialectical relationship intelligible – perceptible must be completed with the semantic analysis of the fictional discourse (what is said) and the way it is organized (how it is said), both procedures taking into account a textual synchronism (actualization in simultaneity and interdependence of concepts), as well as with the recurrent structures of the text as a reflexion of functional specificity, a diachronic process and an emphasis of a network of significances resulted from overlapping the texts.

The aesthetic exigency must be understood as the ultimate goal in order to delineate the work of art from the surrogate, fake or reject. When analysed, according to Mihail Bahtin [6. *Estetica cuvântului* (The aesthetics of the word)], as organized material, as object, the value of the work seems intrinsically connected to terms such as: intuition, sensibility, imagination, memory etc. The Russian formal perspective uses terms such as: to feel the form, to make a work of art etc., operating a dissociation among the simple sensation impulse, pleasant states and entering the purely spiritual circle. The theory focuses on the creative and contemplating intention, referring to the origin and functions of the work, to its role in the social life, the legitimacy of the message or the text's relation with the historic reality. Another important aspect as attitude in the form/content analysis and the manner of artistic reflection, implicitly how the work is perceived, is explained from an intentional point of view by Roland Barthes [7. *Critică și adevăr* (Criticism and truth)] by the fact that shifting from reading to criticising means changing the will, perspective that has a fundamental role in the process of re-actualisation of the work through the reading act.

The narrative texts are not built unitarily structure-wise and the various discursive manners, the contexts in which they appear as well as the target audience impose a transversal type of reading, based on codes, on their de-structuring and restructuring during the interpretation effort. The scope of issues under scrutiny is a fundamental human one making reference to existence, morality, love, thinking, death, etc. Thus, when reading a fairy tale, we will connect the form and content of the text to the fascination of image as decisive form of impression upon human knowledge and manifestation, whilst, in the case of parable, we will focus on the texts addressed to the primary Church in order to reconstitute the revealed truth as well as its integration into the present; this approach is justified by the sapiential role of the message.

The possible worlds of the fairy tale re-signifies reality fundamentally, they confer to it attributes that are justified on the basis of inner reasons, on a model free of landmarks but which is equally free to consider them. We take this phrase from the analysis made by Roderick M. Chisholm [8. *Identity Through Possible Worlds: Some Questions*] who suggests the primacy of the text utterances over the states of facts. In doing so, the combinations of the text are not exhausted, analytically speaking, with marks, terminations and types of structures but what comes across as relevant are the formulae specific to fairy tales: the determinism of the narrative flow in the cause-effect sequence, the attitude of the characters as paper beings that reflect human features such as courage, fear, confidence, cheating and others.

On the other hand, the parable are inserted in a social-cultural context, fact which steers the discourse towards the didactic area of the message, talking about judgment, promise, requirements and gifts God promises through the narrator's voice or directly in the texts of the Bible. Texts are built programmatically on the model of the open work (sequence that generates, explains and closes the paradigm), based on certain microstructures organised as space-time landmarks, by polarising some thematic areas and some networks of motifs with an eschatological purpose. The narrative is built on the event and its analysis, the former designating the framework for the factual unfolding, the latter bringing significance to the consciousness level. From a stylistic viewpoint, one can easily notice the affective nature of expression, the discourse being organised unequivocally and authoritatively as an assertion.

Looked upon as message, the text intrinsically manifests the addressability component, fact which focuses the attention upon the one who is targeted, the one the text has been conceived for. The multiple definition of the knowing subject as *homo sapiens*, *homo habilis*, *homo faber*, *homo religiosus*, *homo ludens*, *homo loquens*, etc., synthesis defining aspects of man should we look at him as unitary being. However, the concept of reception has to accept a *homo duplex*, with inner split, with contradictory tendencies, with synopes in acquiring and retaining the information. We reach here a sentential strategy, an inner network oriented as a corpus with a persuasive purpose whilst the discourse approach manner should be one that captures the attention and keeps it awake. If stories draw a mythical image of God, usually an old man walking and randomly interfering in the history of mankind, parables talk about a continuous reality where the divine presence and consistency in relation with man are elements of a constant connection. It is worth reminding here the principle of counterpoint specific to man-God relationship, a relationship which permanently re-establishes the human dignity that was compromised through the sin that breaks the divine norms, a recovery through the promise freely offered to His people. The crisis of the inner object is not compensated by faith; man easily reconsiders his position towards God, being tributary to pre-logic thinking, a primitive mentality dominated by emotions, instability and inconsistency.

## **5. RESEARCH METHODS**

Stories mirror a path taken by a character capable of reaching a superior status (that of a king for instance), they are similar to the heroes of Ancient writings, they display remarkable, even exceptional, qualities, and when they do not evolve, the fact itself is translated into a regression on a value scale. The outlining of some fictional destinies represents an exigency of the narrator's function within the context of literary convention, most often than not, within a collectivity, with a psychological perspective where the role of the telling a story operates a return to the creationist act.

Mircea Eliade [9. *Aspects du mythe (Aspects of the myth)*], on basis of the distinction between the mystical (sacralised) side and the laic (non-sacralised) one, stated that fairy tales embrace an exemplary initiating scenario only to provide amusement or escape for a trivialised consciousness and especially for the consciousness of the modern man.

On the other hand, religious texts explain a state of grace, a superior order that has to decrypted on a cognitive level by the receiver of the message: logically, really and ethically. Questioning the discourse leads the communication act beyond clichés or models specific to a story, beyond instincts and the superficial perspective (even if there is a constant reference to a reality that is familiar to the one the parable is addressing: shepherding, agriculture, etc.). Vittorio Fusco [10. *Parabola/Parabole (The Parable)*] ascertains that the parable makes use of a fictional adventure (which initially needs to be seen in itself, in its inner logic) in order to draw a conclusion, to make a change, that should be transferred in its globalisation, not in its individual narrative details but to the true situation the parabolic aims for the very beginning. The parable specific mechanism, as an equivalent Jewish message, can be extended to a wide range of different linguistic phenomena, even if they share the basic value of "analogy, comparison": proverbs (Le 4,23), judgments (Me 7.16), recommendations of sapiential nature (Le 14,7-10).

The method of psycho-critical analysis determines by textual overlapping the common area of recomposing significances, the recurrent expressions leading to a study of the figurative language for which the message unity is a secondary purpose, the primary one being its finality and a certain accuracy of actualizing the comparative text with the original one. Repetitions [11. Tzvetan Todorov] are aspects that compose the narrative technique ... affecting either the action, or the characters with the description details ... of which we remind here: antithesis, gradation and parallelism.

## **6. FINDINGS**

The story's elements of poetics and the linguistic structuralism (generative grammar) in the biblical text and fairy tales are subject to permanent changes in interpretation as a result of the ever new perspective from which texts are actualised. According to the linguistic analysis theory suggested by Avram Noam Chomsky, the monogenesis concept presupposes that the two coordinates, time and space,

are common for the appearance of language. Hence, a unity of thinking, a common projection of human aspirations but also the analysis of these categories by shifting from the subject to the predicate of the expression, where the vectors of narration are located.

A structuralist decomposing and recomposing of the concepts of time and space in accordance to the language structure as the main factor of internal organization for the concepts under scrutiny (story/fairy tale and parable/apologue), therefore a synchronic study of them, on the one hand, and a diachronic study, on the other, which focuses on the anticipated result on a textual level (because both the narrator – the voice of the text – and the actual reader are disqualifiable instances as interpretation), represent the two coordinate axes whose origin is the man in the contemporary context.

6.1. Both the fairy tale and the parable address the human nature as possibly educable by following an itinerary, by fulfilling certain functions, by accumulating certain experiences. Both are about reaching a superior status; the fairy tale has social and political landmarks whilst the parable focuses on the communion with God.

6.2. Both the fairy tale and the parable mean the good; even if the end of a fairy tale is not always a happy one, its message condemns the evil easily identified by means of damage and when it is done by the hero of the fable, it is for a greater good. On the other hand, the parable speaks about Good as identified with the divinity.

6.3. Both the fairy tale and the parable build the narrative by opposing the categories in the fictional discourse. Thus, the good opposes the evil, the beautiful enters an opposition with the ugly, the truth differentiates from the falseness, the reward is linked to merits, and the punishment corresponds to a mistake, an injustice, or lack of something, etc. .

## **7. CONCLUSION**

The timeframe of the fairy tale, once upon a time, denotes a story that never existed, a fabulous time with mythical events. The parable admits the phrase at that time/back then, a possible time setting; sometimes the place is mentioned (i.e. Samaria in the parable of the Good Samaritan). The space of the fairy tale is sometimes vaguely delineated, with subterranean or superterranean realms, some other times it is simply delineated as a border whose crossing is severely punished. The parable extracts its space from the one familiar to us: the field, the house, the vineyard, etc. it starts from the immediate, concrete reality towards the allegorical meaning of the story. Accepting the known framework, the beneficiary admits more easily the unfolding of the story and then its teaching.

Beyond the above-mentioned categories, the analysis of the uttering manner perceived between the textual limits and the interpretation ones, brings to surface a uniquely constituted component as an act of imagination which takes over the diegesis mechanisms based on the narrative act and techniques ... where the decisive form of fiction is usually the story [12. Monica Spiridon].

We conclude that the fairy tale – story, as well as the parable – apologue, are subject to a textual polymorphism, with a specific rhetoric; however, there is an interference area where the story can function as an allegory and the allegory (parable) is decrypted as a story because provided the metaphor is continued, it is pushed forward, this fact constitutes proof of a clear intention to speak about something else than what it appears to be the initial object of the uttering [13. Tzvetan Todorov].

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**A SOCIOLOGICAL CONSTRUCTION OF  
GOSSIP IN MASS-MEDIA**

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***Abstract***

What is the social significance of gossip? The answer to this question acquires multiple valences, derived from the pattern of analysis that we intend to use here. Psychologically speaking, gossip is a behavioural pattern, anthropologically, gossip may be a mentality model; philosophy of culture and history regard gossip as a source of knowledge. As an attitude and a behavioural pattern, gossip can be construed as socialising, and the logical and relational scheme of human interaction has been analysed from the perspective of mathematical logic and of information sciences. The present paper aims to answer the question above from a sociological perspective. Starting from the social identity theory, role theory, and enlarging upon the concept of social typology, this study advances an original theoretical and methodological model of interpretative and descriptive analysis, i.e., a conceptual construction of the sociological significance of gossip and of the human types involved in this manifestation of socialising. In this respect, reference will be made to all social actors involved in a manifest situation of gossip: gossipmongers, people being talked about, and consumers of entertainment news in which gossip is the most important source of information. As stated in the title, the research focus is the social environment generically called mass-media. Specifically, we analyse the positive and negative effects of gossip on the public image of those involved in gossip. More precisely, we analyse the social significance of gossip in what we term gossip media/ gossip news on television (entertainment shows).

**Keywords:** gossip; social typology; social identity;

**1. INTRODUCTION**

*Gossip* is a socialising phenomenon as old as the time itself, a permanent need of all societies and cultures, which has remained unchanged in the context of the major social changes throughout the ages. The necessity of gossip conceptualisation as an important socialising element may stir controversies in what its validation is concerned. Why would gossip be a subject of sociological investigation? A multitude of reasons starting from interpersonal social interactions can be formulated in response.

One can argue, for example, that gossip analysis can provide answers to fundamental questions on man and the complexity of social life. C. W. Mills formulates, in his work, *The Sociological Imagination*, a series of fundamental sociological questions, such as: "what types of men and women

prevail in this society and period?” What types of “human nature” are revealed in demeanour and character in this society and period? And what is the significance for “human nature” of each of the traits of the society under the lens?” (Mills, 1975, pp. 35-36).

We believe that by answering these questions in reference to gossip, we can argue why gossip can become a sociological research topic. As we shall observe in the theoretical model developed in this study, there are human types that practise gossip or consume gossip news. Gossip is a consistent source of information, and also a contemplative exercise in self-awareness and awareness of the others. The contribution of gossip to the formation of social identity is unquestionable, since it rests on telling some intimate aspects of others to others. The initial relational “triangle” (gossipmongers, the gossiped, gossip consumers – either active or passive) is then spirally propagated – the story that accompanies this type of social interaction changing every time, either as a whole or at the level of details. The third-party, the subject of gossip, is always examined and mirrored in the public awareness or in their relational environment while absent, through an account placed between two poles – positive or negative. Gossip brings the dimension of ethical values of the intimate aspects in one man’s life to the relational discourse. “Declassification” and the loss/betrayal of the trust of the gossiped one are aspects to be further discussed. To give an example: “gossip is that triadic social interaction in which two parties engage in the process of negatively moralizing the absentee third-party, on condition that moral judgment be grounded on reliable evidence, and that the moral assessors be animated by the sincere intention of telling the truth. Therefore, the lie is excluded from the definition of gossip which governs this study. By gossip we understand, in reductionist manner, only “the good gossip” – ill-speaking an absentee third-party behind their back, but using only the truth” (Rusu, M.S., 2015, p. 307).

We recognize in the definition above the theoretical model developed by symbolic interactionism. Erving Goffman proposes, in his study entitled *Stigma. Notes on the management of spoiled identity*, an alternative identity theory. Starting from the analysis of the concept of stigma, he describes social identity as the result of some attributes and features that we use anticipatively, when we first get in contact with one person, before effectively knowing that person. We anticipatively “stigmatise” a person with a personal trait by which we define his or her social identity. This trait that we ascribe to that person is transformed in normative expectations from that person. Goffman emphasises that it is more appropriate in this case to speak of *social identity* rather than of *social status*, which entails hierarchy, and not a personal trait of an individual (Goffman, 1986). Another argument in favour of undertaking scientific research on gossip can be drawn from Goffman’s idea: it creates the relational context and gives the opportunity of stigmatising the other. The image on which gossip outlines a distorted perception of reality of the gossiped person’s identity determines a specific matter of mentalities and social perceptions within a social group. In the present theoretical construction, we argue why these *social types* involved in the manifestation of gossip also fulfil *social roles*. The hierarchy Goffman mentions is present, as media gossip becomes a consumer goods. The economic value of gossip, quantifiable by *rating*, creates a hierarchy of those who *sell*, who make money of their selling gossip-news and those who *buy* it.

With a view to identifying another sound reason to justify the interest in gossip conceptualisation, we have established, with the arguments above, that social identity can be illuminatingly analysed starting from the social significance of gossip. As an example, let us mention the method proposed by Kuhn and Partland to a group of social actors, by which the subjects are required to answer the question “who am I?” It has been proven that people respond using social categories referring to their belonging to a social group, to roles; they identify themselves, at an abstract and ideological level, with various systems of values, interests, skills, in this particular order, for the most part (Bourhis, Richard Y., Leyens, Jacques-Philipp,e eds., 1997, pp. 53-73). Gossip is the most frequent day-by-day opportunity to answer the question “who is X (the other)?” By the way in which we exploit the others’ image, our opinions on the others, we can construct labels and stigmas. At a deeper level, our social identity is reflected in *categorisations*.

The categorisation theory, the depersonalisation phenomenon, the ascribing phenomenon, labelling and stereotyping theory are, theoretically speaking, as many alternatives of describing small social groups, from the interdisciplinary perspective of social psychology (Bourhis, Richard Y., Leyens,

Jacques-Philippe, eds., 1997, pp. 75–89). We should also mention the idea that more social identities with common essential traits are further grouped in *identity categories*. Social identity is the set of personal traits that manifest socially and influence the relations of the social actor with the others. The mechanism of grouping social identities into categories (according to criteria such as gender, job, social class, age, religion) leads to the emergence of social types and models (Bourhis, Richard Y., Leyens, Jacques-Philippe, eds., 1997, pp. 97-100). Along the same lines, the present paper outlines a few hypothetical categories and identity patterns derived from the practice of gossip and construed as its constructs.

## 2. PROBLEM STATEMENT

It may be surprising that a significant number of scientific papers deal with a topic such as gossip. There are so many topics of interest for a “serious” investigation in social sciences and humanities that the subject of gossip may be considered a *trifle* or a superficial aspect in the research career of any scientist. It is for this reason why most of the studies consulted during the documentation for this paper pay explicit attention to the justification for choosing this topic, from the perspective of a depreciative status of gossip.

On the one hand, the justifications especially concern the moral opprobrium to which gossip is subject, being labelled a negative inter-relational behaviour and phenomenon. Gossiping would be degrading for the human being, which is the reason why it should be avoided and reprovved, and its reprobation, scientifically argued, can only be honourable for the one who takes such an initiative. (We acknowledge, in this respect, various writings of theological ethics, historical studies which document legislative measures and punishment of juridical nature against gossip in various ages or regimes, or philosophical arguments supporting the idea that gossip is degrading for human nature.)

On the other hand, supporters of the arguments in favour of the social benefits of gossip consider that *good gossip* is a universally human practice encountered in all communities and civilisations, which is understood as need for socialising and communication at the intimate and informal level, but also as an outlet of defusing the natural tendency (or predisposition) of the human species towards fighting man with man (*Home homini lupus est.*) The absence of gossip would trigger more profound conflicts, with more serious effects than those of gossip. Gossip thus maintains an indirect form of natural aggressiveness of man, as an expression of the need for power and control (Ingram, 2014). Usually, these studies belong to comparative ethnology and ethnography; in the fields of cultural anthropology, sociology and gender studies, the meanings of gossip reach their maximum of “positive” interpretation.

Last but not least, mathematical logic, engineering sciences and information sciences develop algorithmic schemes and applications for computer analysis of the online information sources and (more recently) social networks, with a view to process, analyse and statistically interpret the global social effects of gossip (Kenneth P. Birman, 2005).

The most important references to a theoretical framework (definition, social importance, classifications, and functions of gossip as a social phenomenon) which have been proven useful for building the argumentative base of the conceptual model of media gossip analysis will be outlined below.

One of the most cited authors who developed gossip theories is Robin I. M. Dunbar, a British anthropologist and evolutionary psychologist and a specialist in primate behaviour, the author of *Grooming, Gossip, and the Evolution of Language*, published for the first time in 1996. His theory, equally fascinating and speculative, on the evolution of human language from *primate grooming* and from the need of human species to socialise as effectively as possible in groups up to 150 people (which is termed *Dunbar's number*, the maximum number of people that each person knows and relates to at some point in their lives), represents the minimum scientific acknowledgement of gossip as a constant behavioural phenomenon specific to mankind in the socialising process. “I want, instead, to focus on the broader nature of this activity and argue that gossiping (though perhaps not gossip in its contemporary malicious form) is the core of human social relationships, indeed of society itself. Without gossip, there would be no society. In short, gossip is what makes human society as we know it possible.” (R. I. M. Dunbar, 2004)



Patricia Ann Meyer Spacks, author of the book *Gossip* (1985), tackles gossip as a significant part of social reality, discerning, as Robert F. Goodman, Aaron Ben-Ze'ev do in their volume *Good Gossip* (1994), between *good gossip* and *bad gossip*. Gossip “as news or as a form of knowledge, is an educative discourse according to Sparks.” (Feeley K.A., Frost J., 2014, p.6) From the perspective of social anthropology, also worth mentioning is Max Gluckman, according to whom gossip is “a social duty”, which is “socially virtuous and valuable”; “but that when I hear they gossip viciously this does not mean that I always approve of them.” (Gluckman, 1994, p. 315).

Little has been written on gossip in Romanian, at least in what scientific analysis is concerned. Other than that, “gossip as a topic of gossip”, to cite Mihaela Rădulescu, is present in many tabloids and blogs which use the Romanian language as a means of communication. Interesting in this respect is the chapter signed by Mihai Stelian Rusu, *Virtuțile sociale ale bârfei: o apologie psihosociologică [Social Virtues of Gossip: A Psycho-sociological Apology]* in the volume edited by P. Iluț, *Dragoste, familie și fericire. Spre o sociologie a seninătății [Love, Family and Happiness. Towards a Sociology of Serenity]*. The author aims to outline “a psycho-sociological apology of gossip, whose finality would consist of the moral rehabilitation of gossiping” (Rusu, M.S., 2015, p. 290, our translation). Another approach to gossip is that of V. Pavelcu, who comments on gossip in psychologising terms, in his 1945 volume, *Elogiul prostiei Psihologie aplicată la viața cotidiană [In Praise of Folly. Psychology Applied to Daily Life]*. In the chapter *Elogiul bârfeii [In Praise of Gossip]*, the author highlights the warning function fulfilled by gossip at the social level. Gossip is the warning signal of what our peers think of us (V. Pavelcu, 1999, pp. 315-318). There is extensive literature related to the assertion of gossip as a media phenomenon. In what follows, a few titles consulted for this research are briefly introduced. In the already mentioned interdisciplinary volume *Good Gossip*, Nicholas Emler discusses in “Gossip, Reputation, and Social Adaptation” the function of gossip as a mechanism of adaptation and acquiring reputation in a group. (Emler, 1994). Another relevant work is that of Feeley K.A., Frost J., eds. (2014) *When Private Talk Goes Public. Gossip in American History*. In the introduction, the editors explain why gossip matters: “gossip functions more comprehensively than any of these other words, transmitting data about other people, whether true or false, positive or negative, specific or general.” (Feeley K.A., Frost J., 2014, pp. 6-7). A study on *Celebrities: From Teachers to Friends. A Test of Two Hypotheses on the Adaptiveness of Celebrity Gossip* discusses the way in which the gossip about celebrities influences the latter’s lives and behaviour. The study elaborates on the idea that gossip is learnt, and that the values transmitted through gossip become hallmarks for young people. (De Backer, C.J.S., Nelissen, M., Vyncke, P. et al., 2007).

### 3. RESEARCH QUESTIONS

What are the topics of gossip? What information does one receive through gossip? Why are we interested in gossip? Who are the people that we gossip about? The effort of answering these questions may satisfy our curiosity or may lead to the profound understanding of social aspects that trigger serious social problems. Gossip is spicy information about a star, but also a means of revealing essential aspects about us and the others.

### 4. PURPOSE OF THE STUDY

The aim of this study is to propose a theoretical sociological model of analysis of the gossip phenomenon in the tabloid media and to conceptualise gossip in the sociological paradigm outlined in the introductory lines of this paper.

### 5. RESEARCH METHODS

A first essential feature of gossip, as a socialising phenomenon, is *invariability*. The public’s need to gossip and their fulfilment of this need through consumption of libellous information provide a complete image of the mentalities, social and moral values of the age, of the principles and preferences of

a given society. Gossip brings private life into the public space, it brings behaviours and attitudes of public figures to the attention of the public opinion.

The social functions of gossip are, according to Foster, *information, entertainment, friendship influence, evolutionary utility, dynamic utility and guilt*. (2014)

The sociological analysis of gossip as a socialising mechanism and as communication/ circulation of information is an undeveloped means in the process of understanding the sources and original causes of major social problems. Revealing the primary causes might optimise the process of their solution, but the preoccupation with the superficial aspects of gossip renders insignificant this form of public expression.

In a glamorous environment, gossip becomes currency or a form of hidden advertising, in the case of celebrities.

The definition of gossip underlines the exaggeration, in a negative sense, of *any* information concerning a public figure's private life. To gossip means to speak ill of someone, to slander, to denigrate, to tell-tales, to babble, or to tattle. The etymology of the word in Romanian (*bârfă*) is unknown. Thus, we acknowledge gossip as gossip when it expresses *anything* about a person in negative and degrading frames.

Within the social paradigm, the meaning of gossip is substantially nuanced, acquiring new, socially significant dimensions. The social mechanisms of gossip occurrence complement the anthropological and psychological approaches to the ways in which gossip occurs and manifests. Before establishing the topics of interest of gossip, it is important to understand the way in which it is formed, beyond the peculiarities of each glamour topic.

Sociologically speaking, gossip may be:

*a. A form of socialising.* Socialising is people relating to one another at a social level. It manifests at the level of social groups of any kind and its purpose is the capitalisation of the aspects shared by the group members – a shared activity, sharing interests and appropriating group values and establishing the role within a group. The actual effects of socialising are: friendship, association, free expression of sentiments and feelings towards the others, consolidation of the self-image and of self-esteem in relation to the others. Socialising entails integration in a group and acceptance of the values, interests and principles shared by its members. The subjects provided by the action of gossiping one member of the group or a public figure are numerous. Man's need for socialising, for having their opinions heard, for acquiring the others' respect or liking, and for avoiding to become a subject of gossip are satisfied by the participation in a gossipy behaviour. The topics of gossip in a socialising group, the attitude towards the other's gossiping, the acceptance or non-acceptance, participation, the expression of an opposite opinion on this form of socialising are means of constructing a social identity, of expressing mentalities and social attitudes.

*b. A form of social communication.* The topics of gossip are discussed at a public level in the tabloid media. The effort of some social actors to meet their social need for free expression of opinions, values, and life principles is not reduced to the level of limited social groups to which they belong, but displays the "exclusive" information they have in the public sphere. This can actually be their only means of expressing publicly and of drawing attention towards them. The gossip-consuming audience tries to taste, first and foremost, from the scandal itself, which is much more spectacular than the subsequent gossip. Television shows which focus on such topics invite more or less famous public figures who declare themselves members of the entourage of the person under the lens and who claim to know facts or, at least, people in the surroundings of the celebrity, who "told them the story". This is how gossip takes shape, from an amalgam of more or less exact information, mixed with more or less pertinent opinions.

*c. A form of social sanctioning.* The differences that manifest between various social roles and the differences between the social expectations imposed by a role-status and the associated non-conforming social behaviour are an important source of sociological analysis in which social anomalies, contradictory social mentalities, changes of values and social principles that can affect social organisation and may trigger serious social problems can be observed. To a certain extent, the differences mentioned above are natural expressions of the relations that occur between people's social statuses and roles. Each one of us goes beyond the framework of their status or of the social role one plays day by day. Everybody

disappoints someone at some point or tries to be someone else. In the end, social identity is formed both in relation to the others and to our social statuses-roles. An individual's identity is formed both from desirable, acceptable, and conforming behaviours and contradictory relations to other people or to their own statuses-roles. Sociology has noted a mechanism of sanctioning the individuals who do not comply with their social status-role. The mechanism of social sanctioning produces, in its turn, both beneficial effects of remedying these contradictory social relations and negative effects, such as stereotyping and labelling.

The absence of social conformism, the departure from the social patterns in which we position ourselves at some point, as well as the obvious differences between one's demeanour in the private and the public spaces (because each one of us experiences these differences day by day) become, in a public figure's case, subject of gossip. As stated in the introduction, gossip goes beyond the natural frameworks of social representation, highlighting an *exaggerate contrast* between appearance and essence. An objective, scientific interpretation of the gossip phenomenon emphasises the dissonance between the social status and the image that a public figure tries to build for himself or herself, on the one hand, and what truly characterises that person, on the other, a reality that becomes apparent in their private environment. Gossip can be a form of social sanctioning of the public figures by the public interested in worldly matters. Following the revelation of some aspects of the public life, an obvious contrast between the public image and what the person behind the public image manifests day by day in point of attitudes and behaviour comes to light.

*d. A form of social valorization by exaggerating the importance of some events or normal life situations.* All subjects of gossip are positioned in the paradigm described above. This is why we note that important events or normal life situations become, in the case of public figures, topics of fashionable debate or gossip. Public figures' birth, death, wedding, pregnancy, christening, divorce, infidelity, abuses and domestic violence, sexual orientation or religious choice are constant topics of gossip. Motherhood is in fashion among celebrities because the image and the femininity pattern they have built up to the moment of pregnancy appears to contrast with the role of a future mother, but look and behold, celebrities also succeed in excelling in this somehow unfamiliar field. Motherhood is an act of bravery and an opportunity for celebrities to display their knowledge in the field by giving advice, video demonstrations or press statements.

What is more, sociology of emotions analyses, from the perspective of the socially capitalised emotions (shame, embarrassment) the trends that the public fond of glamour topics display in their preference for certain types of public figures. In what follows, we will elaborate on this perspective.

At the macro-social level, *gossip is that information that brings the private lives of public figures to the attention of public opinion and in the public space.* At the level of the social group (friends, workmates/ schoolmates, neighbours, relatives, etc.), *gossip is private information about a person who is called here the social actor of gossip.*

The discourse of gossip is in permanent change. It is heterogeneous and leaves much room to interpretation and ambiguity. The debate of a fashionable subject is characterised by contradictory elements and opinions, and also by an instable emotional charge. The spectacle of gossip in the tabloid media displays novel human types for the specialised literature: the gossiped, the gossipmonger (either professional or amateur/ occasional), the "spokesperson" of the slandered celebrity, the self-gossiper, the slanderer, and the observer. The social roles assumed by all these during a show or an interview may be the object of a distinct sociological analysis.

The public figure or the social actor of gossip (as people gossiped about in a group) is individualised in the social environment through the attention they receive at a certain moment.

Who is the public figure who is gossiped? The classification of the categories of public figures may rest on more classification criteria. In this theoretical study, focus is laid on conceptualising those categories of public figures which are *the subject and object of gossip*, i.e. personages who become public figures through their *constant presence* in the tabloid media, as a result of the information they claim to possess about other public figures. Concurrently, there are public figures who are constantly under the lens of the tabloid media because of the revelations of the "savour" of their private lives and who turn into

the target of public gossips. We term this category of public figures *stars* or *celebrities*. This category of public figures is, usually, the object of gossip.

However, before elaborating on this approach further, a distinction should be made between celebrities and notorious figures, whom we call *opinion-makers*.

The *opinion-makers* are professionals notorious in their field, perceived as reliable by the general public. Their public acknowledgement is gained through their own merits, through the personal example they set. They are rarely the object of gossip, which only gives them more notoriety, and their public image is not substantially altered if they do turn into subjects of gossip. They are not a market product, they do not rely on an entire PR team or a whole marketing industry aiming to promote their image. They live strongly anchored in the social reality and pass value judgements on various subjects relevant to society. These public figures earn acknowledgement through the image of normality they display, as spokespersons of a category of ordinary people who share their values and life principles. They “sell themselves” on the media market with their authentic public image, and the public or the media do not discover a huge contrast between their public persona and the private person. The opinion-makers are social actors who react against the effects of gossip and who try to fight it with intelligent, resourceful methods. Self-irony, the assumed presentation of some situations in their private lives which can become objects of gossip, doubled by a disarming attitude towards the tabloid media and their consumers, make difficult for the opinion-makers to fall prey to scandal or public gossip. Gossip manifests itself tendentiously when the opinion-makers can no longer react in order to defend their notoriety and image. The physical disappearance of a personality unleashes a huge scandal. Through gossip, a current of opinion is revealed, which shows a sociologist the dimensions and limits that the gossip-consuming public is willing to reach.

The *stars* or *celebrities* are direct products of the tabloid media. The core interest of the celebrities is to build a public image for themselves and to permanently feed it with elements previously decided by their PR team. The celebrities’ image is the “deliverable” of the media industry. This product must sell so as to cover the costs of investment in the public image. On the media market, valorisation is quantified by *rating* and *number of fans*. Beyond their field of activity, the stars publicly behave within the frames of *reactivity* and *social desirability*. They live their public life in the spotlights, which forces them to be aware at all times of the fact that they are the centre of attention from a public with constant expectations. The star behaves in the public space in compliance with the public’s desires and with the image they have built for themselves, which is also based on public’s requirements. A piece of gossip reveals negative aspects of the lives of celebrities, which makes us note the person behind the public persona. The social status and the public image of a star are affected by the roles and behaviours the stars adopt in their private lives.

This approach raises questions related to the identity structure of the stars and to the place they occupy in a society. The stars’ social identity is constructed in a social reality built around them, at the same time with the construction of their public image. The greater the differences between the social identity and the image of a celebrity, the more numerous the subjects of gossip will be. The tabloid media feed an audience fond of glamorous topics with the life standards of a celebrity, with the luxury and extravagances they display. A glamorous world is thus outlined, one functioning with completely different rules, standards and models of living, one in which mentalities are different from those of the general social framework. The celebrity world, sketched in the reports of socialite events as a place where gossip flourishes, is the social environment in which celebrities valorise their potential by showing the public an ideal model of living. Behind the glamour of the “red carpet”, there is a socio-professional community made up of experts in public relations, producers, managers, marketing consultants, make-up artists, stylists, designers, hair-stylists, etc. They make up the social system in which the activity of the star is carried out, a direct source of information and emergence of gossip about what is happening behind the stage of the stars’ lives.

Celebrity gossip pays close attention to behaviours and attitudes of such people from the perspective of their emotional life, of the affective experience they manifest in the public space. People find out details of the private life of a star if the latter reacts emotionally to aggravations coming from their inner circles. An important emotional reverberation is precisely the star’s public reaction to the

gossip and scandal in which he or she is drawn. The celebrity's presence in televised shows or in the written media, through interviews, in which he or she gives the public their own variant of the topic of gossip is accompanied by the celebrity and his or her fans' emotional reaction. A public reaction of shame, embarrassment (or the lack thereof) with regard to a delicate subject in their private life greatly satisfies the public's needs and curiosity.

At the public level, celebrities play the role of models, of reference standards of physical appearance, looks, demeanour, attitude, for a public of which their fans are a part.

*Fans* are a special category of audience in permanent search for the sensational when it comes to their idols. Their need to know as many aspects as possible from the private lives of their idols is a way of getting closer, more familiar with the favourite star; they feel affectively related to the ones they admire. An affective need of the fans is that of perceiving the celebrity they admire as being honest.

If the marketing product of a star is no longer enough for the public's requirements, extreme PR measures are taken, and gossip becomes a means of advertising. In such a context, new types or categories of public figures appear, people who want to leave anonymity behind and who offer to act as "spokespersons", observers or professional gossipmongers.

What distinguishes "spokespersons" from "professional gossipmongers" is the different discourse and the different messages they send. *Spokespersons* are intimate friends or relatives of the celebrity, who sit on televised shows on the celebrity's demand and transmit his or her point of view to the public. They try to remain neutral when faced with the provoking questions of the moderators or reporters. *Professional gossipmongers* are regulars of the tabloid shows who possess indirect information about the slandered celebrity. They express personal opinions, which they argue from the perspective of their experience and philosophy of life. With their attempts at a common-sense analysis, the professional gossipmongers assume the role of being the moralising voice of the public.

In this context, the rating is defined as the "stock market" of showbiz. The high ratings recorded by gossip, as a general theme of debate in the tabloid media reflect the general orientation of the public towards sensationalism.

## **6. CONCLUSION**

The theoretical perspective that we have attempted to build in this study opens the path to an applied sociological research based on the quantitative analysis of comparing statistical data of national rating, as well as on a quantitative analysis of televised fashionable shows, using the observation form and content analysis. The hypotheses of such research can be formulated starting from this theoretical study, by operationalizing the concepts developed in this conceptual design of sociological inspiration.

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## EUROPEAN IDENTITY THROUGH CULTURE

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### *Abstract*

Confronted with the disenchantment of the world caused by post-modernity, it is difficult to bring back into discussion a well-defined identity, based on specific, often cultural, elements. European identity is a complex notion defined both by characteristics common to the cultures of various ethnicities and people in the European geographical area, as well as by their specific characteristics. In this article we will study the relationship between identity and culture in relation to the European construction as an institutional project to see how the concept of Europe, its cultural sources and the EU political project can be combined. European culture (as well as its bases of identity) does not only have an evolution composed of all local, national and sub-national cultures, but it also consists of all exchanges between the national and local cultures that have come together for centuries. In this sense, Europeans are “heirs” of the plural and unitary history of their continent, but what role does this feature have, impregnated with pluralism and unity, in an identity perspective? In order to answer this question, we will focus on the links between culture and the sphere of identity, seeking, on the one hand, to know the elements that, in a scientific way, bring together or divide these two key concepts, and, on the other hand, studying the way in which plurality acts within the identity.

**Keywords:** Europe; EU; European culture; multiple identities; euro-symbols;

### 1. INTRODUCTION

The EU construction is today, in the context of a rapidly evolving world, the main way to preserve the identity and values that characterize the countries of the old continent. But if we look at Europe in the last 20 years, we see that the West has been a major participant in stimulating Europe’s culture, so Europe has suddenly woken up not only in terms of political and economic diversity, but also in the face of intercultural relations challenges. Of course, they have been present in the past, but now they have achieved another realization. We observe an economic adaptation to the integration process and at the cultural level there is “a kind of rebellion against the trend of leveling the world” (Altermatt, 2000, p. 135). In the common sentiment, as well as in official discourses, we refer to Europe as an entity that evokes a common history of the Member States, despite a past with conflicts, tears and wars. We are thus witnessing a sort of assimilation between the concept of Europe as an identity and cultural source and the European Union as a formal structure. Furthermore, we cannot deny that the EU monopolizes speeches

about Europe as well as its symbolic-cultural connotations (Sassatelli, 2002). As a result, we can consider that the idea of Europe as a foundation of identity is determined by the necessity that EU to create means of legitimacy beyond the economic sphere. However, the symbolic production around the culture / identity binom in the EU is quite delicate because the comparison with national consciousness and the state (a political and social structure that has the capacity to produce a true sense of identification) implies a double perspective. On the one hand, the influence of the EU is irrelevant to the creation of a European identity due to its remote rhetoric and its difficult structure to be identified through the three classic pillars of the state: territory, people and sovereignty. On the other hand, European construction is seen as the carrier of a new enlarged national ideology.

## **2. PROBLEM STATEMENT**

Starting from the definition of cultural identity as a “feeling of membership resulting from adherence to a group sharing the same values, traditions, practices, orientations, symbols and accounts” (Meyer, 2004, p. 20), we will review the identity approaches. Thus, understanding the process of identity formation as primarily based on the variables of the cultural environment is at the center of the so-called essentialist approaches. According to the essentialist logic, “ethnic elements or gross cultural material directly produce identities” (Cederman, 2001, p. 10). Being a supreme interest in the contemporary constructivist approach, identity involves „citizen involvement and participation in the functioning of a polis” (Weiler, Haltern & Mayer, 1995, p. 21). The sense of belonging originates in a set of shared political and social values recognized as decisive for that group, so that the notion of political identity is, in Cederman’s (2001) opinion, „independent of the essential, ethnic, pre-state, such as culture or descendancy, while promoting policies and an active process of identity building” (p. 10).

Considering that an alternative explanatory trajectory that starts from the premise of European identification would be more appropriate, the approach I use in this article is one specific to socio-anthropology. I examine through this approach the mechanisms for shaping European identity, starting from the concepts and resemancing of culture in relation to identity in the new socio-political context of Europeanization.

## **3. RESEARCH QUESTIONS**

In this article, we will study the relationship between identity and culture in relation to the European construction as a project, to see how the concept of Europe, its cultural sources and the EU political project can be combined. European culture (and its identity bases) is not only an evolution of all local, national or sub-national cultures, but is also formed of all the exchanges between these national and local cultures that have widened over the centuries. In this sense, Europeans are „heirs” of the plural and unitary history of their continent, but what role does this feature impregnate with pluralism and union in an identity perspective? In order to answer this question, we will focus on the links between culture and the sphere of identity, seeking, on the one hand, to know the elements that, in a scientific manner, bring together or divide these two key concepts, and, on the other hand, studying how plurality acts within the identity.

## **4. PURPOSE OF THE STUDY**

The aim of our approach is to understand the role and contribution of cultural and identity stakes to social engineering in Europe, especially in the current political context, where the main issue under discussion is the European supranational identity and the acceptance or rejection of membership to the united Europe. Through a socio-anthropological approach to European cultural identity, the paper aims to contribute to a more nuanced understanding of the evolution of this type of collective identity, on the one hand, but also to a concrete, systematic presentation of the contemporary processes of European identity formation. In order to recognize and be able to analyze the revival of nationalist and ethnicist currents taking place in today’s Europe, we must focus our attention on the historical and cultural traditions of each country, but at the same time we need a new analytical comparative framework to help us address



issues such as collective, minority and individual identities in an increasingly polarized and more divided Europe.

## 5. RESEARCH METHODS

Our approach is among the dominant approaches that characterize the research of European identity, being of a theoretical nature. The identity issue around which we want to focus our work will lead us to a reflection on the need for definitions that clarify the link between culture, identity and Europe.

### 5.1. A discourse on the link between culture and identity

“The Identity of Europe has always been uncertain and imprecise, a source of pride for some and hatred or contempt for others. Like all identities it is a construction, and an elaborate palimpsest of stories, images, resonances, collective memories, invented and carefully nurtured traditions” (Padgen, 2002, p. 33).

Today, the concept of culture is often associated with another term, the identity one, and vice versa. If these notions have common borders, they cannot be mistaken. Culture is much more important in the sphere of social action, while identity is more related to the sphere of affiliation. If the former refers largely to the unconscious components, which have constituted it as a system, the second, the identity, seems to rely rather on symbolic oppositions between systems, which are therefore more conscious (Padgen, 2002).

Culture is an evolving symbolic system that allows a subject to connect to the present, past, and future, in a nonlinear path, to build himself as a social being. Throughout this path, culture acquires properties, such as its dynamic character, which gives it a socio-anthropological sense. Thus, culture evolves with time, but in a relationship of coherence-incoherence, in the sense that it has different degrees of acceptance / reaction to the external elements coming into contact with it. It is therefore permeable, making it difficult, due to contamination, to set up its own borders. Culture is diversified and stratified, so it varies depending on a multitude of factors. It is characterized by a certain degree of fragility, especially in a context of *liquid modernity* (Bauman, 2000), in which the conflict between the public and the private context, between explicit and implicit, increases with the increase of its relational dimension (Hannerz, 2001). On the other hand, culture is operational, meaning it allows the transition from the abstract sphere to the practical field, facilitating an adaptation to the real context. This is where the identity filter comes into play, which makes possible rationalizing the meaning of a *cultural idea* and translating it into action.

In addition, culture can be used in the noble sense of the term (great works, music, etc.) or in a more particular sense, related more to the cultural identity of a group. In these two dimensions, it cannot remain locked in the barriers dictated by social determinism, which does not take into account the openness to individual autonomy, nor does it remain stuck in the concept of social structure. In other words, culture can be defined as a *habitat of significance*, in other words as a symbolic or physical space of actions and meanings in which *agents* (groups or individuals) act (Hannerz, 2001). Finally, culture can be, depending on the context to which it refers, individual or collective. This particularity leads our debate further, to the more complex dimension of objectivity and subjectivity. If culture has, on the one hand, an objective component, i.e. it occupies an autonomous position that overcomes individuals and influences them, on the other hand, it is also formed by a more delicate subjective dimension, corresponding to the role individuals assign to it. In this context, we can say that identity is entirely inseparable from a cultural or a social process.

The constituent elements of collective culture indicate that it is a system recognized by the collectivity, in which identity becomes the code of an ensemble of signs. Under these conditions, culture can be defined as a collective system of meanings, and identity as a conscious mediation that allows an individual to be found in a social system. This is the first way to explain the link between culture and identity. However, it is difficult to adopt an entirely objective or purely subjective approach when dealing with this topic because it means to reason without taking into account the relational context “which alone can say why, for example, at a certain point in time, an identity is affirmed or, on the contrary, repressed at another time” (Cuche, 2010, p. 83).

Indeed, in an (objective) “cultural approach”, for example, identity is considered pre-existing for the individual. In this case, the focus is on the cultural heritage that is related to the socialization process of the individual in a social group. In this model, the person concerned is oriented towards the internalization of the cultural patterns he finds in the social system and which, to a certain extent, are imposed on him (Cuhe, 2010). In other approaches, objective as well, identity is a property of the group, as it is the most fundamental of the social affiliations. It establishes links based on a common genealogy and is transmitted “into and by the group, without reference to other groups” (Cuhe, 2010, p. 85). Since it is a matter of defining identity based on specific criteria, we face an objectivist conception of identity, especially in cultural terms: common origin, language, territory, traditions, etc., all elements that often refer to ethnic or which are identified with the nation-state. On the contrary, if we approach identity from a subjective point of view, it cannot be reduced to these elements. Indeed, according to subjectivist approaches, identity is, first of all, identification with a more or less concrete collectivity and/or more or less imagined. It is rather about taking into account the representations that individuals have within a particular group or a certain community in relation to this social reality. If this last statement helps us to consider identity as a variable and unclear element, instead, it also emphasizes the ephemeral and rather subjective aspect, which depends more on the individual, than on the social ensemble. For this reason, neither the first approach nor the second is really satisfactory as such. It is necessary to find a middle way between objective (cultural) vision and subjective vision, which can be the relational context. According to Fredrik Barth (1998), for example, identity is a way of categorization used by groups to better organize their exchanges.

A specific culture does not in itself produce a differentiated identity; rather, it is the result of interactions between groups and organizational systems that are put into practice during these exchanges. This aspect necessarily leads us to a relational perspective that takes into account the collective manifestations, as well as their dynamic aspect. We will notice that there is no identity in itself, but that it is always linked to the relationship it establishes with another identity.

#### **5.1.1. Identity issue: between individuality and relational context**

Whether we are at a European, national, collective or individual level, defining identity always implies difficulties because it takes us into a sphere that is increasingly based on personal perception, and which is formed mainly in the relationships between groups or social systems.

Starting from a definition to the limit, identity is the very condition of existence and existence-in-the-world, which cannot be reduced to an unequivocally and much less to an individual dimension. The most common attitude is to treat identity as a self-signifying concept, that is, which does not need to be explained because it is related to the innate quality of an individual or a community: “identity refers to collective identifications by surname or nickname” (Gallissot, 2000, pp. 134-143). However, these identifications come from a representation to the outside: they are not an illusion that depends on the pure subjectivity of individuals or on a self-signifying concept, since they always refer to a dynamic relational report.

Identity representation inevitably enters the individual in collective forms, and identity is thus formed through circles of belonging that get crossed. This dual game between *individualization* (the process, the consequence of post-modernity, in which the individual is being built as a social being outside a collective system) and *collective naming* (reflecting the collective personality) leads to collective attributions covering almost all roles in a system of collective culture. Identity becomes thus a social construction formulated by opposition rather than by juxtaposition. First of all, its construction needs social frameworks to form; therefore identity often refers to interpersonal relationships that function by *assigning* a precise status and formulating *differences* that lead to discrimination between different circles of belonging (Gallissot, 2000). Secondly, it always needs a *comparison object* to exist, and this implies that one object/subject is needed, the other, which, the more distant from the forms of intimate representations, the more it is perceived in a negative way. This process belongs to the sphere of inter-ethnic and social relations and manifests itself through the barrier between us and others, as well as through the exclusion and inclusion practices.

All these scientific speeches result from the fact that identity has become a social sciences theme when it has begun to be perceived as a problem related to modernity, because with modernity we see an

increasing need for individual autonomy (Sassatelli, 2002). In this context, identity is considered at the same time an expression of individuality and a task of the subject, which can be constructed only by a context made significant by the reality that transcends the individual. Bauman (1996) expresses this by the following words: "[...] since no time did identity become a problem; It was a problem from its birth – was born as a problem, (that is, as something one needs to do something about – as a task), could exist only as a problem, and thus ready to be born, precisely because of that experience of under-determination and free floatingness, which came to be articulated ex post-facto as a disembedding" ( p. 19). The analytical concept of identity was therefore reformulated from a constructivist point of view, being more intimately linked to the cultural and social context.

Despite this, identity is in an unclear position. It is not enough to relate to it in dynamic and relative terms (depending on context and subjects). It is important to take into account the manner in which this term is used and to distinguish it from *identification* if we want to understand why in the European case the identity poses the problem of nationalist danger. Indeed, we must consider identification as a component of identity that encompasses *differentiation*. That is, if there is no identity in itself (identity and alterity are linked in a dialectical relationship), identification goes hand in hand with *differentiation* (Gallissot, 1987). In the identification process, identity is the result of a *relational* and *relative* situation that includes the difference as a founding, positive element, instead of a threatening element. This creates a vision that could be more acceptable, especially from the perspective of the European citizen. On the contrary, seen from another angle, it could *simply* become a compromise between the identity defined by the individual and the one defined by others, that is, between self-identity and exo-identity (Cuche, 2010). This process may cause, as it often happens, tensions in the perception of identity at collective level, as it is often considered an inheritance conferred by a pre-established entity that gives it a permanent, if not invariable character (Gallissot, 1987). Thus, it can become another basis for addressing culturalism, which leads to a fixed identity concept: a defensive fundamentalist postulate that attributes inferior characteristics to the identity of the other. In other words, collectively, where the concept of identity is often interpreted as an assertion resulting from pure assimilation, collective identities are still reduced to "irreducible fractions" and become more easily the object of dangerous political or social instrumentalization. From there, there is only one step to nationalism, which appears as a mere consequence. Indeed, regardless of context, identity is more strongly perceived in an essentialist way, therefore rooted, unitary, solid, permanent, and falsely authentic (even though this concept does not fit properly with the dynamic dimension admitted by social sciences).

In any case, in spite of the interrelational aspect, identification may still take certain directions that lead us again to the essentialist danger: for example, by a claim to affiliation (the claimed identity), a transfer of cultural, racial and ethnical stereotypes or stigmatization of certain social groups by *exaltation* of identification. This is possible because it is done by externally designing what has been internalized; thus, the resulting identity is conceptualized starting from a tough nucleus, with well-marked borders, so that what is far from these concepts is automatically labeled as *alterity / threat* (Sassatelli, 2002).

We can see from the above that identity is a true paradox, difficult to decompose. It really gives the impression, quite rightly, that it is unresolvable: an unidentifiable object that should remain as it is, so as we cannot reduce it to one of its components (Sassatelli, 2002). Identity presents less difficulty when focusing not on its components, but rather on its *construction process*. Moreover, the construction metaphor is often used to better explain the elements that would otherwise be considered opposite. This metaphor allows the removal of the essentialist impasse and the possibility of making the identity a multigrade course, a mobile, concentric construction that we can call multiple identities. It synthesizes in itself the dynamic, dialogical concept and the plurality of identities in an ever-relational and relative system. A vision that is sufficiently indefinite to allow us to coordinate a plurality of situations or an *oikoumene* (Hannerz, 2001, p. 10) of relationships of alterity without a mandatory involvement in the criticisms already mentioned. Moreover, the metaphor of construction allows us to choose, from the many identities that coexist, the one that suits us most from this ensemble of cross circles, and which may at the same time be local, regional, national or European collectivity.

Having multiple identities (i.e. more identifiers) has added value that does not only apply to a wider scale (for example in the European case), but solves the conflict that post-modernity has generated

within the state-nation. As a result, it appears that the very national identity itself could lose its status, despite the place that the nation-states grant it. Multiple identities have allowed national consciousness, previously saturated with more specific elements (e.g., more rigid and less differentiated values, more nationally recognizable features, etc.), to become aware of post-ethnic identifications within the same political, social and geographic ensemble. Nevertheless, the effectiveness of national discourse on identity, despite its artificial construction, remains more plausible than the European discourse.

#### **5.1.2. Formation of cultural identity in the European case**

The end of a binary logic between homogeneity and heterogeneity, with post-modernity, has projected us into a complex symbolic reality in which culture makes identity a true identification bazaar. Even within national borders we can increasingly see a true fragmentation: the correspondence between nation and culture has never been perceived as so fictitious. Confronted with this multiplicity (in which each identity intertwines with other affiliations, regardless of their level), the dual model of reality is no longer to be conceived. As such, essential identity and cultural models have never been so reproducible.

After the consolidation of the nation-states and with the post-modernity that weakened the borders, identity became a state issue and cultural identity a political instrument. We often notice that political engagement within states is prone to mono-identification. The tendency toward mono-identification of cultural identity, i.e. the attempt to recognize only one cultural identity for the definition of national identity, gains ground in contemporary societies. It is, moreover, present in Europe not only in relation to the external borders of the European Union but also within the Member States. We also notice the tendency of mentioning in singular form the collective identity when referring to a Member State and in plural form when talking about the European ensemble. Indeed, contrary to our perception of traditional societies, contemporary societies are more rigid in terms of identity conception, being societies more and more flexible within. As such, although each individual is more or less explicitly aware of having a multiple identity (for example, each individual integrates a plurality of identities present in a state, in a history, etc.), the fact that this aspect is highlighted stirs up restlessness and worry. That is why we are clinging to a political response to overcome the fear or an “old” conception of cultural identity (for example, a defense concept). The *cultural identity* expression was born in the colonial era, when colonized populations sought to claim their own autonomy in the face of an imposed, dominant, and universalistic claim that originated from the West (Sombart, 1994). The process of independence and decolonization involved a special interest in the affirmation of cultural autonomy and awareness of one’s own cultural identity. For this reason, it is often perceived, even today, as a sort of assertion built in opposition to any kind of domination (as an identity based on cultural systems for preservation and defense). Cultural identity represents the elements that should constitute a community, a people or a specific group that possesses a particular culture and a system of common values. But, gradually, the cultural base on which the individual (the nation) was built has diminished. Now, cultural identity refers to cultural groups whose boundaries do not coincide, or coincide to a small extent, and share non-uniform features such as, for example, family traits. In this composite ensemble, there is no unique connection, but a multitude of cross-links, and we need to see when and where a link has crossed with another, when and where it influenced it, touched it, contaminated it and so on (Sassatelli, 2002). Thus, cultural identity should be considered as an awareness of difference (born from a continuous exchange), perceived as such by a group towards another group, nation or people.

It is precisely this interpretation of cultural identity that will be taken up at European level. “Europe after 1945 tries to find out what is the difference to other parts of the world. Because it unites, it highlights what unites the Europeans, the substantial foundation of solidarity sought” (Obaton, 1997, p. 11). The phrase is well known since the 1970s, especially thanks to a series of meetings organized by the Council of Europe. One step was taken in 1976 when Georg Von Ackermann, the then general secretary of the organization, highlighted the role of European cultural identity in European construction at a symposium on Europe’s cultural identity (Obaton, 1997). Subsequently, a resolution is adopted at the Athens Conference in 1978 by the European Ministers responsible for Cultural Affairs where the affirmation and protection of cultural identity in Europe are presented as of particular importance. In 1985, the Committee of Ministers adopted another resolution on “European Cultural Identity”, which emphasized inter alia that cultural cooperation makes an indispensable contribution to European

awareness (Council of Europe). Little by little, the expression has gained ground in scientific and institutional spheres, where it is now widely used, but also in current language, contributing to its diffusion.

Cultural identity is approached from a multi-dimensional point of view, being at the heart of social phenomena, whose understanding, even control, is a major issue in a society where claims for recognition of regional, local or ethnic cultures are becoming stronger. In the European case, the reference to identity lies in the fact that, starting from the idea of Europe, especially as it is expressed in official EU speeches, there is an imagined community (Anderson, 1983) which brings together an ensemble of families. Anthony Smith's essay, *National Identity and the Idea of European Unity* (1992), brings further clarification about this imagined community, exploring the possibility of coexistence between national identity and another wider European identity on a European scale. The author starts from the assumption that an ethnic group differs from the nation in the sense that there may be more than one ethnic group in a nation. According to him, nationalism does not require individuals of a nation to be necessarily culturally similar, but they must instead feel united by solidarity, by a sense of belonging that is usually produced by a dominant ideology. If we force the note and assume that a strong ideology is enough to create a sense of belonging, we might think that if there is a strong European ideology, there would be a common feeling that is strongly felt. However, Smith also asserts that national identity, unlike other types of identities, contains solid elements: a collective memory, places of memory, myths, a defined territory, etc., as well as a common cultural system empowered by rights and obligations. According to him, national identities are therefore persistent. However, he also states that modern individuals have multiple identities, but only these individual identities are variable, therefore multiple. Consequently, if other levels of belonging are possible (in our case at European level), they depend almost exclusively on the degree of involvement of personal individuality. In other words, he claims that national identities are multidimensional (many dimensions that can be combined), but they are not multiple (many identifications), because their historical anchoring, linked to the ideology of the nation-state, prevents a true opening towards transnational melancholy.

Thereby, on a European scale, we can only have families of cultures that mingle superficially: "the problem here is that there is no pan-European system, only national system; and what they teach, or omit to teach, is determined by national, not European, priorities" (Smith, 1992, 72).

We agree with Smith that in Europe elements that characterize a national identity are not present in the same form. But we do not share the direction of his approach, which starts at the national level to reach the European level. If we always start from *national building* to refer to a European collective identity, we will never come out of the impasse created by the nation. If the identity must have a certain standard, especially cultural, the same essentialist danger also appears for the models and criteria established by an official system. And the imagined community, this image of Europe, can only reproduce a "false" image, an *invented* identity (Sassatelli, 2002) more artificial than national identity, and its ideological construction remains fictitious. Under these circumstances, European cultural identity can be considered a mere sum of different nationalities, perceived as more authentic and more substantial.

Especially at the moment, the European identity is a fragile construction; it is sustained by a currency in crisis and a sense of unstable feeling of belonging that is still part of the *national building*. European identity is a combination of specific national products that does not help us to perceive it as transnational. Indeed, it is easier to perceive an ensemble of identities that share elements than a European identity, especially in cultural matters. Smith (1992) reminds us of this: "here lies the new Europe's true dilemma, a choice between unacceptable historical myths and memories on the one hand and on the other a patchwork, memoryless scientific 'culture' held together solely by the political will and economic interest that are so often subject to change" (p. 74). Moreover, it is not enough to mention a glorious past, sometimes described nostalgically, focused on noble culture, the classical world, the beauty of architectural styles, etc., to make us feel a common identity.

Since they belong to the same type of logic, the elements cited by Smith, such as the glorious past, are not necessarily useful to break out of the essentialist and nationalist impasse and to determine the existence of at least a common identity. Rather, we should start from the concept of culture in a socio-anthropological sense (which should exist in Europe), linked to the relationship between the specific

cultural identity and the identity of the universal cultural values. We know the problem of the ill-fated potential of universalism, especially its ethnocentric side, but also the danger of nationalism, which is falsely ethnocentric: the two consist in designing our cultural model, enlightening and rational, as the only real way of life that should be disseminated. On the contrary, the ability to relativize a specific cultural experience proves an intellectual consciousness that requires our experience to not be the center of the cultural universe. This approach is not spontaneous but needs to be discussed, learned and “mediated”. This *rational mediation* instrument could be an institutional way to transcend the state structure. *One way to do this* would be to adapt to the context of political and cultural mediation that Europe has long relied on since liberal sentiments coexisted with universalism. But the idea of a united Europe and expanded to 28 states, soon 27, without the UK, is faced with this challenge: how to make this rational mediation work in cultural practice and in the national and European institutional architecture? Once again, we are surrounded, on the one hand, by a form of respect for the European universalism, a beneficial form of culture in a civilization sense and, on the other hand, by the attraction of preserving the integrity of local practices for the *authority* of the nation-state and its sovereignty. In this dilemma, we will often choose a simpler approach to the detriment of cultural identity (in the sense of encouraging differences) and of the supranational context, by rethinking it as a notion resulting from a long tradition, specific and delimited. However, while admitting this trend, we are also convinced of the permeability of culture and the dynamic and fluctuating side of identity, in short, an authentic paradox.

On the contrary, if we interpret differently the discourse surrounding *European cultural identity*, we could probably achieve more satisfactory results. Europe could follow a different path, introducing an identity based on other directions. It would be better to leave aside the national elements, as elements that come from a common historical-cultural discourse, which is insufficient in our day. And to think of Europe as an imagined community that cannot be distinguished by its authenticity or its *invention*, but rather by the *way it was imagined*. Therefore, we must focus on the *construction* process and on the *symbolic significance* of this *imagined community*, which has become the European Union.

#### **5.1.3. A new image for Europe and its identity aspects: the symbolic dimension**

The European Union could produce new definitions of identity due to its institutional character and its symbolic aspect. Through its new symbolic dimension, it could build a reality that avoids the previously mentioned difficulties (especially the nationalist danger) and create new specific content. This symbolic dimension could allow the European Union, through its communicational logic, to adopt a framework dimension rather than a content one (Sassatelli, 2002) and to give rise to new meaning horizons in terms of identity and culture.

Through its framework dimension, the EU can assume certain properties such as *indexicality* and *totemism*. It could be indexing in the sense that it does not explicitly mention precise content in its mediation practice in the logic of construction, since these contents could be used in a dangerous or essentialist way. In choosing how to refer to these specific contents (for example, what is the proposed identity and what is the culture to be chosen), the EU prefers to remain vague, ambiguous in relation to a particular context. Through the second quality, the totemic property, the EU could, despite the absence of the definition of its essence, insist on a positive and mythical aspect of the identity discourse that sums up its motto. Through the summary of the identity spirit of its states, the Union raises its own identity speech to a “superior” rank, without having to specify it. The European framework becomes a mediator between the supranational level and the local level, where multiple identities are found. Thus, in the communicative logic of the EU, the concept is represented by a specific expression, which has become its motto: unity in diversity. A symbol that marks, despite the differences that exist, an expression of unity. Research on European cultural identity tends to define it as a combination of differences without homogenization. Thus, it seems that the EU expressly uses, in its identity development, the dialogical and dynamic aspect of its construction process.

But how do we determine this communication logic? And why is it important? We need to take a step back and distance ourselves from identity research to estimate the *usefulness* of the notion of identity in European construction.

At the beginning of the European adventure, the major concern was twofold: peace between nations and the ability to cope with the threat of the Soviet Communist bloc. In this context, there was no

explicit reference to identity, but rather philosophical reflections from, among others, the efforts and contributions of personalities such as Richard de Coudenhove-Kalergi and Denis de Rougemont to mention only the most famous. After the fall of the Communist bloc, the enthusiasm for ideals came to the fore after being somewhat weakened by the economic and political dimensions of European construction. This change in the pattern is due to the fact that only economic integration is not enough to guarantee cohesion within the European construction. Consequently, the institution building process begins to take a wider and more complex path. The European construction, which has long been reduced to the common market, then to a unique one, becoming more and more a reality affecting many sectors where the Union is involved in different degrees. To the regulatory, normative policies, actions that can improve its image have been added: symbolic “policies”. These “policies” give more attention to the discourse developed by the institutions and propose more interventions in the cultural sector to reach the hearts of its citizens. The EU thus becomes a kind of humanistic enterprise with the aim of bringing nations and individuals closer and stimulating their consensus, which means referring to the production of meanings rather than the explicit results of its actions (Sassatelli, 2002).

However, this symbolic aspect also shows the power relations and instrumental logic related to the relationship between power, culture and identity. Indeed, this symbolic dimension was quite criticized for generating a kind of *manipulation* of individuals by political elites. The symbolic content of the *framework* (i.e. of the EU) has been *a priori* designated as *misleading*, even though it has never been truly studied. Maybe because policies studied through *policy studies* are still focused on *policy*, its nature, and the direct consequences of decision-making, not on the rhetoric or symbolic meaning of policies (Sassatelli, 2002). With the neo-institutional approach, since the 1980s, this has changed little. The cognitive approach specific to this theory and the focus on the expressive element of politics (and not just the instrumental role) has led to a reconsideration of the decision-making process. The symbolic dimension of policies is considered to be of the same interest as the rational, concrete dimension. Thus, symbols and metaphors become key concepts in this construction path, even more than the comparisons of the national example or the debate on the genesis of a common identity destiny. In this context, we can adapt to the European case David Kertzer’s (1989) proposals on the state, and we say that if Europe’s image is ambiguous and difficult to perceive, “we must personify it to perceive it and give it symbols to love it” (p. 21).

However, we see that in the choice of symbols, rituals, cultural actions or not, the EU reproduces a kind of model that consolidates, within a nation, identities. But Europe differs from this model by the fact that, by its nature, it appears as a transnational and post-ethnic identity example, that is, as a counter-model. Its context is so *complex* that it becomes almost impossible to follow the same symbolic logic: rather, it is necessary to practice a mediation of this symbolic logic. Therefore, in this context and in line with the image of an EU framework, the ambiguity and complexity of some symbols contributes more to its force than to in the national case, because ambiguity allows the Union to produce a common destiny, even if in a situation of difficult consensus. This is precisely the importance of its indexing property. In other words, if the content leaves some room for interpretation, this facilitates acceptance of its motto and amplifies the communication impact on the recipients, as they have a greater margin of interpretation.

## **6. CONCLUSION**

Culture has become a place of interaction, in which the individual acts according to the sense he attributes to different situations; this sense resides in the interaction with the other. Identity representation inevitably enters an individual in collective forms: identity is thus formed from membership circles. The end of a binary logic between homogeneity and heterogeneity that characterizes today’s societies has projected us into a complex symbolic reality where culture faces identity as a true identification bazaar. These reflections have also had a repercussion on the European construction process and the image of Europe as to the formulation of its identity and culture. Nevertheless, this image of Europe has evolved, the institutional project gradually reconsidering the terms of culture and identity and their symbolic implications in the building of identity and cultural development.

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**INTERCULTURAL COMMUNICATION - DEVELOPING**  
**PRESENTATION SKILLS**

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*Abstract*

This endeavour is part of a broader project, which will materialize in a students' book. It is designed in an attempt to help them improve their communication, presentation and public speaking skills on the one hand, and to enhance their self-esteem and confidence on the other, thus boosting their marketability when they leave school and enter the workforce. The present paper introduces the rationale and the methodology used in teaching the structure, rules and strategies of effective oral presentations to non-native ESP students in general and Business English students in particular. Subsumed under the category of important professional skills, presentation skills are regarded as a prerequisite of the present-day working environment in addition to hard skills and formal qualifications. A good command of English and an excellent ability of expressing the desired message or presenting a view or an idea clearly, concisely and confidently increases considerably students' chances for future employment.

**Keywords:** presentation skills; public speaking skills; intercultural communication skills;

**1. INTRODUCTION**

Regardless of the area of specialization, ESP students are occasionally required to make presentations in today's learning environment as the academic curriculum does not place a great emphasis on this aspect. In addition, the majority of students are reluctant about speaking in public, experiencing fear and anxiety. Presenting in a foreign language increases even more the level of anxiety as language proficiency is greatly impacting the quality of presentation. However, a good preparation, rigorous planning, solid knowledge on the topic and a lot of practice may ensure a good impression on the audience.

There are many reasons why undergraduates should learn how to plan and deliver successful presentations. They will rely on these skills when they have to present their research papers at international conferences or their final results in theses and dissertations when they graduate and especially when they have to prepare and give interview job presentations.

In today's business environment, many cultural identities meet and cooperate. Business professionals need to know how to interact their foreign partners, to face the challenges of cross-cultural challenges and to understand their cultural heritages.

Since today's students are tomorrow's professionals, it is important to teach them how to plan and deliver effective presentations. It is common knowledge that oral presentations are required in various industries of the present-day business environment, ranging from business, sales, marketing, media, financial services to public relations and graphic design. Even if the reasons for delivering oral presentations are very diverse, students should be equipped with the proper vocabulary and techniques and teachers should constantly assist them in developing their communication and public speaking skills.

## **2. PROBLEM STATEMENT**

It is worth noting here that ESP students are increasingly aware that they need to acquire certain competences and qualifications in order to better compete in the current working environment. Needless to say, they dread giving oral presentations.

Previous studies (Fallows and Steven, 2000, Živković, 2014, Wallwork, 2010 and others) show that employment requirements have changed in today's working environment, shifting focus from the traditional formal qualifications that demonstrate theory learning to work-related practical skills and competences.

As Fallows and Steven (2000) put it "today's challenging economic situation means that it is no longer sufficient for a new graduate to have knowledge of an academic subject; increasingly it is necessary for students to gain those skills which will enhance their prospects of employment. Employability skills include the following abilities: the retrieval and handling of information; communication and presentation; planning and problem solving; and social development and interaction."

In order to be better equipped to meet the requirements of today's constantly-changing and highly competitive work environment, undergraduates must be taught to communicate effectively so as to persuade, convince and inspire so as to maintain their competitive advantage. The more they learn about planning a presentation and the more they practice, the greater the level of confidence needed to have an impact on the audience.

These soft skills are universally assessed and highly sought by hiring managers nowadays, who have high expectations from potential employees.

## **3. PURPOSE OF THE STUDY**

The present research is a more practical approach, placing the emphasis on the importance of oral presentations in developing students' assertive communication ability.

Teaching students how to plan and give effective and persuasive oral presentations mainly aims at developing specific knowledge and skills required for employment and at achieving the following objectives:

- acquire new specialized vocabulary
- learn to use transitional words and phrases to create link between ideas (comparison, contrast, cause and effect, exemplification, conclusion and others)
- learn to plan and write a presentation
- improve documentation and research techniques
- improve public speaking skills
- develop argumentation skills (giving counterarguments in a convincing manner)
- increase students' confidence
- learn to adapt their posture and use gestures
- control body language and eye-contact in order to transmit confidence
- develop assertive communicative competence
- develop the ability to choose the appropriate language register or to move easily from one register to another (formal, neutral, informal)

- learn to deal with questions
- develop students' ability to evaluate a presentation and determine them to be self-critical
- develop the ability to use technology to produce a presentation
- develop intercultural or cross-cultural communication skills, (acknowledging cultural differences facilitates cooperation in a multicultural environment).

It is therefore the ESP teacher's challenging task to provide an interdisciplinary approach to teaching oral presentations in order to overcome anxiety and increase confidence among undergraduates.

#### **4. RESEARCH METHODS**

In order to be able to competently and professionally express themselves, students need to be taught certain aspects of speaking in public. Before embarking upon planning their presentation they need to find out as much as they can about their audience (nationality, age, etc.) and to determine the level of knowledge about the topic they will enlarge upon.

When cultural backgrounds interact, they must take some other factors into account such as hand gestures or facial expressions that might be perceived as offensive, jokes must be carefully selected and national stereotypes should be avoided.

Since preparation and knowledge are crucial for minimizing anxiety, a greater emphasis should be placed on these aspects. Thus, students are instructed to get familiar with the material they intend to talk about and to define the target objectives of their presentation. After gathering as much information as possible, the next step is to select the relevant information and to plan the presentation by focusing on the body of the presentation, a captivating introduction and memorable concluding remarks.

My research is based on an experiment that involved all my students enrolled in Business English seminars, taking into account their needs and interests. Thus, first year Business English students (136) were required to compare and contrast two products at their choice in a 15-minute presentation prepared individually. The experiment also involved the second year undergraduates of International Relations and European Studies (24) who were expected to be able to accurately and objectively describe graphs and charts whereas third year students in International Relations (23) were instructed to prepare a fully-fledged presentation for a job interview. The present study presents the findings of observing and assessing the presentations delivered by 136 first year Business English students.

An entire seminar was devoted to introducing the proper vocabulary, main stages of planning a presentation, the principles of presenting, exploring the body-language and the importance of eye-contact in a presentation, enlarging upon do's and don'ts and presenting mistakes made by others. Students were also instructed to take into consideration cultural identity and cultural experience when presenting to a multicultural audience.

Moreover, special attention was devoted to introducing the basic rules of a PowerPoint presentation. An important aspect that must not be overlooked is proofreading the slides for spelling and grammatical errors, failing to do so can have a negative impact upon the audience.

Students were welcome to share their experience and to make comments. At the end of the seminar they were explained how to assess a presentation, taking into account several aspects such as greetings and introduction, clarity of presentation, originality, body language, use of visual aids, dealing with questions, relevance of concluding remarks and others. Starting with the next seminar they were expected to deliver their own presentations and to evaluate their colleagues' performance. The novelty of this research lies in the fact that students objectively evaluated and graded presentations, receiving an evaluation form.

Therefore, students were expected to choose the appropriate vocabulary but advised to keep it clear and simple, bearing in mind that the level of English in the audience might be heterogeneous. Furthermore, they should be able to talk about the selected topic and not to read the material contained in the slides or notes. Therefore the meaning and pronunciation of difficult words must be rigorously checked using online resources.

After greeting the audience and introducing themselves and the selected topic, students are advised to keep the audience focused by using various attention-grabbers such as questions, rhetorical

questions, interesting statistics, quotes and even self-deprecating humour or comments, which are regarded as safer than jokes that may offend the audience. Also they may use gestures (non-verbal communication) to welcome the audience and to show determination and enthusiasm. However, since there are students from other cultures under the Erasmus exchange programme, certain gestures that might be perceived as disrespectful in other cultures should be avoided (such as the OK hand gesture or pointing a finger to someone, which are regarded as offensive in Turkey).

Moreover, the use of technology is highly recommended for oral presentations and students are encouraged to make use of visuals, which seem to be more appealing to people's minds. The number of slides is limited and students' task is to present, discuss and convince to make an impact on the audience, maintaining their enthusiasm throughout the presentation.

It is worth noting here that according to the theory of nonverbal communication developed by Albert Mehrabian in the 1960s, the assertiveness in communication is more about body language than the selection of words. Thus, a great emphasis is placed on eye-contact, gestures, facial expression and posture – 55%, tone of voice – 38% (that should not gradually be reduced to monotone) whereas the selection of words accounts for only 7 %.

After the concluding remarks in which they are expected to reiterate the main ideas and to emphasize the key words of their presentation, the next step is to invite questions. If there are no questions, the best way to avoid the uncomfortable moments of silence is to mention the aspects people are usually interested in or want to find out more.

Another related aspect that worth mentioning here is dealing with questions. Since the audience is entirely made up of colleagues, malicious questions can hardly be raised. Nevertheless undergraduates should be instructed how to avoid difficult questions. In our experiment there were questions addressed by students who were interested in finding out more about a topic. As a rule, undergraduates should be advised to anticipate questions and if a presenter does not know the answer, it is better not to improvise but to show his/her willingness to research more.

## **5. FINDINGS**

All my students responded well to this assignment, delivering presentations in a lively and interesting way. Even students with limited knowledge of English enjoyed these presentations, choosing topics they were interested in and felt comfortable with such as comparing and contrasting types of phones, computers, beauty products, black tea vs. green tea, white chocolate vs. black chocolate. Intermediate and upper-intermediate chose more challenging topics such as presenting the types of human behaviour (introvert, extrovert and ambivert) or comparing and contrasting two popular American medical television drama series Grey's Anatomy and House. However the tendency was to speak more about the topic they chose, going over the time allocated for each presentation.

My students from Moldova demonstrated a strong cultural identity. The four Erasmus students (three from Turkey, one from Portugal) that attended my seminars chose to present their countries, insisting on the places that worth visiting.

Both beginners and intermediate students chose to stand and face the audience and tell the story using their own words instead of sitting and reading the slides. Some avoided eye-contact at the beginning of their presentations betraying their lack of confidence but due to positive feedback and a more comfortable public speaking environment, they became more confident and relaxed. Others crossed their arms thus showing a defensive attitude and lack of confidence. A few displayed some nervous habits such as twirling the hair or playing with the pen and fidgeting. Some of them felt more comfortable standing still, others shifted the body weight from one foot to another whereas one student chose to walk too fast and too long distracting attention. Once these aspects were brought to their attention, they corrected their posture immediately, standing straight, shoulders back, head up facing the audience and smiling.

At the end of every presentation, everyone applauded. My students proved to be excellent assessors, providing objective feedback and asking pertinent questions demonstrating their genuine interest in the topic. The grades they gave were about how well the presenter designed and delivered the presentation, overlooking small grammar mistakes.

My students' feedback regarding this interactive activity was that it incorporated genuine communication and it was much more challenging than learning specialized vocabulary through traditional teaching methods. As adults and future professionals, they are genuinely interested in personal development. The task of evaluating their colleague's presentations enabled them to learn from the mistakes made by others and to challenge them to deliver better presentations.

There are people who are born with a natural aptitude for public speaking and effective communication. Specialists believe that these skills can be learned and constantly developed. In this respect, out of 136 presentations, five of my students impressed me with their inborn talent for public speaking, less than ten will never pursue a career that might require oral presentations (including two cases of glossophobia) but the majority of students were eager to learn more, discuss and do better.

Nevertheless, they concurred with the fact that it was a new, motivating experience and a better way to construct knowledge, thus displaying a more positive attitude towards learning.

## **6. CONCLUSION**

As research has demonstrated, teaching oral presentations to ESP students is a complex, challenging and multidimensional process which exceeds the sphere of linguistics as it also involves teaching certain aspects related to non-verbal communication, which are of the utmost importance such as physical behaviour, posture and manner in which the verbal message is conveyed in order to ensure the maximum impact. Since the business world is made up of different cultures that communicate in the same language, cultural differences and possible misunderstandings must also be rigorously discussed.

Since oral presentations imply multi-skills, developing these soft skills in ESP students has become a necessity in today's working environment. When entering the labour market they are expected to have acquired solid work-related practical knowledge and excellent communication skills and to be able to apply them to future endeavours.

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**THEISM AND METHODOLOGICAL NATURALISM**

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*Abstract*

No theist should hold that scientific accounts of the world are (or could be) comprehensively true because of the nature of methodological naturalism and induction. First, periods of so-called normal science treat regnant theories as true, but induction about the history of science tells us that we have little reason to be confident that these judgments are in fact true. Hence, induction about the history of science counts against our ability to claim that contemporary theories produced by induction are true. But, that is self-defeating. Second, no theist can avoid the specter of occasionalism. Suppose an apple falls on your head. The naturalistic account of what happened is that certain constants and spatial relations made it the case that the apple struck you in the head. The miraculous account might be that God himself was the agent that struck you with the apple. To the observer, it might be the case that there is no empirical difference between the two circumstances. Methodological naturalism does not have the power to show that the second account is false even though it is forced to conclude that the first account is true. But, that is arbitrary. So, while methodological naturalism is problematic for the naturalist, it is even more so for the theist.

**Keywords:** Methodological Naturalism; Theism; Occasionalism; Induction;

**INTRODUCTION**

Most scientists are committed (implicitly or explicitly) to the doctrine of methodological naturalism. Methodological naturalism is defined variously in the literature, but it usually involves a commitment to the principle of causal closure, i.e., the doctrine that all physical phenomena have (only) physical causes. Many scientists are likewise committed to scientific realism, which is the view that science is a truth-conducive enterprise or that scientific terms and theories refer. In this paper, I discuss some difficulties that these commitments present for theism.

**2. PROBLEM STATEMENT**

There are numerous articles that defend the principle of causal closure (e.g., Kim 1998; Papineau 1993), and it is widely recognized as basic assumption of operational science. In spite of the broad implicit commitment to the principle, the principle has recently come under renewed scrutiny (Gibb 2016). Likewise, there are voluminous debates on scientific realism (Liston 2018). This paper does not

discuss this literature per se. In other words, it does not ask whether in principle scientific realism is justifiable or whether in principle causal closure is justifiable. Neither does it ask whether scientific realism or causal closure are true. Instead, this paper discusses whether scientific realism and methodological naturalism are compossible with the thesis of theism.

### **3. RESEARCH QUESTIONS**

Is the triad of scientific realism, methodological naturalism, and theism mutually consistent? In other words, does it make sense to believe that science proceeding according to normal practice, including a commitment to causal closure, is truth-conducive while also believing that God exists?

### **4. PURPOSE OF THE STUDY**

My claim is that given the nature of science, i.e., (a) its intrinsic method of empirical observation and induction and (b) its posterior assumption of about physical causation, theists should not be scientific realists. In *Research Methods*, I discuss (a) and (b) separately in order to show that either they are undermined on their own terms or that they are inconsistent with theism. Hence, the triad contains theses that are either singly incorrect or jointly inconsistent. Hence, one or more of them should be abandoned

### **5. RESEARCH METHODS**

#### **5.1. Scientific Realism and Induction**

The first thing to see is that even a thesis as common as scientific realism is not one that comes free. Hence, here I enter a complaint about scientific realism that is available to both the theist and the non-theist. Of course, the point is not that this argument gives special reason for the theist to refrain from holding scientific realism. Instead, it is an example of a problem with scientific realism that is exacerbated by methodological naturalism for the theist. Hence, this argument is the first of two that provide cumulative support for the claim of the paper. The argument is that induction itself counts against the rationality of thinking that any given scientific account is true. In other words, even if we could accept scientific accounts as the kinds of accounts that could be true, we have no reason to think any of our accounts are true on the basis of the root of scientific argument, which is induction. One can borrow from Kuhn to see the point (Kuhn 1962). The history of science has produced, as a pattern, as series of formulas and theories that turned out to be wrong according to the judgment of later thinkers. Usually theories are declared dead when a sufficient number of anomalous observations arise together with some better method for describing the phenomena that the current model describes. In any case, the new theory is adopted in place of the old, and the theory of the day is acclaimed as the correct theory. But, I think is surprising. It has the flavor of the folklore about the medical community's indecision regarding whether newborns should sleep on their stomachs or backs.

Induction about the history of science itself seems to indicate that we have more ground to believe that regnant scientific theories are wrong rather than right. Since scientists have always been wrong to this point, it seems like special pleading to assert that they have it right this time. Now, sometimes this criticism is seen as overly pessimistic (Psillos 1999; Park 2014). But, it is simply an observation about a pattern in history. Utility, though much to be valued surely, is simply not coincident with truth. What is strange is the sunny optimism of science that it will succeed in giving a comprehensively true account of anything on the basis of the fact that it has produced more effective medicines and feats of engineering. After all, Roman bridges remain standing to this day, and the Romans believe that a nymph caused the river to flow under them. One might retort that the history of science also shows that whenever a theory has been found wanting science has repudiated the theory and moved on. In other words, induction about the history of science might lead us to think that we will continue to discover flaws in regnant theories and make necessary adjustments. Fair enough, one thinks, but usually science goes beyond that (at least among its evangelists) to the further claim that the steady improvement in the sophistication and utility of the sciences has a definite terminus at which we will have a unified theory of everything. But, that kind of optimism is surely not warranted on the basis of the history of the enterprise. It draws on some

eschatological hope which is certainly a shadow and might rightly be called an intellectual opium for the masses.

### **5.2 Methodological Naturalism and Theism**

In 5.1, I argued that induction is not a sufficient basis from which to expect true ontological conclusions, particularly those of the ‘totalizing’ explanatory kind offered by scientific theory. The point of that argument was to suggest with the literature that there are reasons one might reject scientific realism independent of one’s other commitments. In this section, I develop this argument by appeal to a reason that theists in particular should not be scientific realists, which is the cost of methodological naturalism. One could, of course, hold to scientific realism without holding to methodological naturalism, but I am not aware of any place in the literature where such a system is teased out. I am not here principally offering an argument that methodological naturalism ought to be rejected as a criterion for scientific explanation. Rather, I am arguing that theists especially have a reason to treat as dubious the scientific explanations that are permissible on methodological naturalism.

Take this very serious case as an example:

Suppose an apple falls on your head. The naturalistic account of what happens in such an instance is that certain physical constants and spatial relations made it the case that the forces upon the apple caused it to strike you on the head. You were standing under the tree (or, in any case, passing beneath it). The wind blew against the branch with a certain amount of force, which broke the stem holding the apple to the branch. Then, gravity happened: the apple was attracted to the ground and everything else according to some regular math. Your head intersected the trajectory of the apple as it was attracted to the ground by science.

Call this the naturalistic account (or, if you prefer, the physical account). Of course, this is the account that we are predisposed to believe and the one that seems likely to be true in some sense. Nevertheless, there are many (perhaps many, many) other accounts that are equally possible and likely that are equally plausible. For example, suppose the cause of the apple’s hitting your head is that an angel was directed by God to strike you on the head with an apple as a gentle reminder to call your grandmother (whose birthday it is and who bakes the world’s best apple pies). He does this in response to your prayer of the previous evening in which you begged that you not forget your dear grandmother’s birthday. The angel assumes control of the apple by divine power and smacks you on the head with it. You rub your head for a moment and then run off to call grandmother.

Or suppose that God stops time and hits you with the apple directly (perhaps because you are very pious and He deigns to answer your prayer directly).

Or suppose that a demon is attempting to draw on your sinful desires, so, having had such success with fruit before, he hits you in the head in order to elicit a profane slur from you.

One imagines that the number of such accounts is limited only by one’s imagination and patience.

In any case, the methodological naturalist must choose the naturalist or physical account because only that account fits the doctrine of his controlling assumption. But, naturalism can give us no reason to prefer that account over the others. Theism gives us no reason to disbelieve the ‘miraculous’ accounts. So, why favor the first account? If one says, because it makes the most sense, or is the most regular, or the most natural, then one begs the question. If one says because science is impossible without some scope limitation (which surely is true), it still does not follow that methodological decisions to limit the scope of possible explanations lead to us to true accounts.

If one says we have no reason to believe the miraculous account because a naturalistic explanation satisfies the data, then one again begs the question. If one does not beg the question in that case, then one needs to provide some argument for why the naturalist account should be preferred as true simply because it fits the data. If one says the naturalist account is to be preferred because the account is based on publicly-available information, one says what is simply false – since the observational data might be identical in all cases. The publicly-available data does not include mathematical descriptions of the motion of the apple: it includes the observation that the apple appears to be moving.

If one says that the naturalistic account should be chosen because of the consensus of scientific experts, one appeals to a bankrupt principle. This defense is sometimes given in the area of string theory: “according to this principle, non-experts are expected to base their opinion about the content and status of



theories in a well-established scientific field largely on the assessments by those who have established themselves as experts in the field” (Dawid 24). We might translate this principle into English as the “trust us” principle. Not only is the principle non-empirical, it appeals to little more than condescension. If one can invoke such an appeal to an authority, why not theism? After all, such an appeal rests primarily on the intuitions of prominent scientists and neither on matters internal to scientific theorizing or external observation.

If the naturalist account is to be preferred because science is impossible without some scope limitation (which surely is true), it still does not follow that methodological decisions to limit the scope of possible explanations leads to us to true accounts. Finally, if one says the naturalist account is to be preferred because it is useful, fecund, testable, or parsimonious, then the truth of the account is no longer the criterion and we have shifted ground. In that case, why concern oneself with whether the account is true?

If one appeals to parsimony (non-empirical, though that would be), the theist (but not the naturalist) should favor strong occasionalism because that account only requires one principle of action – God’s direct willing. Now, we might have reasons on a specific brand of theism (say, Islam) to think that angels do not hit people with apples, but that is beside the point. If we decide upon methodological naturalism because we have theological reasons for believing that God does not interfere (or send His angels to interfere) with the ‘natural’ world, that would still be insufficient - because God could have so acted in this instance. So, unless we have an argument to the effect that God could not have so acted in this instance, then the naturalist explanation of the apple falling is at best possibly true. But, the angelic accounts are also possibly true (unless someone can provide us an argument that they cannot be true).

I suppose an obvious retort could be an abductive argument for the truth of causal closure. Causal closure is the thesis that physical events have only physical causes. If this thesis is correct, then methodological naturalism follows along in tow. The abductive argument for closure would ask the question: what would we expect to be true if causal closure was false? We would expect to see physical events taking place without physical causes, or better we would expect to see “physical effects that are causally unexplainable in terms of physical causes” (Tiehen 2421). But, notice that somethings being explainable in some particular way does not guarantee that the explanation is true. For example, the apple hitting your head because a demon intended to tempt you explains the data, but few people are persuaded that such an explanation is a good one. Of course, the theist has reason to believe the God interacts with His world, so any explanation that voids this reason should be passed over.

This last comment I take to be the chief obstacle of MN for the theist, namely, it requires that theists discount God in the process of evaluating scientific theories. But, this invokes an inconsistent triad:

- (1) Methodological Naturalism
- (2) Scientific Realism
- (3) Ontological Dependence of Creation on the God.

An orthodox view of creation (in any major monotheist religion) holds that God not only created everything but that he sustains it in existence (Damien 129; Gunton 2004). Of course, this means that any statement about how the world works will be incomplete unless it acknowledges (even implicitly) that the world works at all because God is the center. Now, someone might object that the consistency and order of the universe is implicitly attributed to God – but on methodological naturalism that cannot be true because methodological naturalism discounts any non-physical explanans automatically. So, if we come to some set of interpretations that we have no means to adjudicate between on so-called “scientific grounds,” then a theist should be able to have recourse to other means, say, theism. The proponent of methodological naturalism cannot demand something more robust from the theist than he demands from himself.

## **6. CONCLUSION**

Theists have at least two strong reasons not to be scientific realists on methodological naturalism. The first is the generic problem of induction with regard to the history of scientific

explanation. In other words, the first reason is not unique to theists but is common to anyone who considers the issue regardless of other commitments. The purpose of this discussion is not to exhaustively engage the literature's discussion, but to reinforce the idea that each of several theses discussed in the paper is not true a priori. The second reason is peculiar to major forms of theism, whether Judaism, Islam, or Christianity, and notices that methodological naturalism discounts theories out-of-hand that are not in principle impossible or even implausible on generic accounts of any monotheist religion, regarding God's power or conservation of creation. Hence, the theist has more reason than even the naturalist to be dubious about scientific realism on methodological naturalism. I conclude that the triad of scientific realism, methodological naturalism, and theism is not consistent. Assuming that theists have independent philosophical or religious reasons for holding to theism, theists should give up scientific realism or methodological naturalism. Alternatively, a vital commitment to scientific realism and methodological naturalism might be reason to reconsider theistic belief. In either case, one or more of the triad should be abandoned. A revised draft of this paper was originally presented at the Randomness and Foreknowledge Conference, Dallas, TX 2014.

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## MCDSARE: 2018

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#### HUMBLING THE RATIONAL: A HUMEAN CRITIQUE OF LEIBNIZ'S PRINCIPLE OF SUFFICIENT REASON

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#### *Abstract*

“Why is there something rather than nothing?” asked 17th-century polymath and philosopher G.W. Leibniz. Indeed, it is this query which still looms over metaphysics today. To Leibniz, the fact that every effect has a cause led to his commitment to what philosophers refer to as the principle of sufficient reason. However, does every derivative genuinely derive from some derivation? If not, what ramifications would this error have on the Leibnizian project? This piece will begin with an explication concerning some main instances in the Leibnizian corpus, where Leibniz gives argumentative support for the principle of sufficient reason. Next, this article will enter the perspective of 18th-century philosopher David Hume, who by denying the sturdiness of causal relations, assisted in jeopardizing this backbone of Leibnizian thought. Lastly, this essay will close with support for Hume's account of causality over Leibniz's, by drawing the reader to consider the problems uncovered by Hume, and their impact on Leibnizian metaphysics, via discrediting the principle of sufficient reason.

**Keywords:** Leibniz; Hume; Epistemology; Principle of Sufficient Reason; Causality; Induction;

#### 1. UNPACKING LEIBNIZ'S PRINCIPLE OF SUFFICIENT REASON

In Leibniz's *Principles of Nature and Grace, Based on Reason*, he asserts that nothing ever happens in which an explanation is undiscoverable as to why that occurrence manifested as it did, and not in any other way (Leibniz 1989, 30-31, 209-210.) Leibniz also adheres to the view that as one accumulates more knowledge of what led to what he/she is attempting to know, the less challenging will that endeavor be (Leibniz 1989, 30-31, 209-210.) Now, Leibniz connects these beliefs, with what he claims is the ultimate reason explaining all existence; God (Leibniz 1989, 209-210.) One sufficient reason as to why God is a cause, or theoretic requirement to explain life, is that Leibniz thinks material things, left alone and considered in isolation, possess no inclination to motion or rest, strengthening the idea that God is an immaterial principle (Leibniz 1989, 209-210, 211-13.) That is because a principle is imperceptible and since Leibniz attributes no natural motion to what one defines as purely bodily, it

cannot be that anything material bears a predisposition to movement or inertia, rendering the reality of motion, to ultimately be a result of God (Leibniz 1989, 125-127, 207-210.)

More abstractly, Leibniz invites his readers to consider why this immaterial cause, God, must stand outside of creation, or the domain of contingent things (Leibniz 1989, 209-210.) As understood by Leibniz, God is exterior to his/her effect, the universe, since to posit the question as to what the ultimate cause of a series of contingent things is, one must begin by first assuming an answer is uncoverable (Leibniz 1989, 209-210.) That is because no success in solving the riddle of existence is achievable if one only decides to look back on ephemeral causes, infinitely (Leibniz 1989, 209-210.)

Accordingly, one must ground his/her answer in an external cause which started that series, whom Leibniz asserts is God or that purely immaterial and permanently active origin of all life (Leibniz 1989, 209-210.) Hence, one could sufficiently justify that the most secure foundation for existence, is an immaterial and everlasting sustainer, who explains and guarantees the continuity of reality (Leibniz 1989, 209-211.) For not only is God more soundly an immaterial entity, who is best fit to explain the *phenomena* of motion, due to what is utterly corporeal being unable to move alone, the Divine must also be unswayable (Leibniz 1989, 209-211.) One reason for this is that one could only attribute a cause of that magnitude to such an entity, to justify the constant activity found in nature (Leibniz 1989, 209-211.) Lastly, God must be distinct from nature, and thus, exterior to it, since only the Divine is necessary for existence unlike everything else which exists contingently, or in such a way that not all life need to rely on it, to persist.

Leibniz further ties his principle of sufficient reason to the idea of God's omnipotence as he investigates why it is that something exists, for nothing would be easier to generate. Now, Leibniz resolves this puzzle by appealing to God, as being the best explanation, or sufficient reason for the reality of life, since, only an entity containing the highest level of perfection can establish life's goodness (Leibniz 1989, 210.) One reason why Leibniz believes existence is a type of perfection is that justice is a reality, which deals with good and evil, and since evil is a form of deprivation, and because nature could never die but merely change, indicating its limitlessness, assists in grounding that life is good (Leibniz 1989, 207, 210.) Thus, by analyzing and gaining knowledge of reality, and the perfections that appear to be present in it, Leibniz would assert is sufficient grounds to uncover not only the reality of God but also that the Divine's essence is optimal.

From this, Leibniz continues to assert that it is sufficient to declare that God always chooses the best that could be. For as the most optimal entity, it is only like the essence of the Divine to perform those tasks which would lead to the best possible outcomes (Leibniz 1989, 211-213.) Now, to understand what Leibniz believes by the best possible result of all possibilities, readers should first consider his idea that God, as a transcendent entity, or *meta*-monad, displays only those perfections findable in the universe (Leibniz 1989, 211-213, 218-222.) That is because aside from the Creator and the constant flow of Creation, nothing more could be actual (Leibniz 1989, 211-213, 218-222.) Indeed, to Leibniz, people's every day and naïve understanding of perfection, as equating to that quality of the Almighty, who could make all possibilities actual at once, in a way that would satisfy everyone's desires unlimitedly, fails to capture the reality of how the Creator intended life (Leibniz 1989, 211-213, 218-222.) That is because one may compare God to a good shepherd, who maintains his/her flock while also giving them the freedom to roam, to refine and value their coexistence (Leibniz 1989, 211-213, 218-222, Ezekiel 34:23, 37:24, John 10:27, Isaiah 40:11, & Psalm 23: 1-2.) As such, God neither acts against his/her wisdom to rectify nor his/her compassion to allow people to choose, which Leibniz would believe further grounds God as perfectly perfect or the purest of pure entities (Leibniz 1989, 211-213, 218-222, Ezekiel 34:23, 37:24, John 10:27, Isaiah 40:11, & Psalm 23:1-2.) Finally, Leibniz would assert, that miscomprehending perfection, derives from people's limited capacities to know reality with the same clarity as the Almighty, which shows through their frivolously confusing central features of necessary and sufficient causation (Leibniz 1989, 28-30, 30-35, & 35-37.)

Another instance of Leibniz's explanation of the principle of sufficient reason is in his examination of the difference between necessary and sufficient causes, and how God, or that grand unifying theory elucidating all of existence, is both valid and sound (Leibniz 1989, 28-30, 30-35, & 35-37.) Now, as understood by Leibniz a necessary cause is that which one could only conceive as being the

producer of an inevitable effect (Leibniz 1989, 28-30, 30-35, & 35-37.) So that the reader may better understand the spirit of what Leibniz is trying to capture, one may refer to the Kantian example of the impossibility of successfully ideating a four-sided triangle or a three-sided square (Leibniz 1989, 28-30, 30-35, Kant 1998, 559-570, & Jaspers 1993, 172-179.) That is, Leibniz, like Kant after him, would assert that there is truth in the belief that there exist permanent aspects of the universe, which the mind cannot bypass, indicating that a certain level of harmony is present in the natural order (Leibniz 1989, 28-30, 30-35, Kant 1998, 559-570, & Jaspers 1993, 172-179.) This agreeableness, or the seamless coherence between an entity's essence and representation, gives credence to the Leibnizian theory of pre-established harmony, for the cosmos, *qua phenomenon*, appears orderly, providing sufficient reason to infer that a cause was responsible for that appearance (Leibniz 1989, 35-37, 207-208.) Thus, at one tier, one may assert that God is conceptually necessary to explain eternal truths and that those truths can validly fall under God for their cause (Leibniz 1989, 35-37, 207-208.)

At the same time, one may also declare that the reality of life by bearing signs of design and structure, is sufficient reason to believe that a designer ultimately mapped out and constructed what is present in existence (Leibniz 1989, 35-37, 207-208.) Lastly, because one could sufficiently trace existence back to God as its immaterial substratum, while also integrating all essentialities, like necessary truths, to architect a formulaic expression depicting God, helps to justify that arguing for the Divine is doable both soundly and validly (Leibniz 1989, 35-37, 207-208.)

## **2. HUME'S CHALLENGE TO CAUSATION**

From a radically different approach to the topic of causation, comes 18th-century philosopher David Hume, whose dissection of rationalist metaphysics, including Leibnizian philosophy, starts with his distinction between matters of fact and relations of ideas (Hume 1993, 15-16.) Now, as understood by Hume, support for the method of inference, assuring that if one discursively reasons about abstractions alone, without the need of experience, to uncover truths, is a faulty paradigm indeed (Hume 1993, 15-16.) First, Hume asserts that experience is, in fact, requisite for one to be able to reflect and reason about ideas since without first experiencing and intaking the *phenomena* available in the natural order, no mind would be able to depict what it is contemplating or considering via thought (Hume 1993, 9-10, 15-16.)

To Hume, this predicament of human knowledge, or the inability to conceive ideas without initially perceiving examples of them in the world, derives from the fact that objects emit a representation which one must first register, as verifiable by the experience of those objects being agreeable to how one usually encounters those things (Hume 1993, 12, 16-17.)

In other words, Hume would assert that people could only agree about what an object is because their minds possess capacities to regard things in such a way that they match the appearance they exude, which the customariness of the feelings one regularly feels when interacting with an object, occasions (Hume 1993, 12-14, 19-20.) However, the reader should note that Hume does not believe objects exist in a permanent or guaranteed way, which leads him to explicate his understanding of matters of fact (Hume 1993, 15.)

By matters of fact, Hume believes that which regularly occurs in the world, to the extent that people regard it as a surety, when, it is, more accurately, inductive (Hume 1993, 27-29.) For although many individuals may regard something like the idea of the sun not rising tomorrow as an absurdity, Hume would persist to point out that it is still not contradictory to reason that it cannot (Hume 1993, 20-22.) This capacity, or the mind's ability to envision something as other than what it is, or absent altogether, shows that there exists little room for valid deductive proofs or justifications which block the mind from imagining or conceiving any other possible explanation, explaining whatever is in question (Hume 1993, 24-25, 28-31, & 33.) In other words, to Hume, the possibility of conceiving and imagining the world as other than what it is, is not nil, and this serves as the foundation for his onslaught against causality's supposed undeniableness (Hume 1993, 24-25, 28-31, & 33.)

First, Hume draws his readers to consider something like gravity, which is impossible to directly experience, making it impossible to know validly (Hume 1993, 16-18, 39-44.) That is because gravity is an immaterial principle, and without any knowable characteristics that could be subject to the scrutiny of

the senses, no one would be able to reflect and form ideas concerning gravity without running into logical contradictions (Hume 1993, 16-18, 39-44.) To Hume, this is the case, for if ideas ultimately derive from sensory impressions, then that renders ideas never to be genuine ideas, but instead remnants of experience (Hume 1993, 9-13.) Also, the fact that reason runs into obstacles, when employing ideas alone, such as the case with analytic proofs of God's existence Hume asserts never convinces or forces the mind to negate the possibility of there not being a God; helping to assert that what is imperceptible can never be indubitably sure (Hume 1993, 39-44.) So that the reader may better understand Hume's criticism of causation, another example concerning gravity may be of use. Now, when one drops a ball from a tower, that ball, although known to drop at a specific rate to the ground habitually, is void of a *priori* justification (Hume 1993, 15, 17, & 19-20.) One reason for this is that by not experiencing gravity itself, Hume believes that one could think of that ball as going up, sideways, or any other way conceivable, which would not defy the rules of analytic inference (Hume 1993, 18-20, 40-42, & 44-45.) As such, one may claim that gravity, as the cause of the ball falling to the Earth, is not itself an immutable or fixed cause, for one would be unable to envision gravity otherwise if any of its qualities were available to perception (Hume 1993, 18-20.)

However, because no one could observe gravity immediately, for it possesses no proximate perceptual qualities, helps to justify that gravity is a term which describes a cause that is uncertain (Hume 1993, 18-20.) Accordingly, Hume would assert that although the effects of gravity appear constant on Earth, it is not indubitably sure throughout the universe, since no mind is ever unfree to question the supposed analytic foundations of causation (Hume 1993, 18-20.) Hence, as a matter of fact, or something that bears some truth, only in the terrestrial realm, and only to humankind, Hume would assert that a cause like gravity is not authentically a cause and is instead a designation encompassing what appears to be in constant conjunction (Hume 1993, 18-20.)

Another problem concerning the so-called unquestionable occurrence of a supposed cause leading to what is interpretable as an effect, is that cause and effect are inseparable, negating the idea that causal relations unfold sequentially (Hume 1993, 21-25.) That is, if one regards a cause as necessarily preceding an effect, to be able to begin to understand how it relates to that effect, Hume would disagree (Hume 1993, 21-25.) One reason for his disagreement would be that reasoning about the appearance of an effect, could only come after the event of that effect (Hume 1993, 21-25.)

As such, one may claim that discursive thinking, as operating backward from an effect to a cause mismatches the progression of logical inference, for how could it be that a cause must precede an effect to be a cause, when coming to that discovery must first derive from tracing that effect back to it (Hume 1993, 21-25)?

To Hume, issues such as these, weakening the so-called unshakeable reality of cause and effect, assist in securing that once reason oversteps the bounds of sense, it starts to enter murky waters. In other words, when reason reaches for what it could never verify via perception, and as it starts to fancy ideas like an ultimate immaterial cause of existence, Hume would assert that it is in dangerous waters indeed; for one could always pose questions as to what caused that cause (Hume 1993, 37-39.) Accordingly, the problem of infinite regress Hume employs to help debase attempts to secure the reality of an overarching principle which led and unfolded as the cosmos (Hume 1993, 37-39.) For although one must assume that an answer exists, to pose a question and that the ability to investigate a topic would be impossible if there were nothing to discover, Hume would remind his readers that ideas speculating about what is beyond experience fail to be in the domain of philosophy (Hume 1993, 37-39.)

That is, Hume believes philosophy is the attempt to provide indubitable certainty regarding topics that could be justifiable in an utterly airtight fashion (Hume 1993, 37-39.) As such, since the surety of cause and effect is debatable, and because the belief in an original cause of the universe, or an immaterial God, could never be experientially verifiable, one may read Hume as one who believes nothing is sure (Hume 1993, 37-39.) Thus, since everything is a contingency, Hume believes it would be truer and perhaps more rewarding, if one were to analyze existence through the lens of probability and induction (Hume 1993, 37-39.)

### 3. HUMEAN CHALLENGES TO LEIBNIZIAN METAPHYSICS THROUGH JEOPARDIZING THE PRINCIPLE OF SUFFICIENT REASON

Thus far, this piece guided its readers through aspects of Leibnizian metaphysics with a focus on Leibniz's understanding and application of the principle of sufficient reason. Afterward, this article attempted to explicate Hume's critique of causality, and by doing so assists the reader in gathering his/her opinion of this matter, freely, without having only Leibnizian thought as an option. Now, this essay will assert why Leibniz's metaphysical account of reality is epistemically weak, under the scope of Hume, by poking holes in the logical foundations of the principle of sufficient reason. For without this cornerstone of Leibnizian thought, Leibniz's speculations regarding God, necessity, and contingency begin to fall apart.

Now, one objection Hume would pose to Leibniz's adherence to the principle of sufficient reason is that Leibniz mistakenly believes that causal relations are strictly *a priori* affairs (Leibniz 1989, 31.) That is, Hume points out that all effects must first be observable, and available to experience, for without initially encountering what could be attributable as an effect, no one would be able to infer that a cause caused it (Hume 1993, 37-39, Russell 1972, 659-674.) For example, if one were to discover, on an isolated island, a timepiece, that person would undoubtedly think that it came from a previous inhabitant of that island and that someone, at some time, designed and fashioned that watch (Hume 1993, 37-39, Russell 1972, 659-674.) Consequently, Hume would assert that if that person never saw that watch, that individual's train of thought, inferentially tracing that watch back to what would most likely be its designer, would never have a chance to occur (Hume 1993, 37-39, Russell 1972, 659-674.) Hence, unlike Leibniz, Hume would believe that not all effects are strictly products of relatable ideas, and rather since effects could be objects, something such as the principle of sufficient reason would be epistemically frail (Hume 1993, 37-39, Russell 1972, 659-674.) For how could an immaterial principle give rise to physical existence, and how is it that one could indubitably reason about a material effect when its cause was ultimately an idea in the mind of its causer?

Another issue Hume would cast light on, to deflate Leibniz's principle of sufficient reason, is the fact that the principle of sufficient reason is not a necessary inference needed to investigate the natural order, and instead, it is a contingent assumption (Hume 1993, 37-39, Russell 1972, 659-674.) In other words, Hume finds that one could imagine the world otherwise than having to possess a cause to explain its existence (Hume 1993, 37-39, Russell 1972, 659-674.) One reason for this is that causality, does, in fact, derive from experience (Hume 1993, 37-39, Russell 1972, 659-674.) Now, because experience as available to people, who are those constructors and inventors of the concept of causality, can never prove that their trust in cause and effect is valid, assists in demonstrating that causality is not universally binding (Hume 1993, 37-39, Russell 1972, 659-674.) As such, a notion like the principle of sufficient reason, cannot surely and thoroughly be safe from critique, and since it is not exempt from revision, debate, and doubt helps Hume to secure that it is not necessary, or utterly unthinkable in any other fashion than what it is (Hume 1993, 37-39, Russell 1972, 659-674.)

Moreover, Hume would declare that Leibniz fails to recognize that cause and effect are inseparable for if an effect does not appear to be a product of something else, it could never be a genuine effect, which dissolves the principle of sufficient reason's claim that everything derives from a specific cause (Hume 1993, 57-60.) That is, if an effect is unanalyzable, it cannot be an effect, for its cause can only remain unknown. As such, terms like "cause" and "effect" more accurately depict a situation which occurs regularly but never in a way that applies the same to all other so-called causal relations (Hume 1993, 57-60.) For instance, if one finds a blank notebook, that person could never be sure if that notebook was in possession of someone who intended to use it for a class, as a diary, or as a business record. Accordingly, since no additional information is obtainable for one to pinpoint that notebook's cause, it is better to refrain from speculation. That is because there would be a variety of possible causes to choose from, to assign to that notebook, and never one that could be knowable as its precise cause (Hume 1993, 57-60.) Thus, since there exist many other explanations to things aside from the principle of sufficient reason, which ultimately leads back to God for Leibniz, Hume would believe the principle of sufficient reason is not as clear-cut as it should be (Hume 1993, 575-60.)

Now, one ramification that Hume's critique of causality and how he would handle the principle of sufficient reason would have on Leibnizian thought is that it would help to undercut Leibniz's view concerning the surety, or soundness and validity of believing in God (Leibniz 1989, 208-211.) One reason why Hume's challenges to causality would help to debase Leibniz's view of God is that to Hume, Leibniz's reasoning goes awry when he asserts that God is necessary and sufficient to explain reality and existence (Hume 1993, 37-39, 40-45, & 57-60.) First, Hume would claim that although Leibniz declares that God is an immaterial principle, who is necessary to existence, he fails to explain how a necessary cause can link to a contingency, like the natural order, which even he asserts could change (Hume 1993, 37-39, 40-45, & 57-60.) That is if God is immaterial, how is it that the Divine could create a reality unlike himself/herself, in which impermanence, finitude, and the power of the mind to question almost everything, appears (Hume 1993, 37-39, 40-45, & 57-60.)

Without this cornerstone of Leibnizian thought, Hume would claim that Leibniz's metaphysics falls apart for Leibniz himself confuses the nature of necessity and contingency on which his project relies. Moreover, if a necessary cause, like Leibniz's God, is, in fact, just an inductive claim than it follows that all of Leibniz's philosophy rests on a contingency, which could hold sway to some, but could never achieve the surety it wishes to expound. Next, because the principle of sufficient reason does not hold for all of reality, in a way anyone could confirm via the senses, shows that Leibniz is not relating ideas when he claims that Nature implies God for its cause, for God is not experienceable. Thus, because nature is physical and God, to Leibniz, immaterial, Hume asserts that there is no sufficient reason to assume an ultimate cause to life, for what is non-physical cannot produce a physical effect in a purely immaterial way. Lastly, without the principle of sufficient reason, being sure, the reader should refrain from adhering too fast to a belief like Leibniz's, for it lacks the indubitableness and clarity its author declares it possesses.

#### **4. CONCLUSION**

This essay commenced with an overview and introduction to Leibnizian thought regarding the principle of sufficient reason, as tied to causality, and Leibniz's metaphysical speculations about God and the natural order. Next, this article drew its readers to consider issues and problems arising from adhering to theories relying on causality, through challenges raised by David Hume. Lastly, this piece argued in favor of a Humean account of causality and attempted to display how Leibniz's principle of sufficient reason leads to chimeric metaphysical dogma, and not the concreteness of truth.

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## MCDSARE: 2018

### International Multidisciplinary Scientific Conference on the Dialogue between Sciences & Arts, Religion & Education

#### PRAYERS FOR THE DEAD IN THE CULT OF THE ORTHODOX CHURCH

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#### *Abstract*

The memorial services that are made for the dead represent an important part of the Orthodox divine public cult, the divine cult representing the center and the specific and fundamental expression of the religious life, the Orthodox Church's life itself. We must, nevertheless, stress that between the teachings of faith and the cult of the Church there is an indissoluble connection. The prayers for the dead are based on the Christian faith that soul continues to exist after death, at which adds the teaching about the close connection or love communion between the live and the dead. The memorial services for the dead represent an act of cult, in the same time being a confession through which is asserted our belief in the immortality of the soul, in our resurrection, in the existence of the eternal life and in the God's kingdom, being in the same time the expression of love which makes possible the communion between the live and the dead as members of the Church..

**Keywords:** God; Church; cult; faith; prayer; confession;

#### 1. INTRODUCTION

Orthodoxy is well-known first of all for its teachings of faith, which are characterized by a special depth, but also for its cult, characterized at its turn by a richness of content and sense, a thing which is not at all surprising, because the Orthodox divine cult is defined as being an expression of the teachings of faith. In the same time, because of the cult, the community of faithful are expressing their feelings of adoration of God, of honoring the saints and the Mother of God, mediating, during its fulfillment, the commune of the godly grace.

It is surely safe to say that in Orthodoxy the divine cult represents the center and the specific and fundamental expression of the religious life, the Orthodox Church's life itself. We must, nevertheless, stress that between the teachings of faith and the cult of the Church there is an indissoluble connection.

The role of the divine cult is to create a medium of connection and communication between God and man, fulfilling in this sense a double function: the laetetic function, namely of adoration of God, while the second function of the public divine cult is the charismatic one, sacramental of sanctifying, through which is shared the grace of God to the faithful, grace that is necessary to their spiritual growth and redemption (Ene Braniște, 2002, 54-56).

## **2. PROBLEM STATEMENT**

Still, along with these two functions of the divine cult, we must also mention a third one, considered as secondary or auxiliary, namely the didactic, catechetical or teaching function, which considers the preaching of the evangelical truth in the specific forms of the cult, with the purpose of instructing the faithful in our Savior Christ's teaching, and of consolidating them according to the Christian virtues and faith.

## **3. FINDINGS**

If we consider Christ's words to the Saints Apostles before His ascension to the sky, *„Therefore go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit”* (Matthew 28, 19), we may observe that He placed the didactic function at the beginning of any pastoral demarche. Since its very beginnings, the Church understood the importance of preaching the teachings of faith and the need, for those who wished to become Christians, to know the teachings of faith and this is the reason why the catechetical demarche was considered thoroughly since the Saints Apostles' times. Later on, immediately after gaining the religious freedom, the Church has organized, on solid basis, an institution which to fulfill this didactic, pedagogic and teaching need of the Church, namely the institution of catechumenate which in the history of the Christian Church had an existence of over three centuries (Saint Chiril of Jerusalem, 2003; Teodor al Mopsuestiei, 2008; Sfântul Ioan Gură de Aur, 2003).

Randomly or not, in the history of the Christian church the period during which the catechumenate institution existed is also called the golden period, because then the effervescence of the Church's religious life, in all its aspects, has reached an apogee that was never again attained. We assert here, with no exaggeration whatsoever, that a very special role in supporting such a manner of knowing and living Christ's teachings in that golden era from the history of the Church, was also played by this very church institution of catechumenate, which made sure that all who became Christians knew in detail the Church's teachings of faith, in all its important aspects and, consequently, the Christians' feelings and attachment to the Church's life and teachings were all the more special.

Today, more than ever, the pastoral realities of the Church claim imperiously a revitalization of the catechetical work and, within this preaching category, of the mystagogical catechesis, which to determine an enhancement of the attachment and sentient participation of the faithful at the liturgical life of the Church. A very important part of the Church's cult and practical life is represented by the mortuary arrangements that determine and include very important manifestations of devoutness from the part of the faithful. Concerning the theological foundations of the prayers for the dead, we must underline the fact that they are based on the Christian faith that souls exist even after death (Dumitru Stăniloae, 1997, 158 ș.u.), at which adds the conception about the close connection or communion of love between the live and the dead, without forgetting that, theologically speaking, we are referring to the fighting Church of the live and the triumphant Church of the saints, of the holy, of the dead (Dumitru Radu, 1986, 380-383).

The manifestations involved by the mentioning of the dead, be they ecclesial or with particular character, which make what we are calling the cult of the dead, have bases in the Scripture. Thus, man was created by God in body and soul, soul, as constitutive element of the human being is created for eternity, being the essential element which never perishes: *„Do not be afraid of those who kill the body but cannot kill the soul”* (Matthew 10, 28). On the other hand, the Holy Scripture shows us that the soul apart the body, is not confounded with it, continuing to live after being separated from the body by physical death: *„For we know that if the earthly tent we live in is destroyed, we have a building from God, an eternal house in heaven ... We are confident, I say, and would prefer to be away from the body and at home with the Lord”* (II Corinthians 5, 1-8). The existence of the soul after being separated from the body is shown more clearly by Lord Christ Himself, in the parable about the unmerciful rich man and pauper Lazarus: *„The time came when the beggar died and the angels carried him to Abraham's side. The rich man also died and was buried. In Hades, where he was in torment, he looked up and saw Abraham far away, with Lazarus by his side. So he called to him: <Father Abraham, have pity on me and send Lazarus ...>”* (Luke 16, 22-24). These words demonstrate that man continues to live as soul, he can communicate, he feels, has feelings, he is aware of his being.

The Holy Scripture ensures us that, after the physical death, man lives a happy life or a life of torment, according to how he understood to live on earth, subsequently to the particular judgement of the soul about whom we learn from the aforementioned parable (Luke 16, 19-31), and in the same time it shows us that besides the particular judgement, there is also a universal or public judgement, which will take place at the end of the world. Then man will be judged in body and soul and, according to this, he will have a happy live or a life of torment (Matthew 25, 31-46). This means that, after the particular judgement and up until the public judgement, the state of the souls that were separated from the bodies is not final. They go either in heaven or in hell, according to the moral condition from the time of death, but we must make the necessary observation that the dead cannot make anything more for his redemption (John 9, 4; Matthew 25, 13), his soul being either happy or in sufferance, according to the deeds of his life (John 14, 2). In the same time, the Orthodox teachings show us that after death, the state of those who passed to God is a conscious one. The good ones benefit of the joy of God's kingdom, enhancing their happiness by the work of the godly grace, whilst those who sinned are unhappy, thinking, sensing and having feelings and wishing to change their unfortunate state, without being able to do so. Those who are in such a state cannot change it in any way whatsoever by their will or doing, but only through the prayers of the living, of those who are part of the fighting Church (Dumitru Stăniloae, 1997,176) .

According to Saint Apostle Paul, the Church is called the body of Christ, and the faithful are parts of this body, between them existing a natural connection: *„While our presentable parts need no special treatment. But God has put the body together, giving greater honor to the parts that lacked it, so that there should be no division in the body, but that its parts should have equal concern for each other. If one part suffers, every part suffers with it; if one part is honored, every part rejoices with it. Now you are the body of Christ, and (each) one of you is a part of it”* (I Corinthians 12, 24-27). From the Church, the body of Christ, are part not only the living, but also those who passed away to God in the Christian faith, with the hope of resurrection and of eternal life, as the saint apostle is telling us: *„Whether we live or die, we belong to the Lord”* (Romani 14, 8). Considering the communion between the living and the dead, our prayers to God and His Saints for those who passed away are necessary and useful (Dumitru Radu, 1986,903), because the prayers of the saints to God are well received, and our prayers to the saints, God's friends, for us and for our dead, are recommended by the Church, as they are justified by the Scripture: *„Pray at all times in the Spirit, with all prayer and supplication and to that end, keep alert with all perseverance, making supplication for all the saints”* (Ephesians 6, 18); *„I urge, then, first of all, that petitions, prayers, intercession and thanksgiving be made for all people”* (I Timothy 2, 1).

We must say that the practice of prayer and alms giving for the dead is not specific only for Christians, for we encounter proofs that justify it in the Old Testament (II Maccabees 12, 43). Savior Christ Himself shows us clearly that the prayers made for others, thus also for the dead, are necessary and useful: *„Ask and it will be given to you; seek and you will find; knock and the door will be opened to you”* (Matthew 7, 7); or *„If you believe, you will receive whatever you ask for in prayer”* (Matthew 21, 22).

The prayers and rituals for the dead are to be found in the liturgical life of the Church from the very beginning of its existence, representing an essential part of the spiritual manifestations of the first Christians. The Church held services for mentioning the dead, and holy days and terms or monthlies for memorials, that are included in our teaching, ritual and cult books.

Among the days dedicated to a general memorial of the dead, we mention:

- the Saturday before the Sunday of meat Quinquagesima (of the Tremendous judgment) also called “the winter Saturday of souls” when we mention all those who have passed away in our families, the Church praying for all those who died with the hope of resurrection, so that God will make them worthy of His mercy and to judge them with kindness and to place them amidst the rightful ones.

- days of general memorials for the dead are the second, third and fourth Saturdays from the Lent, in the liturgical orderliness of these days existing special canticles for the public memorial of the dead, with the necessary specification that, in practice, all the Saturdays of the Lent (except the one from Holy Week) are marked in the calendar as Saturdays for memorials of the dead.

- The Saturday before the Whit Sunday, also called “the summer Saturday of souls”, is also a day in which the Church generally commemorates those who died with the hope that they will enjoy the gifts of the Holy Spirit whose coming upon is celebrated the following day. This faith is based on the teaching

according to which the Holy Spirit is the one who continues into the world and fulfills the redeeming workings of Lord Christ, working which is not limited only to the living, but also is extended to the faithful who passed to the Lord, because these too are members of the Church.

- even if there are no specific mentioning in the cult books, by analogy with the two Saturdays of souls, the Church organizes in autumn (usually in a Saturday in between the holy days of Saint Dmitry and of the Holy Archangels) an autumn Saturday of souls, when the dead are generally commemorated.

- under Russian influence, in certain areas of the country there is the tradition to make a general commemoration of the dead, usually on the Tuesday (or Wednesday) after the Bright Week, a commemoration also known under the name of the Blajinilor Easter (D.L. Balaur, 1936/183) (lb. Slavic – blajenâi = happy) or the Easter Saturday of souls. With this occasion the faithful pray to God so that Lord Christ, the One who came down with His soul and godliness to hell (a moment that is mentioned in the Easter Eve, a day when no more intercessions can be made for the dead), to untie also those who are in hell because of their sins.

- at these days of general commemoration of the dead adds the holy day of the Ascension of the Lord, when is made the general commemoration of the national heroes and of those who died on the battlefield, for their soul to rise to God in His grace. Also occasions of general commemoration of those who died into Lord are those days when the titular saint of a church is being celebrated, and in such a day are organized love feasts and alms gifts for the living and for the dead (Ene Braniște, 2002, 219-222).

Considering the Christian faith, according to which the soul of the man continues its existence beyond the boundaries of earthly life, the Church is not forgetting the dead, after their funeral. This is why apart the aforementioned general commemorations, the tradition of our Church has established certain terms of individual commemoration of the dead, terms that are established after the day in which a faithful has passed to eternal life. According to this tradition of the Orthodox Church, the terms for commemorating the dead, when sermons and prayers are organized for him, are:

- the third day subsequent to someone's death, which usually corresponds to the day of the funeral;

- the ninth day;

- the twelve day (in certain places);

- forty days after death;

- three, six, nine months, and a year after the death of a Christian;

- each year, until the seventh year (Ene Braniște, 2002, 1980, p. 498).

All these commemoration terms are not randomly established, for they involve both a theological and physiological and natural signification, to which adds a mystical and spiritual signification that has to do with the popular belief about the customs of the air.

Therefore, according to the theological signification, the commemorations from the third day after the death of a Christian is made to honor the Holy Trinity, whilst on the other hand it reminds of Lord Christ's resurrection in the third day after death, a moment which become a guarantee of the resurrection of the dead (I Corinthians 15, 20).

The commemoration from the ninth day made is made with the conviction that the dead will be worthy of the companion of the nine troops of angels, reminding us in the same time about the ninth hour then our Lord Christ, whilst still on the cross, promised to the thief that he will go to heaven, what we also hope for our dead. The 40 days commemoration has the purpose of reminding us about the Ascension of the Lord, which took place 40 days after His resurrection, with the hope that the souls of the dead will be taken into God's kingdom. The commemorations which are made at three, six and nine months after someone's death have a trinitary symbolism, for the glory of the Holy Trinity, while the commemoration made after an year and, later on, each year up to seven years, is following the example of the ancient Christians who, each year, were gathering around the graves of the martyrs in the day of their death to honor them, because in the Christian conception the day of death is considered a day of birth in the eternal life (Nicolae Necula, 1996, 275).

As for the commemoration made at seven years, its signification is symbolical, for we know that seven is considered a sacred number, reminding us of the seven days of the Creation and of the seven gifts of the Holy Spirit. The commemoration of the dead at the aforementioned terms is done with dirge

and Liturgy, preparing *coliva*, wine, ring biscuit and other gifts that are shared to those in need, in the memory of the dead, and at the more important terms the commemoration is accompanied by alms-giving for the poor and things are doled for the soul of the dead, not before they are blessed by the priest in a special sermon. Usually, after the memorial service the procession moves at the tomb of the dead where is held the sermon of Panihida, and afterwards they will go at the place where the love feast is prepared and the alms are blessed, a reminiscence of the ancient love feasts. With this occasion will be recited the prayer for blessing the clothes (when they are prepared to be given to the poor) and the other things that are to be given to the poor, as a commemoration for the soul of the dead (Molitifelnic, 1992, p. 323). We have to mention that there is also the habit of offering dishes with food, cups or glasses for commemorating the dead, spoons or forks. Their number is not mentioned in any traditional book, but usually a symbolic number is chosen (six, seven, twelve etc.), but each person will offer as much as he can or believes is right, as the expression of generosity and love everyone has both for the dead and for the neighbor in need (Nicolae Neacula, 1996, 277).

Moreover, to commemorate the dead there can be given the so-called masses for the dead (the Romanian term of *sărinđar* derives from the Greek ή σαρραντριά which means a group of 40/ Ene Braniște, 2001, 432), namely diptych with the names of the dead which are to be commemorated at 40 Liturgies, and at the end of the 40 Liturgies is organized a Liturgy with Memorial meal, mentioning the settled diptych, a moment which is popularly called *dispensation of the masses for the dead*. If possible, this moment is accompanied by a meal for those in need.

#### **4. CONCLUSION**

The cult of the dead represents, therefore, an extremely important part of our religious manifestations. Apart from being a duty of the soul, the commemoration of the dead represent an act of cult, in the same time being a confession of faith through which is asserted our belief in the immortality of soul, in our resurrection, in the existence of the eternal life and of God's kingdom, an expression of the love which makes possible the communion between the living and the dead as members of the Church. The days when the dead are commemorated are moments filled with sensibility, in which is manifested the profound communion with those who died. They must be respected and encouraged for only in this manner will we maintain the connection and communion with our kin, with those dear to us with whom we hope to meet again in God's kingdom at the end of the world.

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## MCDSARE: 2018

# International Multidisciplinary Scientific Conference on the Dialogue between Sciences & Arts, Religion & Education

## STEPHEN HAWKING AND DIVINITY IN HIS “GRAND PLAN”

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### *Abstract*

Relationship between religion and science remains a permanent attraction of all people. As the simplest atheist is the most telling proof of the existence of God, as any attempt to change the message revealed by God, is implicit recognition. This is also the attitude of the authors of the paper, great Plan Stephen Hawking and Mlodinow Leonad. That last reality of this world bears the imprint of the Holy Trinity, we even say the authors, who are not as irreligious, as will appear. Speaking about quarks, they say the following: "Curacii, which also we cannot see, I am a model explaining the properties of protons and neutrons from the nucleus of an atom. Although I think that protons and neutrons are obtained from Quark, we won't be able to notice a Quark never, because the force between quarks increases enormously as they try to separate them, so there may be no free quarks in nature. They always occur in groups of three (proton and neutron) or in pairs Quark-Quark (mezonii), and behaves as if it would be connected with rebounding, (Stephen Hawking, 2012, 40).

**Keywords:** Religion; science; divinity; third;

### 1. INTRODUCTION

We live in a day and age of communication and high tech media! We constantly expose ourselves to information! The age of the printed press has been long gone and the age of artificial intelligence has been ever expanding. In such a world it only seems natural to question oneself whether or not there has been some room left for God as well. As it is to be expected, the answer may vary from one person to another, from one generation to another, from one nation to another, so on and so forth. Nonetheless, in keeping with the given answer, we could divide the world in two sides: according to the first one, God died and there is no more place for Him on Earth, while according to the second one, it is technology and information that open people's hearts even wider to receive God! For a true Christian, things are pretty clear. On the one hand, God has Revealed Himself to Man, He has Shown his work throughout history and, through Jesus Christ, we have accepted His invitation to a partnership of eternal love. Despite its difficulty, we are forever fighting against meanness, hatred or envy for fear that they should overwhelm us and we desire to be like Him since "It is He who causes His sun to rise on the evil and the good, and sends rain on the righteous and the unrighteous." (Mathew, V, 45) For us, Christianity

is a way of life where we are invited to live according to Christ's own way! God is a most loving Father, constantly waiting for us to become one with Him, that is through LOVE, the only path to achieve eternal life. We are trying hard to strike a balance between all scientific discoveries and His Revelation, while finding convergent points and being convinced that there is only one single Truth and authentic science cannot but anchor itself into it.

On the other hand, life is not easy for those taking the second side, permanently eager to demonstrate that God is dead, since, during their endeavour to overshadow the Truth, they will find it almost impossible to not swear false about the Truth, should they always be true to themselves! Accordingly, we have embarked upon the discovery of such recurrent ideas in *The Great Design*, written by one of the most intelligent contemporary people, Stephen Hawking, recently passed into the world of the righteous, a work edited in collaboration with Leonard Mlodinow. (Stephen Hawking, 2012).

## **2. PROBLEM STATEMENT**

To our knowledge, the research topic that we want to approach has not been undertaken by anybody else so far. This is an extraordinary challenge, on the one hand because while reading the work of the two previously mentioned researchers I have come up against quite a considerable number or paragraphs full of contradictory ideas while, on the other, through their arguments they postulate exactly the idea of faith and God's existence, and even of the Holy Trinity. This is the very point that we want to make in this paper!

## **3. RESEARCH TOPIC**

The notoriety of the authors stirs admiration in every reader, all the more if they attempt to make a presentation or even try to alter some of the points of view expressed by them. Without ever experiencing the sensation of feeling superior or inferior to someone, we are convinced that, while keeping in mind the advice of Saint Gregory of Nyssa, there are no limits to knowledge in this world because man is invited by God to become like Him, The Source of all Knowledge and Wisdom Himself. From this perspective, we would not be wrong to assume that the limit of human knowledge is boundless. Therein, *The Great Design* is a book that fully sustains this argument.

On the one hand, what used to be a mere axiom has proven an outdated hypothesis and on the other, what we are holding to be an axiom today might have the same fate tomorrow, repeating the same cycle over and over again. We might say that our only certainty is uncertainty. This is how things are in the field of scientific research, although, without a certain conventionality and axiom acceptance the evolution of knowledge or the scientific progress would not be possible at all. It should only seem natural to ask ourselves whether or not what is happening in the field of scientific research today is but a mere invitation to postulate and discover the Creator. It is rather sad that for a considerable amount of time the man of science had been completely overlooking the religious aspect, in general, and the spiritual one, in particular (The authors admit to a divorce between philosophy and physics: "philosophy has not been able to keep up with the development of modern science, and with the development of physics in particular", *The Great Design*,5).

In this sense, science has taken leaps, building itself a specific vocabulary, but in so doing, it has completely ignored man's spiritual and religious aspect, losing the possibility to connect with him. Rightly so, a contemporary neurosurgeon, preoccupied with this aspect, stated that "in a world which has developed its technical but not its spiritual side, the inability to express any spiritual truths resembles an author willing to write a novel using only half the alphabet of his own language". (Eben ALEXANDER MD 2013: 76). Moreover, what the contemporary man of science seems to deliberately ignore is the fact that on the basis of all human existence and becoming there is LOVE! Outside Love there is no conscious life but only biology! We make a distinction between conscious life and biology! Biology is an attribute common to all life on earth, conscious life is only specific to man. Some form of reasoning or another may be found in all beings, but man is the only creature, from the entire Universe, who does not just reason about things but who can make judgements of his own reasoning! It is through his reason that he is endowed to discover the explanation of his whole existence! And yet, if while analysing, questioning his

existence and discovering its laws should he conclude that chance lies at the foundation of all this and there is no Creator, then he might be right if and only if “a tornado sweeping off a mountain of trash could make up a Boeing 747 from the materials compiled down there” (Sir F. HOYLE, 1981).

Moreover, the contemporary man of science has accepted several work hypotheses, quite relative as they were, and has assigned them an axiomatic value, by turning them into a genuine ideology. Nobody has ever proven that there is at least one example of cross-species and yet evolution is accepted as a proven fact! In consequence, it is on this thesis that the entire current and ongoing scientific research grounds itself into. And Stephen Hawking made no exception to it. While blaming the belief in God he obliges us to believe in what he was unable to prove to the end of his life! Accordingly, what we aim at analysing in his work, *The Great Design*, are exactly these inadvertences or even the paragraphs or the phrases which postulate faith, divinity, Holy Trinity etc.

#### **4. RESEARCH PROPOSALS – THE GREAT DESIGN– SOURCE OF MEDITATION ON THE EXISTENCE OF DIVINITY**

We hereby intend to look into *The Great Design*, by Stephen Hawking, written in collaboration with Leonard Mlodinow. What these two authors seem to be missing is the fact that things, events, and facts are unique by themselves, but when looked at from different angles, they give one the feeling of being special! The same could be said of the Universe as well: it is unique by itself, but when looked at by so many people and from so many angles, when scrutinized under the lenses of so many individuals eager to expand their knowledge and with different levels of expertise, the Universe might as well appear something different, each time! As such, resembling a child on his way to intellectual metamorphosis, humankind has been constantly giving different testimonies and surprising ever new features of the Universe! Throughout times, it has become widely accepted that humanity has been changing its perspective over the universe, the surrounding environment, the earth, or, simply put, its existence. But the one considered by the scientific world as the father or the modern notion of scientific law has been to the day Isaac Newton (1643-1727), contemporary with the Romanian Brâncoveni and Dimitrie Cantemir. Ever since his days and up to the first twenty years of the twentieth century, the Universe, man included, have been perceived of and recorded as precise mechanisms and perfect machines, and, accordingly, the three laws of motion and the law of gravity seemed to be quite enough to explain everything and provide solutions to all problems alike. From a theological point of view, this prompted a material approach of life and of the universe. And yet, once quantum physics became known, things have changed. We could say, theologically speaking, that from that point onwards scientists were forced into thinking that the world is anything but what can be seen on the surface, to say the least of its being a mere machine, a mechanism. Quantum physics has made a descent right into the abyss of the matter that is presently and boldly so called God’s particle. Each new discovery in quantum physics raises one more veil from the face of all the uncertainties and mistaken proclamations stated by humankind up to that moment. For example, Richard Feynman’s theory contradicts not only the idea of preordainment but also the existence of a Universe born as a result of fortuity (Stephen HAWKING, 2012: 6)

The more the genuine scientist looks into existence, as opposed to the simple newsmonger of scientific data, the more he is able to solve mysteries and discover secrets. To be noticed in Stephen Hawking’s work is a *contradictio in terminis*! On the one hand, he does not accept any historical-religious theory describing the origin of Universe and of life, while on the other, he seems to be forwarding some sort of final theory, i.e. M Theory, which, according to him, “is the only model which contains all the features we all believe a final theory should contain...” (Stephen HAWKING, 2012: 7-8).

In reality, M Theory is hardly a theory but rather a mythic-religious-scientific syncretism, and the analogy with the impossibility to represent the surface of the earth on a single map cannot even be considered, since reality itself is unique and not double, triple or quadruple etc as it is understated in the work of the two scientists! Furthermore, the reason they forward this M Theory is because “it can provide us with answers to the question of creation...” and “it foretells that countless universes were created out of nothing.” (Stephen HAWKING, 2012: 8). We need to explain that the authors reject the idea of the Divine Revelation which has culminated with the Embodiment of Christ in history, but they invite us



nonetheless to embark upon a voyage on the waters of probabilities and predictions! To believe in perhaps and foretell and reject the One who said: I am the Way, the Truth and the Life! To believe in evolution which has not yet provided us the slightest example of cross-species, but to ignore Christ who has changed the direction of history and revealed that we have the face of a loving Father who invites us to feed our existence only with and through Love, the only one to bring us eternal life!

Without the slightest proof of evidence, Stephen Hawking and his colleague talk about universes created out of nothing, but they insist on making the following statement nonetheless: “their creation does not presuppose the intervention of a supernatural being or of a god, but these multiple unfolded universes occur naturally as a result of the laws of physics, and are predictions of science”(Stephen HAWKING, 2012:8). If genuine science grounds itself into probability and prediction, then the two authors are right, because, for the most part, their work is built around these nuclei! Talking about laws without a law maker is an example of evolutionary logic, because, in the simplest human logic, such thing is hardly ever possible! Moreover, the two talk about a set of initial conditions, without which evolution would not even be possible (Stephen HAWKING, 2012: 21), but they mandate fortuity so marvellously as it supposedly generates this set of conditions! In the existential equation of the two scientists, Divine Revelation does not happen, despite its being obvious, at least by the Coming of Jesus Christ, our Saviour, into the world, and not only!

Starting with His Coming into the world, the history of humanity has known an obvious transformation, and yet, the two scientists refuse to accept this truth as self-evident and invite us to trust their judgement which cannot be sustained with arguments and which should be accepted at once.

We believe in that which has revealed itself to us, they invite us to believe in that which cannot be proven, in predictions and suppositions! Speaking about subatomic particles which are not visible to the naked eye, the two authors state that “electrons are a useful model which explains observations such as the traces in a misty room or the spots of light on the cathode tube of the TV set, and many other such phenomena as well.”(Stephen HAWKING, 2012: 39). As a matter of fact, electrons cannot be seen to the naked eye, and, despite all that, “all physicists nowadays believe in the existence of electrons, even if they cannot be seen” (Stephen HAWKING, 2012:39). And things don’t stop here because, “quarks, which are also invisible to the naked eye, make up a model which explains the properties of protons and neutrons in the nucleus of an atom. Although it is generally considered that protons and neutrons are made up of quarks, it will always be impossible to observe a single quark because the more we try to separate them, the stronger the linking force between quarks grows, which means that they cannot exist free in nature. Quarks always appear in combinations of three (in protons and in neutrons) or in pairs quark-anti-quark (in pi mesons) and behave as if they were bonded by an elastic band” (Stephen HAWKING, 2012:39-40).

This is the most obvious design of the Holy Trinity, which is the foundation of all existence. Unity through trinity and trinity through the unity of quarks is a meditation theme for any Christian, but also for any scientist to whom the Divine Revelation, achieved through the Embodiment of Christ, has not revealed itself yet. Unfortunately enough, the man of science believes in the existence of the quarks, despite their invisibility, but rejects God’s existence and His Son, by the means of which everyone is invited to join a partnership of eternal love! We can but admit for the fact that we have grown so fundamentally apart one from the other, at least in as far as certain life issues are concerned such as its origins, the meaning and purpose of life etc, especially because the field, the discipline supposed to harmonize all scientific researches ever made has died (Stephen HAWKING, 2012:5). Up to 1989, Philosophy, as this is the field referred to, used to provide materialist axioms which have been currently replaced by uncertainties only! Things couldn’t be otherwise since it feeds itself on the general tendencies manifested by humanity which witnesses and observes, quite helpless, that “philosophy has failed to keep up with the development of modern science, and especially with physics. In an attempt to better know the world, researchers have become the bearers of the torch of all scientific discoveries”(Stephen HAWKING, 2012: 5). And, given that every man of science is a specialist in a minute area from the entire field knowledge, it is understandable that they only state their opinion or launch a hypothesis which, from the very beginnings, can be attacked by subjectivism, reductionism, one-sidedness etc.

Philosophy is meant to process all these new data, all these scientific discoveries, to harmonize them and make an objective statement about one of the tiny areas conquered by researchers. We would

not be wrong to state that, through their work, the two authors intend to fill in this huge gap in philosophy. Regrettably, one needs to observe that their “eagerness” is hardly compensated for by “their skilfulness”, because they take up their endeavour from a materialistic stand! The questions raised and most likely to be reproved are numerous and cannot be listed in this paper. Given the scarcity of space, reference will be made only to a few.

A quite thorny issue is connected with the problem of the free-will which the two authors seem to be dealing with in quite a determinist fashion. It is a well known fact that, starting with Pierre-Simon, Marquis de Laplace (1749-1827), the issue of scientific determinism started to become into focus, which means that the entire universe has acted, acts and will act in keeping with scientific laws, which excludes all possible intervention on behalf of divinity. This is just one face of the deist perspective which has been circulating in the theological world and which sustains that God created the universe and then gave it laws to govern itself, and then God retreated someplace else. Both Hawking and Mlodinow, as well as a considerable number of the modern scientific community, partially embrace this perspective, as long as they exclude the existence of a creator, without being able to point to the origin of all scientific laws, or who passed them, and who calculated them so accurately, but most importantly how they have remained valid throughout times. As a matter of fact, they will reject any difference between the material and the spiritual world, and with reference to the action of scientific laws, both in the material and in the spiritual world, everything is subjected to the determinism of scientific laws. The matter in question is quite tricky enough since one should remark the protestant influence of the thesis on predestination. Both authors belong to a protestant cultural environment where they were born and brought up. Needless to mention that we do not intend to criticise anything, but, whether we like it or not, mention needs to be made to the fact that each and every one of us bears the print of the environment they were born and brought up in and perhaps this is where the beauty of the world we live in comes from; every human being is unique in their own way, distinguishing one from another, even if they are twins, because not only are they the unique work of art of their parents but also of their Creator! Through their work, or better said, hypothesis, the two authors no longer leave room for the Creator in the process of creation; everything is subjected to scientific determinism and God can no longer intervene.

Should things be like this, we can no longer speak of a History of the chosen people, we can no longer mention the Prophets, Moses, Jesus Christ, the Church etc because scientific determinism does not take leaps; in that case, we can no longer talk of man’s becoming. How can we account for the fact that there are some children who grow to be scientists and others who turn into illiterate grownups since scientific laws act the same at all times? The same question applies to all current scientific research in the field of genetics and neurologic activity. How could we explain, given the context of scientific determinism, the great conversions? Reputed scoundrels turned into saints, but the other way round too, special people turned into a laughing stock!!!

What is worth remembering, though, is connected to the fact that the latest discoveries in the field of quantum physics disagree with the thesis of scientific determinism. Related to this, let us mention the article Two experiments that prove that time can run backwards and future events can affect the past (for further information see the full article at <http://www.agerpres.ro/sci-tech/2015/06/17/doua-experimente-care-demonstreaza-ca-timpul-poate-merge-inapoi-si-ca-viitorul-poate-influenta-trecutul-02-15-09?ref=yfp>) which would justify our prayers for the deceased ones! And yet, the greatest proof of the groundlessness of scientific determinism is Richard Feynman’s work, a laureate physicist who was awarded the Nobel Prize for physics in 1965, and who by the means of his double slit-experiment proves that matter can be influenced by human consciousness (Physics Essays, 2012) .

Nonetheless, worth remembering is that, in their moments of sheer honesty, the two scientists acknowledge the limits of the researcher and of his existence. Accordingly, at a given moment, they admit that “in the case of quantum physics, scientists are still striving to understand the details of the way Newton’s laws appear in the quantum field”(Stephen HAWKING, 2012:55 ). Likewise, they state that “quantum physics is a new model for the reality which provides us with a picture of the universe. It is an image where many fundamental concepts of our intuitive understanding of reality no longer make sense” (Stephen HAWKING, 2012: 56). And yet, despite all that, he sustains that “the universe can be understood because it is governed by laws”, but he does not conceive of or accept any lawmaker!

Man's helplessness to understand that laws exist even before they are discovered, and that they have been there from the beginning of times, is quite terrible. The scientist discovers them one by one but he cannot fathom that he is far from having discovered them all. However, the most important thing is connected to the fact that all laws have an infinitesimal precision. The most insignificant change, in any law, entails a perturbation of the entire cosmic harmony. And to understand the meaning of scientific religiosity with Stephen Hawking and Leonard Mlodinow, it should only be enough to state that we are invited to have faith in their presentation, despite the fact that it can neither be proven nor true. For example, speaking about the so-called theories of the great unification, they sustain that the age of the universe is 10 to the 10th power, and protons "i.e. the matter we are made up from disintegrates itself after 10 to the 32nd power years"! If what they say is true, they do nothing but anticipate immortality, and should we want to make a critical analysis and systematically expose our arguments, then we reach the conclusion that they take us outside time!

We wind up our short survey of The Great Design by outlining, yet again, the Holy Trinity design on the latest existential reality. With reference to the quantum chromodynamics theory and to the fact that the proton, the neutron and many other particles of elementary matter are made up of quarks which have a remarkable feature which physicists name colour, the two authors make the following statement: "quarks can have three so called colours: red, green and blue. Moreover, every quark has an antiparticle partner and their colours are called anti-red, anti-green, anti-blue. The idea is that only those particles which are colourless can exist as free particles" and what is even more interesting "a colour and an anti-colour annul themselves reciprocally, so that a quark and an anti-quark form a colourless pair ... similarly, when all three colours combine, the result is colourless" (Stephen HAWKING, 2012:93).

## **5. PURPOSE OF THE STUDY**

For these two scientists it would be preferable to ground the design of the universe into fortuity, rather than assign it to a Wise Creator. Therein, they state the following: "our universe and its laws seem to be grounded into a design especially made to fit our existence and leave us some space for changes"(Stephen HAWKING, 2012:139). The fact that everything in this universe has a *raison d'être* and a logic, is the best proof that, beyond this reason and logic there is an Omniscient and All-Wise Being to set things in perfect harmony.

## **6. RESEARCH METHODS**

The research methods used in this presentation are textual and close analysis so that we convince ourselves that the exceptional fame which precedes these two men of science is above the logic of The Great Design.

## **7. FINDINGS**

The purpose of the current study is to convince ourselves that, should there be the case, we have been invited to discover Christianity as the most wonderful way of life, the highest dignity that a man can assent on earth: this is an invitation to a love partnership between Man and God, which means the same number of partnerships with all the people we meet in this life.

## **8. CONCLUSION**

We are convinced that nobody questions the authority and the scientific integrity of the two authors, or at least of the late Stephen Hawking. And yet, reference should be made to the fact that The Great Design only partially lives up to the fame of the author, particularly because he keeps on contradicting himself time and time again. Likewise, Stephen Hawking was the one to have disagreed with the theory of the black holes in the Universe to later become one of the most ardent believers in their existence, and even of their role!

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**METAPHORICAL INCOHERENCE OR WHAT**  
**MAY'S LETTER MAY MEAN**

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***Abstract***

The image we create about the surrounding reality is utterly subjective and that it is deeply and undoubtedly culturally dependant. There is a huge difference between the ‘real’ reality and our own version of it and this difference is generated by the multitude of filters that come into play when we process the ever growing amount of information that is constantly sent our way. The paper aims at analysing the potential metaphorical incoherence of the letter sent by Theresa May, the Prime Minister of the UK, to Donald Tusk, the President of the European Council, invoking Article 50 of the Lisbon Treaty. By means of specific analytical tools belonging to cognitive linguistics, we prove that not only the deep structure of the letter does not support the apparent message but it contradicts it significantly. The lexical inventory selected by the author of the text, such as the use of personal and possessive, along with the source domains used to conceptualise the target domains of ‘UK’, ‘EU’, or ‘negotiations’ clearly display a different perspective upon the relationship between the two protagonists of the UK’s withdrawal from the union than the one suggested by the obsessive phrase ‘a deep and special partnership’.

**Keywords:** conceptual metaphor; mapping; metaphorical (in)coherence; decoding;

**1. INTRODUCTION**

There has never been a more challenging time in human history that the present when it comes to analysing language as a cultural tool and/or phenomenon. Along with the never-ending usefulness of the Internet and social media, came also the unprecedented size of audience that a message can reach. A satisfactorily educated individual of the 21st century with a smart phone and a decent Internet connection could have a far greater impact in terms of number of people that get his/her message than Leonardo Da Vinci or Isaac Newton could have had when they were alive. Once we realise the endless manipulative potential of language from this perspective, the analysis of this aspect becomes exhilarating and frightening at the same time.

## **2. PROBLEM STATEMENT**

It is common knowledge that the image we create about the surrounding reality is utterly subjective and that it is deeply and undoubtedly culturally dependant. There is a huge difference between the 'real' reality and our own version of it and this difference is generated by the multitude of filters that come into play when we process the ever growing amount of information that is constantly sent our way. The same chunk of information might have numerous different interpretations according to each individual's family background, level of education, political partisanship, sexual orientation, religious beliefs, ethnic origin, wealth, age and/or gender (the list could go on). If we add to these the intentionality of the message and the possibly hidden agenda of the author, one would agree with the idea that such an analysis is not only worth doing but it is almost mandatory.

As we previously explained (Velicá, 2005), there is no real communication involved in the mass media (especially in the case of the news) as there is no real dialogue, no real sharing of ideas, no constructive feedback but only one-way feeding of pre-digested chunks of information that justifies one point of view or another or serves one interest of other. The same intention of placing a certain thought in the mind of the reader should be assumed in the case of political communication as well. There is no novelty in the perception that mass media are no longer free and independent and that, most often than not, they have in fact become instruments of opinion making, of political conversion or, to put it bluntly, of control and manipulation. Perhaps one of the best known voices supporting this idea is that of Avram Noam Chomsky's; the intimate relationship between meaning, power and language has been brilliantly dissected and explained in many of his books and studies (see Chomsky, 1988, 1989, 2001, 2002 and 2016). What we hope to be different in our paper is the fact that we approached the text under scrutiny from a combined Chomsky-Lakoff perspective, heavily lying on the cognitive metaphor's revealing power when understanding the meaning(s) of a message.

## **3. PURPOSE OF THE STUDY**

This paper comes as a continuation of an older interest of ours that we have in the matter of how language contributes to the way we are mapping our reality and how learning to decode some of its basic mechanisms might help us avoid being too easily manipulated. Our aim here is to place under the linguistic microscope the official letter triggering Article 50 that Theresa May, the British Prime Minister, wrote to Donald Tusk, the president of the European Council, a year after the vote, in order to decide whether she really means what she says in there.

Without trying to blow things out of proportions, we claim that this letter might prove to be as important as other famous official or personal documents that marked the British history such as King John's Magna Carta or Winston Churchill's Memoirs of the Second World War. Consequently, due to their significance, they should be analysed, explored and commented upon from as many perspectives as possible.

## **4. RESEARCH METHODS**

As already mentioned, our research was heavily based on G. Lakoff's theory of cognitive metaphor (Lakoff and Johnson, 1980) as we believe that if one manages to deliver a linguistically well-camouflaged message on a conscious level, it is not as easy to accomplish this on a deep-structure level where cognitive patterns function automatically according to psychological and biological givens. As Lakoff and Sebeok stated, we are physically conditioned to conceptualise the world from an erectile posture and to manipulate ideas with our hands, thus, operating with metal concepts as we would with real 3D objects.

We analysed the letter looking for cognitive patterns used to refer to the two major parties involved into this issue: the UK and the EU; we looked carefully at the use and connotations of the personal pronouns 'I', 'you' and 'we', the possessive adjectives 'my', 'our' and 'your' as well as the cognitive metaphors referring to the 'UK'/'United Kingdom' and the 'EU'/'European Union'. More precisely, we firstly identified all the instances of the pronoun 'we' and established which referred to the British people/Parliament and which referred to the two parties involved in the process; then, we applied

the same statistical method to the possessive 'our' identifying the instances when it pointed only at the British people and those when it referred to both sides of the partnership; thirdly, we focused on the cognitive patterns associated to the two political entities involved: the UK and the EU. Both of them were conceptualised as either ENTITIES/PEOPLE/ACTORS or OBJECTS/PLACES/CONTAINERS but in different proportions.

Further on, we looked at the types of cognitive patterns employed by the authors of this text: were they mainly ORIENTATIONAL, ONTOLOGICAL or STRUCTURAL? As the second conceptualise events, states, activities, emotions, ideas etc. as entities (persons) and substances; objects, containers and the third explain one complex concept in terms of another whose meaning is easier to grasp, the more complex the concepts you operate with, the more structural metaphors you will use.

Finally, we tried to establish the cognitive truth value of the almost obsessively used phrase 'deep and special partnership' employed seven times in a 5-page document. The fundamental question that we asked ourselves was: 'Did the author of this letter actually mean a fully equal and mutually beneficial relationship as this phrase might suggest?'

## **5. FINDINGS**

At the end of our research, we identified 66 instances of the personal pronoun 'we', 32 instances of the possessive adjective 'our', 15 instances of 'I/my' and only 3 instances of 'you/your', 38 mentions of the UK and 34 of the EU. Table 01 is showing these data and the corresponding percentages and rates.

Table 02 summarises the source domains used by the author of this text to metaphorically conceptualise the target domains of 'UK' and 'EU'; to put it differently, the author chose, consciously or not, to refer to these two entities, the UK and the EU, as either HUMAN or NONHUMAN by means of ontological metaphors. This table also shows that vast majority of the total 50 conceptual metaphorical patterns were either ONTOLOGICAL or ORIENTATIONAL whilst only 1 was STRUCTURAL which is quite significant in the context of our analysis.

It is worth remembering here that this letter is an official statement, issued by the Prime Minister of the UK on the behalf of the British Government that displays two primary functions: (i) to inform the EU officials that the UK, after the vote taken the previous year, decided to leave the European Union by invoking the famous Article 50 of the Lisbon Treaty which gives any member state the right to withdraw from the union and (ii) to clearly and firmly express the British Government's intention to have 'a deep and special partnership' with the EU. Well, the surface structure of the letter, the lexical choices and the tone of the letter seems to fully abide by the two functions above mentioned. However, if one goes deeper, towards the deep structure of the text, looking at the cognitive fabric of it, one will be surprised to discover that actually the letter might be saying something else about the way the author of this letter conceptualises the idea of partnership, the relations between the UK and the EU, the power balance between these two entities and ultimately the degree of importance assigned to them.

The phrase 'a deep and special partnership' appears 7 times in a 6-page letter; this frequency is a clear indicator of the fact that the Prime Minister really wants a strong partnership with the EU, based on equality and mutual trust. If we add to this the two formulas, 'Dear President Tusk' and 'Yours sincerely', that start and, respectively, end the letter which are in Theresa May's handwriting, we could easily agree that the willingness for an equal partnership is fair and genuine. Nonetheless, cognitive linguistics would disagree with this conclusion and we shall try to explain why. The first definition of the term 'partnership' suggested after a simple online search, explains the term as follows:

*'A relationship between individuals or groups that is characterised by mutual cooperation and responsibility, as for the achievement of a specified goal.'*

(American Heritage Dictionary of the English Language)

By any standards, an equal partnership should mean a 50% – 50% distribution of responsibilities and benefits, as the definition stipulates. The almost obsessively repeated 'deep and special partnership' does not enjoy the backup of the author's lexical choices as the personal pronoun 'we' is used twice as much with reference to the UK as it is used with reference to the UK&EU; furthermore, the possessive 'our' displays an opposite distribution as it is used almost two times more with reference to the UK&EU as it

is with reference to the UK only. In other words, ‘we’ (the UK and the EU) are partners but ‘we’ (the UK) are more important than ‘you’ (the EU); moreover, ‘our’ (the UK and the EU) responsibilities and things to do are equally great and difficult to achieve but ‘our’ (the UK) load in this endeavour is almost half of ‘yours’ (the EU). Theresa May is militating for equality and fairness but she makes direct personal reference to herself by using the personal pronoun ‘I’ five times more than she refers to her *equal partners to be* (‘you/your’). One more argument that could be added here is the higher frequency that the term ‘UK/United Kingdom’ in comparison with ‘EU/European Union’: 52.78% and, respectively, 47.22% (ironically enough, this ratio is almost a perfect mirror image of the vote percentages obtained in June 2016).

Table 01. Frequency of identifiers

<b>we (UK)</b>	<b>we (UK&amp;EU)</b>	<b>our (UK)</b>	<b>our (UK&amp;EU)</b>	<b>I/my</b>	<b>you/your (EU)</b>	<b>UK</b>	<b>EU</b>
44	22	12	21	15	3	38	34
66.67%	33.33%	37.5%	62.5%	5 times more numerous	5 times less numerous	52.78%	47.22 %

The cognitive unbalance is also to be found in the case of the metaphorical concepts used by the author of the letter when conceptualising the two protagonists of the alleged ‘deep and special partnership’. Thus, the UK is conceptualised, by means of cognitive patters such as COUNTRIES ARE ENTITIE/PEOPLE/ACTORS, as HUMAN in 63.15% of the cases whilst the EU is perceived as HUMAN in only 47% of the cases. If we add to this the fact that in the majority of cases, the source domain used in the ontological metaphors to explain the target concept of EU is that of OBJECT, PLACE or CONTAINER, one could agree that there might be a deliberate attempt of dehumanizing the EU in the eyes of the reader while putting the UK across as a knight in a shining armour which, as N. Chomsky (1997) plainly said, is one of the basic contemporary manipulation techniques.

Table 02. Ways of conceptualising

<b>UK</b>		<b>EU</b>		<b>COGNITIVE PATTERNS</b>	
<b>HUMAN</b>	<b>NONHUMAN</b>	<b>HUMAN</b>	<b>NONHUMAN</b>	<b>ONTOLOGICAL/ ORIENTATIONAL</b>	<b>STRUCTURAL</b>
24	14	16	18	49	1
63.15%	36.85%	47%	53%	98%	2%

Besides synthesising the findings above mentioned, Table 02 brings something else into the limelight: the only STRUCTURAL metaphor (the most complex type of cognitive metaphors which is used to explain a too intricate concept by a more easily graspable one) used by Theresa May is when she expresses her concerns about the rights of the people, suggesting that ‘we should aim to strike an early agreement.’ The cognitive pattern her is NEGOTIATION IS WAR which speaks volumes about the cabinet’s intention of approaching the ‘deep and special partnership’ mentioned more than 1 time/page. In other words, the only concept that, in the author’s perspective was worthy of a STRUCTURAL metaphor was not that of *equality, partnership, people’s rights*, etc. but that of *negotiation*, and even so, not in the friendliest terms.

## 6. CONCLUSION

Our conclusion, after applying a cognitive linguistic analysis to the text of the letter sent by Theresa May to the President of the European Council is that there is a significant metaphorical incoherence between what the apparent message claims, i.e. the UK is working towards a ‘deep and special partnership’ with the EU, and what the conceptual patterns present in the deep structure of the text



suggest about the British officials' perception of this 'partnership'. In other words, the Prime Minister comes to the table of negotiations carrying the flag of equality and shared responsibility but her mind set seems to be one of superiority and utter lack of consideration for the other side. As is the case with any politically important document and/or message, everything is about how reality is perceived and in the organisation of such texts nothing is random. The way we shape our reality is most often than not heavily influenced by texts like the one under scrutiny here; therefore, understanding the potential *hidden* meanings of such a text is of paramount importance (Velică, 2006).

#### **Annex 1**

On 23 June last year, the people of the United Kingdom voted to leave the European Union. As I have said before, that decision was no rejection of the values we share as fellow Europeans. Nor was it an attempt to do harm to the European Union or any of the remaining member states. On the contrary, the United Kingdom wants the European Union to succeed and prosper. Instead, the referendum was a vote to restore, as we see it, our national self-determination. We are leaving the European Union, but we are not leaving Europe – and we want to remain committed partners and allies to our friends across the continent.

Earlier this month, the United Kingdom Parliament confirmed the result of the referendum by voting with clear and convincing majorities in both of its Houses for the European Union (Notification of Withdrawal) Bill. The Bill was passed by Parliament on 13 March and it received Royal Assent from Her Majesty The Queen and became an Act of Parliament on 16 March.

Today, therefore, I am writing to give effect to the democratic decision of the people of the United Kingdom. I hereby notify the European Council in accordance with Article 50(2) of the Treaty on European Union of the United Kingdom's intention to withdraw from the European Union. In addition, in accordance with the same Article 50(2) as applied by Article 106a of the Treaty Establishing the European Atomic Energy Community, I hereby notify the European Council of the United Kingdom's intention to withdraw from the European Atomic Energy Community. References in this letter to the European Union should therefore be taken to include a reference to the European Atomic Energy Community.

This letter sets out the approach of Her Majesty's Government to the discussions we will have about the United Kingdom's departure from the European Union and about the deep and special partnership we hope to enjoy – as your closest friend and neighbour – with the European Union once we leave. We believe that these objectives are in the interests not only of the United Kingdom but of the European Union and the wider world too.

It is in the best interests of both the United Kingdom and the European Union that we should use the forthcoming process to deliver these objectives in a fair and orderly manner, and with as little disruption as possible on each side. We want to make sure that Europe remains strong and prosperous and is capable of projecting its values, leading in the world, and defending itself from security threats. We want the United Kingdom, through a new deep and special partnership with a strong European Union, to play its full part in achieving these goals. We therefore believe it is necessary to agree the terms of our future partnership alongside those of our withdrawal from the European Union.

The Government wants to approach our discussions with ambition, giving citizens and businesses in the United Kingdom and the European Union – and indeed from third countries

around the world – as much certainty as possible, as early as possible.

I would like to propose some principles that may help to shape our coming discussions, but before I do so, I should update you on the process we will be undertaking at home, in the United Kingdom.

#### **The process in the United Kingdom**

As I have announced already, the Government will bring forward legislation that will repeal the Act of Parliament – the European Communities Act 1972 – that gives effect to EU law in our country. This legislation will, wherever practical and appropriate, in effect convert the body of existing European Union law (the "acquis") into UK law. This means there will be certainty for UK citizens and for anybody from the European Union who does business in the United Kingdom. The Government will consult on how we design and implement this legislation, and we will publish a White Paper tomorrow. We also intend to bring forward several other pieces of legislation that address specific issues relating to our departure from the European Union, also with a view to ensuring continuity and certainty, in particular for businesses. We will of course continue to fulfil our responsibilities as a member state while we remain a member of the European Union, and the legislation we propose will not come into effect until we leave.

From the start and throughout the discussions, we will negotiate as one United Kingdom, taking due account of the specific interests of every nation and region of the UK as we do so. When it comes to the return of powers back to the United Kingdom, we will consult fully on which powers should reside in Westminster and which should be devolved to Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland. But it is the expectation of the Government that the outcome of this process will be a significant increase in the decision-making power of each devolved administration.

#### **Negotiations between the United Kingdom and the European Union**

The United Kingdom wants to agree with the European Union a deep and special partnership that takes in both economic and security cooperation. To achieve this, we believe it is necessary to agree the terms of our future partnership alongside those of our withdrawal from the EU.

If, however, we leave the European Union without an agreement the default position is that we would have to trade on World Trade Organisation terms. In security terms a failure to reach agreement would mean our cooperation in the fight against crime and terrorism would be weakened. In this kind of scenario, both the United Kingdom and the European Union would of course cope with the change, but it is not the outcome that either side should seek. We must therefore work hard to avoid that outcome.

It is for these reasons that we want to be able to agree a deep and special partnership, taking in both economic and security cooperation, but it is also because we want to play our part in making sure that Europe remains strong and prosperous and

able to lead in the world, projecting its values and defending itself from security threats. And we want the United Kingdom to play its full part in realising that vision for our continent.

**Proposed principles for our discussions**

Looking ahead to the discussions which we will soon begin, I would like to suggest some principles that we might agree to help make sure that the process is as smooth and successful as possible.

**i. We should engage with one another constructively and respectfully, in a spirit of sincere cooperation**

Since I became Prime Minister of the United Kingdom I have listened carefully to you, to my fellow EU Heads of Government and the Presidents of the European Commission and Parliament. That is why the United Kingdom does not seek membership of the single market: we understand and respect your position that the four freedoms of the single market are indivisible and there can be no “cherry picking”. We also understand that there will be consequences for the UK of leaving the EU: we know that we will lose influence over the rules that affect the European economy. We also know that UK companies will, as they trade within the EU, have to align with rules agreed by institutions of which we are no longer a part – just as UK companies do in other overseas markets.

**ii. We should always put our citizens first**

There is obvious complexity in the discussions we are about to undertake, but we should remember that at the heart of our talks are the interests of all our citizens. There are, for example, many citizens of the remaining member states living in the United Kingdom, and UK citizens living elsewhere in the European Union, and we should aim to strike an early agreement about their rights.

**iii. We should work towards securing a comprehensive agreement**

We want to agree a deep and special partnership between the UK and the EU, taking in both economic and security cooperation. We will need to discuss how we determine a fair settlement of the UK’s rights and obligations as a departing member state, in accordance with the law and in the spirit of the United Kingdom’s continuing partnership with the EU. But we believe it is necessary to agree the terms of our future partnership alongside those of our withdrawal from the EU.

**iv. We should work together to minimise disruption and give as much certainty as possible**

Investors, businesses and citizens in both the UK and across the remaining 27 member states – and those from third countries around the world – want to be able to plan. In order to avoid any cliff-edge as we move from our current relationship to our future partnership, people and businesses in both the UK and the EU would benefit from implementation periods to adjust in a smooth and orderly way to new arrangements. It would help both sides to minimise unnecessary disruption if we agree this principle early in the process.

**v. In particular, we must pay attention to the UK’s unique relationship with the Republic of Ireland and the importance of the peace process in Northern Ireland**

The Republic of Ireland is the only EU member state with a land border with the United Kingdom. We want to avoid a return to a hard border between our two countries, to be able to maintain the Common Travel Area between us, and to make sure that the UK’s withdrawal from the EU does not harm the Republic of Ireland. We also have an important responsibility to make sure that nothing is done to jeopardise the peace

process in Northern Ireland, and to continue to uphold the Belfast Agreement.

**vi. We should begin technical talks on detailed policy areas as soon as possible, but we should prioritise the biggest challenges**

Agreeing a high-level approach to the issues arising from our withdrawal will of course be an early priority. But we also propose a bold and ambitious Free Trade Agreement between the United Kingdom and the European Union. This should be of greater scope and ambition than any such agreement before it so that it covers sectors crucial to our linked economies such as financial services and network industries. This will require detailed technical talks, but as the UK is an existing EU member state, both sides have regulatory frameworks and standards that already match. We should therefore prioritise how we manage the evolution of our regulatory frameworks to maintain a fair and open trading environment, and how we resolve disputes. On the scope of the partnership between us – on both economic and security matters – my officials will put forward detailed proposals for deep, broad and dynamic cooperation.

**vii. We should continue to work together to advance and protect our shared European values**

Perhaps now more than ever, the world needs the liberal, democratic values of Europe. We want to play our part to ensure that Europe remains strong and prosperous and able to lead in the world, projecting its values and defending itself from security threats.

**The task before us**

As I have said, the Government of the United Kingdom wants to agree a deep and special partnership between the UK and the EU, taking in both economic and security cooperation. At a time when the growth of global trade is slowing and there are signs that protectionist instincts are on the rise in many parts of the world, Europe has a responsibility to stand up for free trade in the interest of all our citizens. Likewise, Europe’s security is more fragile today than at any time since the end of the Cold War. Weakening our cooperation for the prosperity and protection of our citizens would be a costly mistake. The United Kingdom’s objectives for our future partnership remain those set out in my Lancaster House speech of 17 January and the subsequent White Paper published on 2 February.

We recognise that it will be a challenge to reach such a comprehensive agreement within the two-year period set out for withdrawal discussions in the Treaty. But we believe it is necessary to agree the terms of our future partnership alongside those of our withdrawal from the EU. We start from a unique position in these discussions – close regulatory alignment, trust in one another’s institutions, and a spirit of cooperation stretching back decades. It is for these reasons, and because the future partnership between the UK and the EU is of such importance to both sides, that I am sure it can be agreed in the time period set out by the Treaty.

The task before us is momentous but it should not be beyond us. After all, the institutions and the leaders of the European Union have succeeded in bringing together a continent blighted by war into a union of peaceful nations, and supported the transition of dictatorships to democracy. Together, I know we are capable of reaching an agreement about the UK’s rights and obligations as a departing member state, while establishing a deep and special partnership that contributes towards the prosperity, security and global power of our continent.

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**THE SACRED AS A PRIORI ELEMENT IN THE “STRUCTURE OF  
CONSCIOUSNESS”**

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***Abstract***

In this paper, I attempt to interpret one of the fundamental theses of phenomenology of religion, which states that “the sacred is part of the structure of consciousness” (Eliade). For archaic man, something can be acknowledged as real only if it possesses the determination of sacred. The category of sacred is, in fact, the determination that gives the possibility of something to be acknowledged as real. Eliade’s concept of sacred can be understood through the categories of reality (Kant) and being (Heidegger). With this starting point, we can consider that the cognitive science undertaking of religion cannot ignore what phenomenology of religion ultimately claims in reference to the sacred: it is a unifying principle and an objective reality.

**Keywords:** sacred; Dasein; a priori; real – reality; unifying principle;

**1. INTRODUCTION**

In the specialised literature, the attempts at bringing Eliade closer to the cognitive perspective of understanding the religious experience succeed in concluding that “Eliade’s understanding can be seen as complementary to recent cognitive theory, which demonstrates the coherence of that understanding” (Rennie, 2007). The same author asserted in *Reconstructing Eliade. Making Sense of Religion* that “Eliade’s thought is systematic, its internal elements referring to, being supported by, and reciprocally supporting its other elements. The rejection of any one element, for whatever reason, can then result in a rejection of the whole” (Rennie, 1996, 3).

The sacred, in Mircea Eliade’s view, is part of the structure of consciousness – this is, in my opinion, Eliade’s most important statement, which is the foundation of his entire epistemology and which can be cognitively valorised. My hypothesis, which I am trying to reason in this paper, using the tools of Philosophy is that, being a fundamental element in the structure of consciousness, the sacred can be assimilated with an a priori structure of experience and knowledge in general, in the sense defined by Kant – necessary and universal.

This is to say that experience, in the case of homo religiosus – the religious experience emerges at the encounter between this a priori structure and the matter received through senses. Henceforth, the

whole phenomenological epistemology which describes several fundamental concepts (religious phenomenon, religious experience, religious symbol, the sacred-profane dialectic) depends on the understanding of the sacred as an element in the structure of consciousness.

## 2. PRESENCE-AT-HAND, EXISTENCE, REALITY

In Kant's view, *Dasein* equates existence and refers to the way things are in nature; it corresponds to the scholastic term *existentia*. In Heidegger's case, the equivalent term is "present-at-hand" (Germ. *Vorhandenheit*). In Husserl's work, one identifies the same Kantian equivalence: *Dasein*: being present. For Kant, existence is the things' being in nature, for Heidegger, existence is *Dasein*'s being-there. In Heideggerian terminology, a body never *exists*, but is *present-at-hand*. Instead, *Dasein*, i.e. ourselves, is never present-at-hand, but exists.

Both the Kantian concept of *Dasein* and Heidegger's *presence-at-hand* must be discerned from the Kantian and scholastic concept of *reality*. Reality with Kant does not signify what is currently understood by the reality of the outer world.

The understanding of Kant's thesis depends on the understanding of his concept of reality: the being is not a real predicate – I will refer to this Kantian matter with profound scholastic roots in order to be able to further clarify the concept of sacred.

If we follow Heidegger's analysis closely, important for this context is the reference made to Thomas Aquinas's text *De veritate*, in which the scholastic theologian asserts, against the ontological proof of God and similarly to Kant, much later, that the being is not a real predicate: "For something to be known in itself, i.e. understood starting from itself, it is only required that the predicate, which is uttered about the respective existence, to be one of *ratio subjecti*, i.e. to belong to the concept of subject (Thomas Aquinas, *De veritate*, chap. 10). Starting from this point, Heidegger establishes the equivalence:

Ratio = essentia = nature = Reality,

and asserts that "the subject cannot be thought of without that something that is shown in the predicate. But in order to acquire such knowledge, that Kant was to name later analytic knowledge – which equates with unmediated getting its determinations out of the substance of an object – it is necessary for us to know *ratio subjecti*, i.e. the concept of the thing" (Heidegger, 2006, 66).

Kant argues the ontological argument, asserting that existence, *Vorhandensein*, in Heideggerian terminology, is not among the determinations of a concept. The structure of the Kantian argument is briefly outlined below:

*About existence in general*, with the theses:

1. Existence is by no means a predicate or a determination of a thing;
2. Existence is the absolute position of a thing and by this is different from any predicate which is placed every time, only relatively to another object.

3. Can I possibly assert that there is much more than mere possibility in existence? In other words, is existence the effectiveness of a thing, the completion of its possibility?

In *Critique of Pure Reason*, the first thesis is formulated by Kant as follows: "Being is obviously not a real predicate, that is, it is not a concept about something that could be added to the concept of a thing" (Kant, 2009, 459), it is merely "positing of a thing or of certain determinations in themselves". Heidegger reads "real predicate" as "predicate of a *res*": "our question must be more precisely shaped: Is existence a real predicate, or, as Kant says in brief, a determination? Determination, he says, is a predicate which is added *to* the concept of subject and goes beyond it, thus increasing it. The determination, the predicate, does not have to be contained in the concept. Determination is a real predicate which increases the thing, *res*, from the point of view of the content (Heidegger, 2006, 70).

Kant's concept of reality is not the same with effectiveness, existence, or *Vorhandensein*. Reality is the determination of the thing as *res*, real is that which belongs to *res*, and Heidegger goes as far as he assimilates the Kantian concept of reality with the Platonic concept of *ἰδέα* (the concept of what the thing is, what scholastics terms *res*).

### 3. SACRED, REAL, INTENTIONALITY

Powerful and effective, alive and real, true and significant, exemplary and creator, original, enduringness, eternal, organised, orderly, prestigious, supernatural, above-human, transcendent, absolute, divine, mysterious, “the one completely other” – this is the semantic field of the concept of sacred. Eliade aimed, in *The Myth of the Eternal Return*, at studying aspects of archaic ontology, “the conceptions of being and reality that can be read from the behaviour of man of the premodern societies” (Eliade, 1999, 11), concluding that real becomes an object or an act insofar it *mimics* or *repeats* an archetype. For the archaic man, reality is exclusively acquired by repetition and participation in an archetype, in an exemplary model, in the sacred – because “the sacred is the real par excellence, it is power, effectiveness, the source of life and fecundity.

Religious man’s desire to live *in the sacred* is, in fact, his desire to position himself in objective reality, not to let himself be paralysed by the endless relativity of the purely subjective experiences, to live in a real and effective world, and not in an illusion. (Eliade, 2000, 24-25). The sacred is, in the end, equivalent to *reality*; it is saturated with *being*: “Sacred power means reality, enduringness and efficiency. The sacred-profane dichotomy is understood as an opposition between *real* and *unreal* or *pseudo-real* (...) Thus religious man’s desire to be, to participate in reality, to be saturated with power is perfectly natural” (Eliade, 2000, 14).

The structure of this archaic ontology is proven with facts which demonstrate the mechanism of traditional thinking and which “help us understand *how* and *why* an object becomes *real* for man of premodern societies (Eliade, 1999, 13). In this research, Eliade explicitly considers the facts that prove that, for archaic man, *reality* is function of mimicking a celestial archetype, and facts which show us how *reality* is bestowed on by participation in “the Centre’s symbolism: cities, temples, dwellings become real because they are assimilated to the “Centre of the World” (Eliade, 1999, 13).

In many parts in his work, Eliade asserts the intentional nature of the sacred in the construction of the religious experience of the archaic man and of the religious man in general, as well as the transcendent nature of this concept, understood as a universal structure of a religion, of any religion: “Religion entails a mode of man’s being in the world, in which there is an intentional, irreducible, unique relation to the sacred experienced as transcendent. Eliade equates the sacred with the real as an intentional object of faith” (Allen, 2011, 104-105).

### 4. THE SACRED – AN A PRIORI FORM OF UNITY

When the archaic man says that “the mountain is sacred”, this does not mean that it is *present-at-hand*. The sacred in Eliade’s view signifies existence, reality, and not presence-at-hand. The phrase “the mountain is sacred” is intended to say that “the mountain is real”. How does Eliade understand the meaning of this utterance and on what grounds? The religious utterance is that utterance by which the intellect relates something along the lines of the presence-at-hand to something authentic, real, perennial, and powerful. The sacred nature of the mountain is that determination of the concept, in the sense that *this* determination is a real predicate that increases the thing, *res*, from the point of view of its contents. Not only does this statement have gnoseological value, not only is it a synthetic judgement, but it possesses an ontological value of world constitution, in that it expresses the way in which the archaic man invests the presence-at-hand with reality.

This is the reason why not only is the sacred determination descriptive, but it also speaks of the *res* nature of things, that is, of the being of the things that make up the world of the traditional man and, implicitly, of this world as a whole. This human type, when constructing according to the archetypal patterns, in fact, constitutes and consecrates a world in its entirety: “any world is a *sacred world* for religious man” (Eliade, 2000, 25).

The constitution and consecration mechanism described by Eliade emphasises the intentional, i.e. the *a priori* nature of the sacred; however, considering that the constitution process is one of founding the world (of bringing the world into *being*), Eliade “presents a conception on religion based on the experience of the sacred, a structure of consciousness and a way of being in the world which always reveals a sense of transcendence” (Allen, 2011, 107).

Maybe it is worth mentioning that Eliade himself noted that the traditional man's way of regarding the world is a Platonic one, at the risk of emphasising it in favour of an undifferentiated ontologism. In truth, the historian of religions notes that we deal with a 'primitive' ontological conception, in the sense that "an object or an act becomes real only insofar as it *imitates* or *repeats* an archetype. Thus, *reality* is acquired solely through *repetition* or *participation*. Everything that lacks an exemplary model is "depleted of meaning", that is, devoid of reality. Man would, then, tend to become archetypal and paradigmatic. This tendency may seem paradoxical, in that man of the traditional cultures acknowledges himself as *real* only to the extent that he ceases being himself (for a modern observer) and is content with *imitating* and *repeating somebody else's* gestures. In other words, he acknowledges himself as *real*, that is, as 'truly himself' only insofar as he ceases to be so. It could be said that this "primitive" ontology has a Platonic structure and that Plato could be considered, in this case, the philosopher of 'primitive mentality' par excellence, as if the thinker succeeded in giving philosophical validity to the modes of life and behaviour of archaic mentality" (Eliade, 1999, 38).

Although Eliade notes that the acknowledgement of the Platonic nature of archaic ontology does not make us go too far, I think it is important to stress that Heidegger's assimilation of the Kantian concept of reality with the Platonic one of *ἰδέα* is not irrelevant for the purpose of this paper, that is, for explaining the role of the concept of sacred in the architecture of Eliade's epistemology, and for my argument that the sacred can be assimilated with an *a priori* structure, in Kantian sense, one that constitutes the world. In Plato's case, *ἰδέα* is the real, it carries the entire being and determines the steadfast nature of knowledge.

Knowledge must be knowledge of what is true and steadfast and, thereby, real, because man, in Plato's view, only knows what is eternal and indestructible – that is, *ἰδέα*, which (in Heidegger's terminology) makes the emergence of any 'essent' (*das Seiende*, what is) in its aspect (*εἶδος*). Plato's *ἰδέα* is that which, similarly to Kant's concept of reality, has the same meaning, "apparent when, while referring to an essent, we wonder: τί ἐστὶ, *what* is the essent? The answer is provided by the content (the what) of what the thing is, a content that scholastics termed *res*" (Heidegger, 2006, 71).

If we have so far succeeded in assimilating, by their essence, the concepts of *ἰδέα* (Plato), reality (Kant) and sacred (Eliade), the argument should be taken further in order to highlight the fact that each one of them is, equally, a form of the unity of being. *Ἰδέα*, as being of essent, is that which brings together – it is *λόγος*, in the sense of a "steady and constant binding together" (Heidegger, 1999, 173). Kant's categories are, in their turn, forms of unity of the possible unifications in judgements, and reality (content of *res*), as category of quality, is one of them, as a form of unity of affirmative, positive judgement (Heidegger, 2006, 71). If the sacred is part of the structure of consciousness, then we are allowed to construe it the way we construe the *ἰδέα* unifying the logos in Plato's case or the way in which the concept of reality is considered a form of unity by Kant.

The function of the category of sacred is that of binding together. It is for archaic man the unity principle which, irrespective of the name it receives in various premodern cultures, has a function. The sacred is the unifying and organising principle of reality. When Kant speaks of the totality of realities, he does not refer to the totality of the things actually present; on the contrary, he refers to the totality of the possible determination of *res*, to the totality of the contents of *res*, and to the totality of the things possible. Analogically, the sacred is that totality of the real, the unifying principle of totalities. For the religious man, something can be acknowledged as thing only insofar as it possesses the sacred determination, that is, this principle of unity that places things in the reality of the sacred world.

## **5. CONCLUSIONS**

When the archaic man's existence ('being-there') is bound by a "this or that thing is sacred" type of judgement, two conclusions could be drawn: 1. "any binding or unification takes place from the perspective of a possible unity" (Heidegger, 2006, 73), and 2. This reality (the sacred) is the only determination acknowledged as necessary by the archaic man for the thing – *res* nature of the bound existence. In the table of the Kantian categories, the sacred as a unifying principle of things, assimilated with reality, is part of the categories of quality. By virtue of this proposition, Heidegger's analysis brings

the reasons why Eliade's perspective has a Platonic nature to the fore (Heidegger, 2006, 71) and, more importantly, why certain commenters critiqued as being theologizing. These critiques aside, perhaps the present attempt succeeds in explaining why the sacred is not affirmed, in Eliade's case, as an autonomous reality, but rather, in Kantian terminology, as an a priori category, in order to indicate the objective unity of the world as the religious man's sacred reality.

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## **MCDSARE: 2018**

### **International Multidisciplinary Scientific Conference on the Dialogue between Sciences & Arts, Religion & Education**

#### **THE LIVING CHURCH OF BRĂILA DEANERY DURING THE GERMAN OCCUPATION DURING THE GREAT WAR, REFLECTED IN ARCHIVE DOCUMENTS**

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#### ***Abstract***

Between 23rd December 1916 - 10th November 1918, Braila lived the terror and drama of life under the German occupation. Over the centuries that have passed since then, few have been bent on the events of that period, and when they did, they focused on the aspects of the military situation and of the social, economic, albeit ecclesiastical life, though in those times of bitter suffering and humiliation, the role of priests, on the front, or in the parishes, was an extremely important one, since they were called to relieve suffering, to encourage souls, to cultivate hope, in a word to raise morale to their faithful. In the few pages where some historians have referred to Braila's situation during the German occupation, information on religious life is extremely low, and is presented tangentially, not for their intrinsic value, but to reinforce statements about other issues. The present study aims, on the basis of the archive documents of those years, kept in the custody of the Brăila Deanery, to address this shortcoming and to present the involvement of priests and churchmen from this cause in the war effort of the Romanian army, the main lines of liturgical, missionary, spiritual and cultural activities they have carried out among their parishioner, and last but not least, their social situation and their families during the Great War.

**Keywords:** Great Union; First World War; German Occupation; Church Life; Military Confessor; Braila;

## **1. INTRODUCTION**

### **Braila and the promoting of the Romanian national unity ideal**

The tradition of the good relations of Braila with the Romanians beyond the mountains, confirmed in 1368, January 20th, by the documentary act issued by the ruler Vlaicu Voda, granting some commercial privileges to the merchants of Brasov (Giurescu, 2002, p.44; Căndea, 1995, p.127), developed over the centuries by merchants and by the shepherds over the mountains that descended with the sheep to winter in the plane of Braila, made the Danube town not to be alien and indifferent to the

unionist struggle of the Romanian elites that militated for the accomplishment of Great Romania by the beginning of the twentieth century both sides of the Carpathians. On the contrary, the intellectual elite in the "Acacia town on the Danube" has intensively promoted and supported the unionist cause through cultural, artistic and political manifestations. Thus, since 1891, the Transylvanian Professor Ion Corneliu Tacit, who taught history and geography at the real Gymnasium in the city, set up in Braila "The League for the Cultural Unity of All Romanians"(Marinescu, 1998, p.286). The Braila branch of this organization was to be extremely active during the period of neutrality, by militating, through public meetings and actions, for Romania's entry into war in order to liberate Transylvania and Bucovina (Marinescu, 1998, p.283), being regarded as "one of the most active centres for the struggle for completing national unity"(Buculei, 1980, p.433). In this respect, on April 19th, 1916, lawyer Traian Ţino asked the Braila City Hall to exempt from paying the taxes a cultural and artistic celebration to be held on May 15th with the aim of raising funds to help the Romanians in Transylvania (Mocioiu & Bounegru & Iavorschi & Vidis, 2018, p.155). After the withdrawal of the Romanian troops from Transylvania, many families of Transylvanian Romanians were received and housed in Braila, some of them being even found jobs that would ensure their everyday living (Marinescu, 1998, p.286; Buculei, 1980, p.440).

In this context, the enlistment and departure of the recruited troops from the city was made in an atmosphere of general enthusiasm, surprisingly rendered in the verses of a Braila writer participating in the Dobrudja campaign: "From the dwelling, the tug moved with a prop, And suddenly, everywhere, the triumphant ovations / Cross in the air with the rain of petals / Thrown over the barges by the crowd that remains"(Perpessicius, 2016, p.23).

The general enthusiasm, not only of the Braila people, but of all the Romanians, would soon transform into a real nightmare as a result of the Romanian army's defeats in front of the allied armies of the Central Powers, occupying Dobrudja and Muntenia, pushing the front up to the lower Siret line.

On December 23rd, 1916, January 5th, 1917, Braila was occupied by the Central Powers troops, in the town and rural villages surrounding the cavalry division commanded by the German Count von der Goltz, made up of ten thousand Germans, Turkishes, Bulgarians, Austrians and Hungarians (Giurescu, 2002, p.256; Semilian, 2007, p.151; Petrovici, 1939, p.28). Being in the immediate vicinity of the front line, throughout the occupation, Braila "enjoyed" an exceptionally severe regime of true terror, maintained by requisitions, the prohibition of elementary rights, the rationalization of food and all commodities, propaganda, threats and punishments of the most drastic.

## **2. PROBLEM STATEMENT**

### **The Braila Deanery under the German Occupation**

During the German occupation, the Orthodox clergy had the difficult task of morally supporting the population, confronted with material shortages of all kinds, poverty, illnesses, requisitions of the German army, abuses, terror of war, bombings, prohibitions and constraints all sorts, with the rationalizations of food imposed by the Germans, the priests themselves, with their families, being confronted with the same problems.

#### **a. Administrative-church situation**

The administrative activity of the Deanery and the sacramental-liturgical and missionary-pastoral work of the priests in the deanery were carefully monitored and supervised by the Imperial German Command, that almost any church activity required the approval of the Germans. For this reason, the correspondence between Ilie Didicescu, on the one hand, and the Prefecture and Braila City Hall, on the other hand, was daily.

From this correspondence it appears that the appointment of priests in parishes, their transfer or appointment to substitution could not be achieved only with the blessing of the bishop, the approval of the German commander of the city being mandatory(A.B.D., 1917, file 1, tabs 7, 13, 14; 1918, file 1, tab 13). Also, the acceptance of provisional substitution of some parishes or of some sections of urban parishes by refugee priests could not be made without the consent of the representative of the occupation army(A.B.D., 1917, file 1, tab 7, 14). Even the payment offices of clerical and non-clerical staff were endorsed by the German Command's representative( A.B.D., 1918, file 1, tabs 190, 231, 291-295).

In order to understand how strictly the control of the German occupier was on the activity of the Braila Deanery, it is of little importance that the ministry was obliged to draw up an activity report on a monthly basis and forward it to the Imperial German Command (A.B.D., 1918, file 1, tabs 1, 12).

Since after the fall of the night, both public and domestic lighting was forbidden, on March 29th, 1917, the Rector Didicescu asked the Mayor to ask the German Command if the Hours of the Vigils Service may be committed from 18.00 in the evening and the Resurrection at 24.00, and if the bells and the ham may be tolled and if the services may be done with the lights on (A.B.D., 1917, file 1, tab 65). Although there is no answer to this request, we can assume that this was a negative one, since in the following year, in the address of 19th April 1918, the Rector Didicescu invoked the positive settlement of his "peace of mind" claim (A.B.D., 1918, file 1, tab 49). This time, churches have been granted the permission to toll the hams all wood or iron throughout the Holly Week and the Feast of the Holy Resurrection (A.B.D., 1918, file 1, tab 49).

The churches did not escape from the requisites made by the Germans, being aimed at the bells, candles and even the remains of wax left from candle burning. In this respect, on May 11th, 1917, at the request of the German Command the City Hall requested a report on the number of bells of each church in the city, the metal from which they were cast and whether they had historical or artistic value, and one day later they asked for the inventory of the candles and candle scraps held by each church (A.B.D., 1917, file 1, tabs 112-113). On May 22nd, through Address 1195, the German Command issued an order for the requisition of the great bells from the churches of "Saint Nicholas", "Saint George", "The Holy Emperors", „The Holy Archangels", the Greek, the Catholic, the Armenian, the Lipovan and the Evangelical. These were left just a middle bell, but they renounced the requisition of the candles because the quantities were insignificant (A.B.D., 1917, file 1, tabs 116-117). In order to save the great bell of "The Holy Apostles' Church" from the requisition, the priest Stephen Bărzănescu presented to the City Hall a report showing that the bell "is of artistic value undeniable by the height, strength and harmony of its sound", that it was manufactured at Munich, that it serves also for the clocks of the clock in the tower and that its dismantling would lead to the deterioration of the tower, instead offering the smaller bell from the other tower (Mocioiu & Bounegru & Iavorschi & Vidis, 2018, p.539). In exchange for the bell, in the spring of 1918 the Germans unveiled the bronze tin church with which it was covered, right during the *Te Deum* service, which marked the conclusion of peace at Buftea-Bucharest (A.B.D., 1918, file 1, tab 412; Petrovici, 1939, p.48; Giurescu, 2002, p.257).

#### **b. The mission of the priests during the occupation**

The role played by the Braila priests, who understood not to take refuge in the territory controlled by the Romanian army, but to bear with their parishioners the deprivations of all kinds of life under foreign occupation, was an extraordinarily important one, a fact confirmed by the testimonies of those who lived at that time, and the attitude of the German occupant.

The Germans paid attention and showed openness to the religious needs of the Christians in the city, understanding to allow the commission of religious services, and not to impede the great participation of Christians in these services, in the context in which they forbade meetings of any kind in the city. In fact, even the Germans organized several religious concerts in the Greek church of the city, attended by German officers and "the entire Greek colony in Braila" (Petrovici, 1939, p.92).

In turn, some Bulgarian officers participated in the Sunday services performed in the churches of Braila, their presence in churches, besides the religious motivation, which we cannot exclude altogether, with certainty an important military motivation, because they could know the state of the spirit of the population, the degree of dissatisfaction with the occupation regime, the messages sent by the priests in this respect. Thus, following a sermon at the celebration of the Epiphany of the year 1918 by priest Grigore Balaban from the "Holy Emperors" church, the Bulgarian officers present at the service complained to the German Command, accusing him of insulting the Bulgarian army as he affirmed that the Bulgarians and the Turks are barbarian, cruel and savage. The second day the house of the priest Balaban was searched and he was arrested and closed, being judged and acquitted on January 29<sup>th</sup> (Petrovici, 1939, p.156). Apparently during the detention he was even beaten. It is certain that shortly after his release from prison he moved to the eternal (A.B.D., 1918, file 1, tab 45).

The fear among the priests was so great that the others signed a letter of de-isolation from the attitude of the priest Balaban the day after his arrest (Petrovici, 1939, p.156).

And yet, the attitude of priest Balaban was not singular. For similar positions, the Imperial German Command banned priest Constantin Constantinescu from Șuțu from serving in the village, establishing his forced residence in Braila (A.B.D., 1918, file 1, tab 228). Priest Bucur Stan from Tătaru, was arrested and imprisoned under the guilt of anti-German propaganda (Deac & Toacă, 1978, p.176), and the priest of Gemelele was deported to Germany for the charge of espionage(A.B.D., 1918, file 1, tab 412, ).

In addition to exercising this strict control over church life both from the administrative point of view and from the messages sent by priests to their parishioners in the service, which was certainly exercised throughout the territory controlled by the Germans, they tried to influence the religious life of the Romanians by imposing the Gregorian calendar. In the order issued by General August von Mackensen on March 20th, 1917, intentionally or not, the feast of the Nativity was passed on December 24, and that of the Resurrection was not even remembered as one of the religious holidays. Nicolae Petrovici, a witness of those events, conspired in his memoirs: "If the Germans intentionally removed Easter from the holidays of the Orthodox world, then they probably wanted the idea of the Resurrection not to be a moral support in the great disaster for the Romanian people as a hope of salvation, for as the Savior defeated death, so also the Romanian people, who at one moment in the occupied territory, were waiting for the day of Resurrection, of Salvation"(Petrovici, 1939, p.148).

An important part of the mission of priests in the given situation was that of cultivating a pure moral life among their believers, especially parishioners whose husbands were left on the front. The same priest, Grigore Balaban, advised them "to avoid the proximity of the enemies and not to expose their sight; to remember forever that men, their brothers and their parents are at war and may be killed by our enemies" (Petrovici, 1939, p.155). An important role in the accomplishment of the pastoral mission had its liturgical service, which in the first year of occupation was affected by the lack of church singers who had been mobilized(A.B.D., 1918, file 1, tab 6). An advantage in this respect came from the then prefect of Braila, Iancu Berceanu. On October 12th, 1917, he sought and obtained the approval of the German Imperial Command for the performance of religious services in the countryside, where the situation of the churches and priests was much heavier than in the city, especially in the villages close to the front line, and for the establishment of choirs composed of pupils and school pupils singing the Divine Liturgy (A.B.D., 1917, file 1, tab 298). A similar approach was taken in the spring of 1918 for the churches in the city (A.B.D., 1918, file 1, tabs 33-37 ).

Beyond the immediate practical necessity of this approach, to compensate for the lack of church singers, the establishment of these choirs was aimed at "enhancing the religious sentiment in the population", as the Prefect wrote in the address sent on 20th October to the Deanery, "in all times of great need and of soul pains like those we are going through now, man finds great comfort in the church. Until today, only faith in God has saved mankind from despondency. It is our duty, therefore, to keep people from losing this moral support"(A.B.D., 1917, file 1, tabs 298-299).

Through the good collaboration between priests and teachers, which had been part of a long tradition, such choirs were set up in each parish, and the results were immediately felt, as Nicolae Petrovici confessed in his memoirs that " churches were very frequented, "and" church chants were like a soul's comfort in the misfortunes of that time, and as a hope in a better future" (Petrovici, 1939, p.155).

Many will find their comfort and relief of the soul sufferings for the loss of their loved ones by their memorial service and by the priests' the words of courage and the assurance that their sacrifice was not in vain, and they had just moved from this life to the eternal in Christ.

The comfort of those in distress was not limited to the spiritual side, but also manifested itself in the care and material help of the poorest of Braila, homeless, war orphans, widowers with many children or numerous families (A.B.D., 1918, file 1, tab 109 ). Also, the clergy were called to achieve a minimal sanitary education for the faithful they worshiped to prevent them from contracting contagious diseases. By circular Order 9/1918, Bishop Dionysius of Buzau had the rural priests to take the necessary measures "to combat contagious diseases". In order for this order to be put into practice, the priest Ilie Didicescu asked the Brăila Prefecture to issue 35 orders of free passage from the German Command without the permission of which the priests could not take any action (A.B.D., 1918, file 1, tab 385).

An extraordinarily important role was played by the Brăila priests in raising the moral of the population by maintaining hope for a favorable end of the war for Romania, strengthening the patriotic sentiment among them, and supporting the national ideal of the Great Union, for which, as we have seen, the Braileans also militated before the beginning of the war. The appeal to the priests of the new prefect of Braila, General Alexandru Văitoianu, appointed in the post of resumption of hostilities by the Romanian Army against the Central Powers' Army in November 1918, is witnessed in this respect.

Immediately after the installation, on November 11th, 1918, he asked the priest Ilie Didicescu that on the next Sunday, in all the churches of the Deanery, after the Holy Liturgy, starting at 10.00, the *Te Deum* service "of thanksgiving to the Almighty for mercy which He has shown to our beloved and beloved Land and to the entire Romanian nation the one who is exasperated and oppressed by the enemies whom He has saved us"(A.B.D., 1918, file 1, tab 422). In Circular No.1322 sent the following day to the priests, the ministry instructed them as the word that they were to teach after the *Te Deum* service to show that "M. S. King, who, as a good Romanian, entered the war with our allies for the slander of our national ideal, pursued for centuries by Great Romania, will firmly hold the word given through those Proclamations to fulfil all the demands of the people through ownership and granting of equal rights. You will show that the prospect of the King and his armed pride and speed could not be accomplished without the will and power of God, Who has always protected our dear Country and its brave men. [...]"

Make a warm appeal to our villagers in the countryside to respond now and with infinite love to the commend of the King's MS under the flag to clear the enemy alongside the Allied Armies and our beloved sister Transylvania as he cleaned the other loved sisters: Bessarabia and Bukovina.

Urge the population to tenacious patience, for there is not much until the suffering and relief of their suffering comes to an end. Looking at the moment it seems difficult, looking at the future, it is brilliant. Going over the hardships of the moment, with the unconditional contest of all, we will go to the much desired land and we will see with tears of joy: The achievement of the national ideal, Great Romania, Happy people, working his own and good field, resting quietly in his home, not afraid of the enemies that we and our allies have defeated for ever" (A.B.D., 1918, file 1, tab 422).

#### **c. Participation of priests and church singers from Braila Deanery to the military campaigns of the Romanian Armed Forces**

During the Great War the priests fulfilled the mission of shepherds of their spiritual sons not only in the middle of the civilian population but also on the front among the officers and soldiers of the Romanian Army. From the documents kept in the Archives of Braila Deanery we find out that four Braila priests, two from the city and two from the rural area, were mobilized and participated in the military campaigns of the Romanian Army as military confessors.

One of those who accomplished this mission within the Romanian Army was the priest Nicolae Donescu, from the parish of „St. Elijah”(A.B.D., 1918, file 1, tab 2), mobilized within the 45/60 Infantry Regiment. One of the officers who met him thus appreciated the results of his soldier's mission: "It is a real help for officers for the educational part of the troops. On the two chapels, made on the front, he seldom served under the enemy's fire, influencing palpably the souls of the soldiers"(Nazarie, 2018, p.165). He would be demobilized on April 24th, 1918, when he demanded the salary for his return to the post(A.B.D., 1918, file 1, tab 67).

The second cleric of the city who performed the mission of military confessor was the parish priest of „St. Elijah's” Church, priest Bejan Enăchescu, mobilized within the 75/76 Infantry Regiment. According to a report by one of the officers, "on the front, he was tireless, often advancing in the first lines to bury the dead. He has greatly contributed to raising the morale of the troops and its officers"(Nazarie, 2018, p.98). In another report, another officer emphasized the patriotism that animated priest Bejan and which he instilled to the soldiers: "He is very conscientious and, through his sermons, has raised the morale of the troops very much. Good preacher, he has enough power to cultivate and strengthen the love of the Homeland" (Nazarie, 2018, p.98). For his merits he was advanced to the rank of captain assimilated on July 1st, 1917 (Nazarie, 2018, p.208).

After his demobilization, on May 30th, 1918, he sent a complaint to the deacon Didicescu requesting "the priest's confessor salary according to the Captain rank." In the same complaint, the priest Enăchescu said: "I believe that the military and the priests, whether civilians or army confessors, have

done and done the service for this country, for in a country, whether small or large, the pillars which support the development of her are but the army, the school and the Church"(A.B.D., 1918, file 1, tab 122). A third cleric mobilized as a military confessor was the priest Gheorghe Bălănică, from the Jugureanu parish, who informed, by a document dated August 5th, 1918, that he had been demobilized since July when he resumed his activity at the parish, requesting reinstatement in due wages(A.B.D., 1918, file 1, tab 191).

The fourth cleric mobilized to accompany the troops as a military confessor was the priest D. Tebeica of the Parish Surdila Greci (A.B.D., 1918, file 1, tab 425), who worked in the 63/79 Infantry Regiment(Nazarie, 2018, p.215). From an archive document it appears that he accompanied the Romanian troops to Moldavia, working as a priest attached to the "St. Spiridon" church in Galati until October 1918, when he returned to the parish (A.B.D., 1918, file 1, tab 290).

The time when these priests were mobilized on the front meant for their numerous families a period of hard trials, with material shortages and sometimes with humiliation. The wives of the two priests mobilized from the St. Elijah parish in order to support their families in the absence of husbands asked the archbishop Ilie Didicescu that the spirits of their husbands should be filled by priests accepting half of the income on the stole what would be brought the respective ancestors to the families of the subordinates. Thus, on 12th January 1917, the wife of priest N. Donescu signed the name "Maria Priest N. Donescu" a receipt addressed to the parish Didicescu requesting that her husband's enchantment be replaced by priest Mihail Panait, refugee in Brăila from Isaccea, Tulcea, with which he had concluded a written agreement by which he undertook to offer half of his income on the stole that he had obtained from the parish, so that she could keep his three children(A.B.D., 1918, file 1, tab 2). On the same date, the priest Mihail Panait addressed to the priest a request to replace the priesthood of priest N.Donescu, in which he indicated that he agreed to give his family half of the income on the epitrachelion (A.B.D., 1918, file 1, tab 2).

A similar approach was made by the wife of priest confessor Bejan Enăchescu, who at the same time demanded the replacement of his husband's priesthood by priest Toma Cheorpec, who also accepted to give Bejan's family half of his stole income from religious services (A.B.D., 1917, file 1, tab 15).

By Address nr.1 from January 12th, 1917, Didicescu asked the Mayor of Braila to intervene with the German Command of the City to allow the refugee priests in Dobrudja to provisionally replace the city priests mobilized in the army or refugees in their turn in Moldavia (A.B.D., 1917, file 1, tab 7). As a result of the favorable reply to the German authorities on 17th January(A.B.D., 1917, file 1, tab 13), the Proccesor Didicescu approved on the same day the request of the refugee priest Mihail Panait (A.B.D., 1917, file 1, tab 14).

Taking into consideration the instability created by the departure of some priests from Braila to refuge in Moldavia and the arrival of other refugees from Dobrudja, those in the city often demanded the transfer from one to another, so that on September 18th, 1917, the presbyter Maria Bejan returned with a second demand, requesting that his husband's priesthood be replaced by priest C. Ganescu of the "Saint Dimitrie" parish of Islaz, under the same conditions as stole income(A.B.D., 1917, file 1, tab 248).

If the number of confessional priests is 4, the number of the singers incorporated in the Romanian Army was much higher, being probably not a parish, either from the city or from the countryside, from where at least one singer had not been mobilized, if not both. This is why the religious service has suffered greatly, especially in rural areas. It was hard to get back to the lectern with older singers who were not mobilized for that very reason. In the town of Braila, the only churches with a singer were "The Assumption of the Virgin", "The Holy Apostles", "St. Elijah", "Saint John the Baptist", "Saint Nicholas", "Saint Spiridon" and "Saint Paraskeva" (A.B.D., 1918, file 1, tab 6). We will probably recall here only a part of the mobilized singers, about whom the priests from the parishes in which they were working informed that they had been demobilized, asking for their salaries to be paid again. According to the documents, the singers Ioan P. Costache, from "St. John the Baptist", demobilized on June 3rd, 1918, were incorporated for whom, on July 19th, the church's parish priest asked to intervene in the "German imperial command" to be exempt from the requisition (A.B.D., 1918, file 1, tab 107), Vasile Coman and Toma Costache, from „St. Elias”(A.B.D., 1918, file 1, tab 110), T. Grigorescu and Gh. Manescu, from "St. George", together with Traian Georgescu (A.B.D., 1918, file 1, tab 112), Ioan Bălhaç, singer of

"Saint Paraskeva" parish(A.B.D., 1918, file 1, tab 133; Bounegru, 2005, p.219), Vasile Râmbu from the parish of the "Holy Emperors"(A.B.D., 1918, file 1, tab 532), Andrei Mateiu from the Silistraaru parish, mobilized in October 1916 at the 7th Riders Regiment(A.B.D., 1918, file 1, tab 105), Ioan A. Beschea, from the parish Osmanu(A.B.D., 1918, file 1, tab 106), Gheorghe I. Perianu and Gheorghe I. Perianu II, from the parish of Scorțaru Vechi (A.B.D., 1918, file 1, tab 108), Sava Marin and Ghiță Petre from the Latinu parish(A.B.D., 1918, file 1, tab 111), Ioan Petcu from the Vădeni parish, mobilized at the beginning of the campaign and left to the hearth on 12th May 1918(A.B.D., 1918, file 1, tab 285), Gheorghe Negoită, from the parish of the "Holy Voivodes" of Perișoru, mobilized on October 1st, 1916, was not demobilized on December 7th, 1918(A.B.D., 1918, file 1, tab 500), Dimitrie Dafinoiu, from the Ulmu parish, demobilized on June 20th, 1918(A.B.D., 1918, file 1, tab 504), Neagu Brânză, from Parlita parish(A.B.D., 1918, file 1, tab 531), and Gheorghe Gh. Caragață, from the Tataru parish, mobilized on October 14th, respectively November 20th, 1916, demobilized and returned to the parish(A.B.D., 1918, file 1, tab 537). Among the mobilized singers, Nicolae Balaban, from the "Saint Dimitrie" parish in Islaz (Braila), mobilized since 1916, fell on the front(A.B.D., 1918, file 1, tab 503).

As in the case of the families of the mobilized priests, the families of the singers suffered material and financial shortfalls, in the context in which they were not paid during the period when the wages were mobilized. (A.B.D., 1918, file 1, tab 105).

#### **d. Refugee priests in and from Braila Deanery in the way of the Bulgarian and German occupation armies**

Following the defeat of the Romanian army in the Battle of Turtucaia, Dobrudja was occupied by the Bulgarian armies, where a large number of Romanian Orthodox priests on the right of the Danube fled both in Braila and in the rural localities of the county. These, many of them with many families, had to face not only the shortcomings of the war, which were confronted by all the Romanians, especially those in the territories occupied by the enemy, but also by the losses of the usefulness in their parishes, in their households, of their wealth, which remained at the will of the occupants, most often looted, scattered and destroyed. In order to support their families, most of these unfortunate refugee priests have requested to fill in various parishes or sections of parishes left vacant either by mobilizing or retreating the title priest or as a result of the death of a priest. In some cases the situation of some of them was so desperate, miserable, that some priests from Braila offered, on their own initiative, part of their parishes to survive on the epitachelion. It is the case of, for example, the priest C. Ganescu of the "Saint Dimitrie" Parish of Islaz, who informed the priesthood on September 18th, 1917, that he received in his priesthood priest N. Popescu, a refugee from the Pașa-Câșla, Tulcea County(A.B.D., 1918, file 1, tab 247).

In fact, all the priests who were refugees in the Braila Deanery from the counties of Dobrudja found understanding and enjoyed the support of the priesthood, who took all the necessary cares to the Prefecture of Braila and through it to the Imperial German Command, obtaining the agreement that the refugee priests to serve in the churches of the city, some even to be enrolled on paying bills so that they can support their families.

The priest Mihail Panait, a refugee from Isaccea, Tulcea, after having replaced for several months the priesthood of N. Donescu, priest from the "St. Elijah" parish, started on April 14th, 1917 for a while replaced the "Assumption of the Virgin" parish (A.B.D., 1918, file 1, tabs 135, 168). After his departure from "St. Elias", starting January 13th, 1918, the priesthood of N. Donescu was to be replaced by another refugee priest, Ioan Ciocan, who came to Brăila from Cerna-Voda (A.B.D., 1918, file 1, tab 13). After the demobilization of Priest N. Donescu and his return to the parish on April 24th, 1918(A.B.D., 1918, file 1, tab 67), priest Ioan Ciocan requested and obtained, starting with May 8th, 1918, the replacement of the priest's priesthood of Anghel Constantinescu from "Saint Paraskeva", a refugee in Moldavia, Galati (A.B.D., 1918, file 1, tab 72).

Another refugee priest in Dobrudja was V.Slioneanu, a former parish priest in Silistra and a deacon of Durostorum, to whom Bishop Dionysius of Buzau approved the "provisional replacement until the clarification of the entire Dobrudja situation", starting July 3rd, 1918, in the second post from the "Holy Emperors" parish(A.B.D., 1918, file 1, tabs 404, 126). He came in the place of another outcast priest, Mihail Vasiliu, a refugee from Dorobantu, Tulcea County, as early as December 4th, 1916, who,

having a large family of ten members, after replacing for a while a part of the parish "The Holy Emperors", requested the transfer to the parish Mihai Bravu (A.B.D., 1918, file 1, tab 132).

The refugee of the war and the Bulgarian occupation of Dobruđa was also the priest Teodor Martinescu, a native of Vișani, but a servant in Ducuzol, Constanța. This, withdrawn with the five members of the family on the left of the Danube, requested the replacement of part of the Șuțești parish (A.B.D., 1918, file 1/1918, tabs 153, 280).

A priest from Braila, particularly from Surdila Greci, Ioan Sandulescu, fled to his native village in Gheringic, Mangalia, where he served as a priest. After providing substitution in the Surdila-Găiseanca parish, whose priest, D. Tebeica, had been mobilized as a military confessor priest, for a while, he requested the replacement of the Rosiori parish, vacated by the death of the parish priest in that village (A.B.D., 1918, file 1, tab 387).

From Constanta, the priests Anton Popescu, who requested the provisional replacement of the Coltea parish (A.B.D., 1918, file 1, tab 428), Ioan Teodorescu, refugee from Pecineaga, Tulcea, appointed on May 30th, 1917, the mayor of the city to provisionally serve the confessor service of the patients in the hospitals in the absence of the priest (A.B.D., 1917, file 1, tab 127), a refugee probably in his turn in Moldova, Niță Trandafirescu, a second refugee from Osmani, Tulcea, requesting the appointment to the Pitulați parish (A.B.D., 1918, file 1, tab 435) and Ion Berteșteanu (A.B.D., 1917, file 1, tab 229).

In addition to the refugee priests in the Dobruđa counties, the documents mention the presence of a refugee priest in Popești-Leordeni, Ioan Gheorghidi (A.B.D., 1917, file 1, tab 229). He replaced the parish "Saint Paraskeva", in the place of the priest Anghel Constantinescu, refugee in Galați until August 20th, 1918, when he returned to the parish where he was the holder (A.B.D., 1918, file 1, tab 215).

Not only the priests of Dobruđa took the path of wandering, but some of the priests of Braila, few of whom, however, chose to leave their parishes and homes to take refuge in Moldavia, the only territory left under the rule of the Romanian authorities at that time. They chose the path of exile. These are the priests Anghel Constantinescu, from the "Saint Paraskeva" (A.B.D., 1918, file 1, tabs 67, 72, 215), Ioan Nicolae, from the "Assumption of the Mother of God" (A.B.D., 1918, file 1, tab 135), and perhaps the confessor priest in the hospital (A.B.D., 1917, file 1, tab 127). Priest Anghel Constantinescu, a personality of the local church and cultural life of his time, retired to Galați. From December 15th, 1917, he worked as a teacher at the "St. Andrew" Seminary in Galați, a school whose director was to become in 1918 (Bounegru, 2005, p.208). Also, from a report by the rector Ilie Didicescu to the Prefect of Brăila, submitted on November 11th, 1918, it appears that the priests from Pitulați and Romanu had fled to Moldavia (A.B.D., 1918, file 1, tab 412).

### **3. CONCLUSION**

The reality outlined on the basis of the information in the documents and the memoirs of those involved in the events of the First World War fully confirms the faith of Bejan Enăchescu in the fundamental role they had, and should have it today, and beyond, The Church, the Army and the School: "I believe that both the military and the priests, whether civilians or army confessors, have done and do the service for this country, for in a country, whether small or large, the pillars on which it is based in her development are the army, the school and the church" (A.B.D., 1918, file 1, tab 122). The research of the sources revealed that it was only through the close cooperation of the three basic institutions of the Romanian nation that it was able to rise and turn the fate of the war, crowning the sacrifices of the front and the sacrifices of the civilian population through the realization of the Great Union. At the celebration of the centenary of the Great Union the knowledge of the sacrifice and the last combatant on the front or at home is a duty of honor and soul, since only on the basis of their sacrifice can we hope that the present and future generations will be able to bring the Romanian nation to the anniversary of other hundreds of years.



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## **MCDSARE: 2018**

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## **FREEDOM AS A GIFT, THE MISSION AND THE RESPONSIBILITY OF THE HUMAN BEING TOWARDS HIMSELF, HIS KIND AND THE WORLD**

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### ***Abstract***

This article presents the freedom concept in the Christian understanding. Freedom is a gift, a mission and a responsibility of the man towards himself, others and the world. As a person, the human is a being open to communion with God and his fellows. This community aspect of the human being has its foundation in the communion and relationship with God. As God's Image, the human being cannot find his fullness except in relation to the perfect model, after which he was created. Thus, freedom is manifested by releasing evil and identifying with the good (with the model). The greatest gift God gives to man is freedom and love. Freedom of will, together with reason, is the image of God in man. It is the foundation of our ability to achieve defining perfection in Christian terms through holiness. In this state of holiness man is truly free.

**Keywords:** Christian thinking; the concept of freedom; man; moral life; world;

### **1. INTRODUCTION**

Christian teaching states that man is a rational, free and responsible being. Between the work of man and the work of God, the divine grace or the energy of the Divine Being comes into being, and through which the divinity can come closer to man. Divine grace is an uncreated divine energy if we compare it with the world, man and all that exists. Divine grace and human freedom are in a close and inseparable connection. Divine grace is the means of man's material and spiritual fulfillment. In the Christian orthodox theology, there is no separation between God and his creation, and especially between God and man, between the created nature and divine grace. Nor is it in the terms of pantheism about this divine presence in creation, because divine grace is at the same time transcendent and immanent. Spiritual elements, ontologically inserted into the human nature by God the Creator, discover this interpenetration

of nature with the spiritual, the soul with the body, that forms a unity but without confusion. In order to overcome this problem, the patristic thinking specific to the orthodox theology made a distinction between the presence and work of God entering eternity as the absolute being, in which the principle of causality does not apply and nothing is included outside the Absolute Being, and the presence and work of God ad extra, God in his capacity as Creator, Savior. The difficulty occurs when we seek to understand the relationship between transcendence and immanence, between supernatural and natural, between man and God, which implies the concept of Christian freedom and human responsibility.

On the one hand, God's being, transcendent, unseen, eternal, originating from Himself, Who has an ontological self-reliance, remains inaccessible, is beyond being and name. The perception of God as He is (I am the One Who is) and to the extent that He reveals himself is given to the saints. On the other hand, God is not an impersonal substance (theism). Although unknown in His being, God is not an anonymous. He is a personal Being Out of Himself, revealing the forces of origin of creation and the ultimate destiny of the world.

Thus, God created the visible world of angels and the seen universe from nothing. The created world (inert matter, psychic structure, biological reality) is not the reflex or manifestation of the divine being (nor the hypostases of the Holy Trinity, which are not creatures). God's extra work in time and space is through uncreated divine energies: The universe is the effect of these energies. Of course, there is an irreducible difference between created and uncreated, between divine and human. But God has put into the natural world through His energies a movement to supernatural, an impetus to ontological fulfillment, an aspiration to the resemblance to God.

The man is a symbiosis between spiritual and material, the soul is immortal because man was created in the Image of God as a person, as a personal, unique and unrepeatable being. But man and creation nevertheless did not reach its final fulfillment, because of the man who, through selfish autonomy, became destructive, broke the power of divine grace. Yet man has the consciousness of his failure and spiritual becoming. The state of fulfillment of man and of the world was accomplished by Jesus Christ.

## **2. THE CHARACTERISTICS OF CHRISTIAN ANTHROPOLOGY**

According to Christian teachings, the fundamental elements that characterize man are as follows:

1. The divine origin and ontological unity of human nature. Man was created by God through a special act, as to the other creations (earth, plants, animals, and the cosmos). Man is not the product of evolutionary matter as in cosmology, nor the same as the divine being as in mythology, but has a special status given by his ontological relationship with God and the world, through his dual nature, constituted simultaneously - mortal body and immortal soul (epis. Npheseh ), through which man is.

2. Man is a personal and unique subject, created in the image of God in order to acquire His Likeness or the state of perfection (Genesis 1:26). The development of God's image is the personal center of the human being, and the ontological reality through which man's relationship with God is realized.

3. The actual restoration of the human nature and the recapitulation of humans is possible only in and through Christ, the Image of the Father, the paradigm by which man was made (John 1.1), the true Man or Son of Man (Romans 5:15), Who perfects and harmonizes all creation.

Taking into account the free and rational nature of man, the Sacred Scripture presents it in different states depending on how his relationship with God was or how much His Image was actualized in him. Thus, we had an incomplete positive state before the Fall; a negative state due to the altering of the Image after the Fall, and a positive state at the Eschaton, made through the Christian redemption in which humanity is renewed and given its proper dignity and value. Etymologically, the term "Image" comes from the Hebrew word *tem* – shadow, reflection, and from the Greek image designating a plastic image such as an effigy or a statue understood in the Old Orient as a manifestation of an incarnation of the represented one, as it is showed in the Wisdom of Solomon: "For all the idols of the Gentiles have counted them as gods ... he, the man being mortal, does a lifeless thing with his wicked hands, he cherishes more than his idols because he is alive those not at all ... "(15, 14-18). The Image of God is based on the entire human nature, being the natural thing that makes the soul rational through freedom,

discernment, will and action, meant to lead the impulses of the body. The dignity of the human person results precisely from the fact that man, by nature, is the master of himself and leads rationally the whole world.

The soul is defined as the center of the human being which, through reason and freedom, generates love or affection. Justin the Martyr and Philosopher, in order to prove freedom and free will specific to the humans seen as rational beings, especially to argue man's error or fall into sin, brings a lot of evidence from Holy Scripture, plus the famous quote from Plato: "Man's fault who chooses; God is without blame - the Republic of X, 617 "(Ioan Rămureanu, 1958, 42).

Origen defines the original state of the divine Image of man in Heaven, and of the human nature, as mind - *ύους*, sin has made souls - *ψύχη* - the present state of the Image. The way from the Image to the likeness would be defined by the following plan: mind - *ύους* - soul - *ψύχη* - mind - *ύους*. He says that "by departing from its state and its worth, the mind has changed and is now called the soul, but if it improves and becomes correct, then it becomes a new mind ..." (Origen, 1982, 158). Before the man fell into sin, the soul was identified with the mind, understood as divine reasoning, and after the fall, the mind became a soul. Origen's logic leads to the understanding that the mind and the soul are not two different human components, but one in two different stages. As far as the freedom of the will is concerned, he wrote about all of them in his Third Book of *De principiis*, where he shows that freedom is specific to the rational soul through which man lives spiritually.

In freedom the human being manifests his or her personal dignity, because he is a created subject, a dialogue partner to receive divine love. A free man fulfills the rationality of his nature, tending toward the Absolute Person, in which the soul lives his true life: "My soul desires and breaks after the courts of the Lord," says the psalmist, "my heart and my body have rejoiced with the living Lord "(Psalm 83: 2).

In the attempt to define man as the Image of God, some of the Fathers identify it by his soul in general and especially in his mind. Apostolic Fathers, apologetics, Origen, Blessed Augustine, and others regard human nature as the entire soul the Image of God. Fathers of Church see the Image of God manifesting itself in all the functions and aspects of the human being. Sometimes the Image of God is linked to any quality of the soul, its simplicity or its immortality, or it is identified with the soul's ability to know God, to live in communion with Him, in the presence of the Holy Spirit.

The human person, as the Image of God, gathers in itself virtually, with the possibility of manifestation, the qualities of its Creator. Reason, freedom and "sovereignty" define the "Image" of God in man because they relate not to the "spiritual" nature of his, but to the ways in which the person differs from nature and constitutes in itself a hypostasis of life, freed from all natural determinism. "Man is a rational, free being, master over creation, because it is a personal existence, not because it is spirit" (Christos Yannaras, 2004, 20). These qualities always reveal the uniqueness and specificity of the human person as rational and consciousness and differentiate it from the other created beings.

### **3. MAN, RATIONAL BEING, OPEN TO FREEDOM AND LOVE**

The source of human freedom is in God, in His love for man, that is why in love I can free myself from all that is alien and hostile to me, obtaining the ultimate freedom. Thus, freedom is one of the central ideas of Christianity.

Sacred Scripture is explained by and in the spirit of freedom. Thus, "you will know the truth and the truth will make you free" (John 8, 31-32). "I do not call you slaves, because the servant does not know what the master does, I will call you friends because all I heard from the Father I have made known to you "(John 15:15). "Whoever will look into the perfect law, the law of liberty" (James 1: 25). "You have been redeemed with great prize, not becoming the servants of men at all" (1 Corinthians 7:23). "Where is the Spirit of the Lord, there is freedom" (II Corinthians 3:17). "You are no longer a slave, but a son" (Galatians 4: 7). "Brethren, you have been called to liberty." (Galatians 5:13) Indeed, God from the beginning called man to freedom by living his life in freedom (Jesus Syrah XV, 14-17), freedom being the essential principle of life as Nicolai Berdyaev says, "Christianity presupposes the spirit of liberty and freedom of spirit, without this atmosphere it cannot exist" (Nicolai Berdyaev, 2009, 140).

The philosophical thinking has defined man primarily as a rational existence, self-conscious, by the phrase "cogito ergo sum" (Socrates, Descartes), because he thinks. The act of thinking is specific to the human being, directed at himself (by introspection), so as an act of self-consciousness (Dumitru Stăniloae, 1991, 134). "In a classical definition, freedom is the ability to choose" (Paul Evdochimov, 2009, 132), but St. Maxim the Confessor says, "the need to choose is a weakness inherent in the fall into sin" (St. Maximus the Confessor, 1983, 344).

"Freedom does not bear its own reasons, but it also creates them. It rises where the freest acts are the only full acts" (St. Maximus the Confessor, 1983, 345). In the teachings of the Holy Fathers freedom is not a choice between good and evil, but true freedom means the exclusive choice of the good and the liberation from any uncertainty about this choice. Thus the Holy Fathers show that true freedom, perfect freedom, is the freedom from the period before the Fall.

Of this, St John of Damascus explicitly speaks when he says, "God made man by sinless, free will, and free will ... That is, the power to remain and to progress in good, being helped by the divine gift, as well as the power to turn from good to evil, which God allows for the reason that man was endowed with free will. There is no virtue what is done by force" (St. John Damascene, 1938, 99).

In Christian thinking, the patriarch Callistus of Constantinople (14th century) exclaimed: "I love, therefore exist," showing that in communion through love, and not through Descartes' selfish individualism, every person must live his existence. These considerations are accentuated in the 20th century by professor Dumitru Stăniloae, the Romanian theologian. Summing up these words "I think so exist" and "I love, so exist" are most accurately expressed by "I love those next to me and I am loved, so they exist." That is man's mission to love consciously, rationally and freely. Love is built on love. Of course, we are not talking about the perverted character of love, but about the real form in which man remains a person and not an object used and consumed.

Only in love the human being is truly free, and this state means the special relationship with God and especially with his fellow human beings in which God is present, because every man is created in the image of God. Therefore, the man created in the Image of God as a personal being due to intrinsically inexhaustible character, proves to be an endless existence, developed in social relations and especially with God. That is why interpersonal life receives and communicates new meanings, meanings and states of soul because it involves the relationship with divinity. Man in himself always lives in infinity, but in potency as a target to be achieved. In this state is active the divine image of man that generates tension to perfection. Life is a reality of love and freedom; it is a gift of God that makes man responsible.

The quality of the person of man implies freedom from human nature. Human person or hypostasis means quality and state of freedom and love. Speaking of the difference between "person" and "individual", father Stăniloae said that "compared to the individual, the person lives in communion with others in such a way that their lives are intertwined: the person does not know where his life begins and where it ends up the other ... as in a continuum" (Dumitru Stăniloae, 1993, 45).

Man cannot be, cannot exist without the one next to him, and the other cannot exist without it. There is no joy in an isolated and separate life of the fellow. No one can live alone. Neither the selfish, the individualist, the narcissist who feels good without the others; he must think about someone else that is inferior to him. "Happiness is in communion, knowing that you are not alone, that someone cares about you and that someone is interested and involved in your life" (Dumitru Stăniloae, 1993, 45).

Christian anthropological thought is centered on the notion of person. Man is a unique and personal being. Man is a being characterized by: a rational and free soul, a self-sustained and unique unity, a tendency towards communion, a value-bearing and open to values; we can define the person as a spiritual hypostasis, a bearer of values that tends to participate in the world of values through communion. "The question of freedom, says Nicolai Berdyaev, is actually the question of the fundamental principle of being and life, the understanding of being depends on the freedom that is before the being. Freedom is a spiritual and religious category" (Nicolai Berdyaev, 2009, 138).

Freedom of man is an inner attribute of the spirit. Human freedom must neither be confused with the divine freedom that is absolute, nor with absolute indeterminism. Our freedom is not an absolute freedom, but it is specific to us, as God's creatures, and it is concurrent in our psychophysical structure. It is capable of developing or shrinking.

#### **4. FREEDOM AND LOVE THE FOUNDATIONS OF SOCIAL AND COMMUNITY LIFE**

The greatest gift God gives to man is active freedom through love. Freedom of will, together with reason and love, is the image of God in man. "The God of Revelation, the Christian God is love, namely love-agaph ... meaning love from the top to the bottom, descending" (Constantin Galeriu, 1991, 141). That is why love, which is not imposed on people by itself, has its beginning not in men, but in God, the source of absolute love that attracts those who love Him. Man cannot ascend to the all people loving God without growing and acquiring His love for men, he cannot complete himself in communion with God without making himself more of a gift towards others.

Therefore, the realization of communion cannot be done, as in the case of knowledge, only through love. This is the only and viable way of accomplishing communion, for there is nothing besides love. "The more people are united by love, the more they are more dear to each other, and in the case of human beings, the more they are united, the more mysterious one is. That's why a growing delicacy stops the person who loves to treat roughly the loved one. The more they unite, the more they marvel at each other and behave more with one another than each other" (Dumitru Stăniloae, 1991, 205).

The dialogue with people began God Himself when He created us creatures endowed with the capacity and duty to engage with Him and with us. Every need to communicate with each other, to talk to each other, to expect answers, originates in these gifts that we have received from our Creator. The basis for the dialogue between us is the need for dialogue with Him. We cannot be without others because we cannot be without God.

In order to be able to enter into a full communion with you "I need to communicate certain meanings to you, and if you listen carefully I gain myself a new understanding of them. I gain a deeper meaning, I become transparent as a subject through the fact that I enter in the depths of your subject, or through the fact that you open freely the depths of your subject. You are my hope and my strength, you strengthen yourself, and so do I, even through the fact that I know that I am your hope and strength. Your belonging and mine to a common us, makes things in such a way that when you cry out for my help, I feel that something in me that belongs to me is suffering too, and if I hit you, I deprive myself of something more essential than if I have lost an object that was exclusively mine ... No one can know how much he or she values for another, but he or she can know how much another person values for him" (Dumitru Stăniloae, 2002, 363). The dialogue between a person and another person is under the power of God, as the One who takes care of our people and has made us so important to each another and capable of helping us and enriching our existence one by one. The human word as a means of openness and conscious and free communication is a way of strengthening and developing our nature by realizing its closeness to the infinite divine nature. The Word unites and opens people through communion. It enlarges a person's universe, opening up his or her horizon, partly apart from another person. The Word opens people to others in the light of the infinite love of the One in whom there is supreme living and love.

Man is a relational existential fact towards communion. St. John the Damascene shows that God made man "without sin in his nature and with free will, but without sin not as inaccessible to sin, but as one who did not have in his nature the desire to sin, but had this possibility in free choice. That is, he was free to stand and progress in good, helped by divine grace, but so was he to deviate from good and be evil. God has allowed this for the sake of freedom, for what is done by force is not virtue" (St. John Damascene, 1993, 51). The same idea is highlighted by Diadochos of Photiki. He says freedom of will is given "in the will of the rational soul, who is ready to move both for good and for evil." Spiritual effort consists of the effort to determine freedom "to be ready for good only", thereby drawing the "remembrance" of evil in this way.

Climbing on the scale of maximal unity with God or deification through grace is a communion effort that strengthens man's sense of a responsible partner in communion and strengthens his freedom from depersonalizing and egocentric passions. Only in this intimacy of the longing for God, in the expanse towards the absolute personal, the human hypostasis can truly develop and put the seal of resemblance on its face. Without this launch of the human Eros to the divine Eros who meets his personal infinity, man's personal consciousness would reach its end "either by gradually immersing himself in a

desolate I deprived of all relations in the Platonic-Origenist sense, or Nirvanic, or by self-training in the dizzy vortex of passions, in which man forgets even about that I that has exist the communion"(Dumitru Stăniloae, 1978, 401). In Christ, God unites with the human nature, and communion is maximal and unique, for communion is the Word, and the one who encircles the human nature is the divine hypostasis.

By focusing on other people and the world as God's work, and purifying from passions by cultivating virtues, man develops true communion that allows him to understand the divine Absolute and to contemplate the depths of the people and the meanings of the world. Given that the love of persons and of God as a Person is the culmination of the cultivation of virtues, means that the one who wishes to attain the resemblance must be engaged in the ascending to the infinite light through the impulse of loving self-indulgence. "*Amo ergo sum* should be man's response to God is love. Between God and the human soul it cannot be anything bigger than to love and to be loved "(Paul Evdokimov, 1999, 64).

Through freedom, man has been given the ability to form himself, to choose his own ways, and to move on his own initiative, to the evermore complete realization of the good, which at the same time means his own perfection and supreme happiness. Man gains the perfect form of his life, realizes himself entirely, not by unconscious organic growth, but by the free decision of his will. This is the nobility of man: he is called to make his own life. "I say that man was created freely, but obeys to whom he likes," says Methodius of Olympus, adding that the freedom of the human being is a gift that man received from the Creator "in order to obtain gifts even more that is, to be worthy to receive from God something in addition to what he now has. "(Methodius of Olympus, 1984, 228).

"God, wishing to honor man, endowed him with the faculty of knowing the higher things and to do what he wants, then urged him to do good without lacking free will, but only by pointing it out" (Methodius of Olympus, 1984, 229).

So, the essence of freedom results from the ability to choose between more possibilities for achieving good. It is straightened from yarn to good, functioning normally when it is decided for good. The choice of evil (transvestite for good) is not the essence of freedom, but is a deficiency, an imperfection, an abuse, by which the will (freedom) is perverted, being directed, by deception or not, in a direction opposite to the natural good development, after which it strikes all the human being (and therefore his will), but pointing all its faculties and impulses in a contradictory direction to its natural state. Self-determination for good is the normal exercise of freedom; it is fulfillment and happiness, while self-determination to evil is abnormal, ruining and unhappy exercise. Because of the first deficiency of freedom, the ancestral sin, the freedom of the adamic man who lives under the vision of history is no longer freedom for the better, but freedom that oscillates between good and evil, yet retaining its fundamental tendency for good.

"Will is a function of the flesh" (Paul Evdokimov, 1999, 59), which connects man with the needs of the world and of his nature, and only a renunciation of his own will leads to true freedom. The truly free person tends to contain all the human wires according to the model of the triumphal life, for Christianity is "an imitation of the nature of God" (Saint Gregory of Nyssa). Man is free because it is the image of divine freedom: "God honored man by giving him liberty, "that good belongs to him who chooses it, no less than he who laid the roots of good in the wings" (Paul Evdokimov, 1995, 52). Freedom is the metaphysical foundation of the will, and even when it is placed inside the "Opus Dei" it does not cease to be true freedom.

## **5. THE RESPONSIBILITY OF MAN TO HIMSELF AND CREATION**

Man is an existence in the face of a continual change, he must choose between what is good for himself or for others, and what impoverishes, narrows and twists his being. The first aspect is promoted by responsibility, and the second is the weakening of responsibility. Regarding the human action, the question of conscience is always raised, must I do that or not? There is a constant emphasis on a certain guidance of freedom, this being totally alien to dishonest beings. Human freedom must have a meaningful, continuous filling of the human being with the grace of the Holy Spirit, of directing all its energy toward the fulfillment of the will of God.

We cannot talk about responsibility without freedom. If man was not free, he would not be responsible, and if he were not a responsible person, he would not have been free. Freedom of man is often spoken of as an attitude unrelated to any condition as a purpose and not a precondition as a cause. Various theories have been promoted that consider that man frees himself from nothing or that it is a product of human freedom (Dumitru Stăniloae, 1995, 74).

Often, man refuses to bind his freedom to responsibility, for it seems to him a restriction or a diminution of freedom. Freedom without responsibility is only a pretext for switching from one passion to another. Regarding such freedom, Apostle Paul says: "You live as free men, but not as if you had the freedom as a covering of cunning, but as slaves of God" (1 Peter II, 16).

Man is a free and responsible being. There can be no responsibility for man without freedom and vice versa. On the one hand, freedom is a gift of God to man, and on the other hand, it is updated and strengthened by man. Today's philosophies and life ideas promoting freedom, human rights to exclusion and creation, exclude his moral responsibility and everything is subject to pleasure and consumption. But he is the freedman or rather the subject, ideologically and economically institutional. All these are an illusion of liberty that makes man a servant of corruption, for what overcomes you, that it rules you" (2 Peter 2:19). Freedom without Borders is in Christian life: "Stand firm in the liberty with which Christ has made us free, and do not get caught again in the yoke of bondage" (Galatians 5: 1); "For ye, brethren, have been called to liberty; only to use freedom as an opportunity to serve the body, but to serve one another through love" (Galatians 5:13).

Responsibility cannot obtain the true dimension unless it is with God, and its efficiency, so understood, does not only concern the time of earthly life but extends into eternity. Responsibility to God is described very suggestively in Holy Scripture: "If ye shall obey the voice of the Lord your God, and do all his commandments, all the blessings shall come upon you ... and they shall be done upon you ..." (Deuteronomy 28 , 1-2). "And if you will not obey ... and you will not compel to fulfill all His commandments and judgments ... all the curses will come upon you and you will come ..." (Deuteronomy 28:15).

Human responsibility does not refer only to the human being or to others, but encompasses the cosmos between, because he is inseparable from it through his body. He maintains his body through matter or transforms matter of the cosmos into his body, consciously living in the soul through his senses. Thus, nature becomes the content of his soul life, not exclusively rejecting it.

## **6. CONCLUSION**

Man, "the Image of God," is meant to realize the full resemblance with God, man being a rational and free being that is, endowed with reason, sentiment and free will, capable of communion with his Model, God. So, our being has the capacity to maintain itself, as it was made in God's Image, in a living relationship with Him, and this relationship is possible because God has made man from the beginning related to Himself, or better said in a conscious and free relationship with Himself through the breath of life, through the living soul (1 Corinthians 15, 45).

Freedom is not confused with free will. Free will is included in freedom or, more precisely, this is the first step in the acquisition of a full freedom. Free will is the power to choose between different purposes and means, motives and mobiles, good or bad. It is the essential function for a man to be the author of his conduct. All individuality and personality stand in free will. You have to choose the good but to do it. The foundation of Christian freedom is the person, and its true meaning is given by Orthodoxy. It consists of a perfect harmony between the work of grace and the work of man, the purpose being the perfection of the human being, its fulfillment in God, and its deification.

Man has, first of all, complete freedom of choice, to follow God or to deny him, to choose between good and evil, to choose between life and death.



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**JOB – THE SACRED IMAGE OF CHRIST IN THE OLD  
TESTAMENT**

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***Abstract***

The theme of suffering is recurrent in the texts of the Book of Scripture, touching upon a most complex theological topic and undertaking some of the most unexpected significances: suffering as a punishment for evil doing, suffering as a future reward, suffering as an experience of God's presence, suffering as medicine both for the body and for the soul, suffering as proof of faith, suffering as a form of purification both of the body and of the soul, suffering because of or for another, Christ's suffering, suffering as a confirmation of the Christ etc. Illness, pain and the fear of suffering make up a common semantic space in many of the texts in the Book of Scripture. Therein the legitimate question coming from those who less understand the mystery of faith and of man's relation to God: if God is good, why does He consent to the suffering of the innocent?

**Keywords:** suffering; illness; sin; punishment; retribution; passion;

**1. INTRODUCTION**

Recurrent in the history of humankind throughout centuries, the Scripture itself seems to address this issue. Why all the suffering and illness? The Psalms embody the failure of the religious man when witnessing the happiness of the wicked and the suffering of the righteous:

And I have said: "All in vain have I kept my heart clean and washed my hands in innocence,

For all day long I have been stricken and rebuked every morning; (Ps. 72, 13-14) But as for me, unto Thee, oh Lord, have I cried, oh Lord; and in the morning shall my prayer meet Thee.

Why, Lord, do You reject me and move Your face from me?"(Ps. 87, 14-15) Clearly, the traditional account can no longer be considered, i.e. that suffering is a consequence of sinning, particularly because there are quite numerous cases where suffering is not always the result of a life led away from God. Not always does suffering manifest a punitive feature, since it can also articulate itself as a sign of God's love (Alexandrescu, 1937, p. 45) or as a part of God's plan for humankind.

Time and again, this is revealed in the Old Testament, especially through the history of Abraham, Joseph and Moses, and, for the most part, through Job's story. One thing is certain, though: holding God

responsible for all the suffering is an answer that will only lead us to a dead end, one of the greatest mistakes that humankind can make.

Only by moving away from this false trail do we reach the correct justification: suffering is but the failure of Man's love to God's own love. Experience has shown that only love is powerful enough to guide man to assume his suffering and, therefore, overcome it (Popa, 2003, p. 3). And, from this point of view, suffering cannot be detached from the virtue of faith and hope. Suffering experienced within faith can only hope for the promise of the future divine kingdom (Chiodi, 2006, p. 339).

## **2. SUFFERING AS A CONSEQUENCE OF SINNING**

According to the texts in the Scripture, one can undoubtedly conclude that God loves mankind and He has persistently proven Himself an ally and a partner of Man: He has been repeatedly sympathetic and compassionate towards Man by showing such commitment in His promises that He sent His only son to suffer for humankind.

Unquestionably, for some (Sartre, 2003, p. 78) talking about God's love for Man is unwise (I Corinthians 1, 23: But we preach Christ crucified: a stumbling block to Jews and folly to Gentiles). Well, it is particularly this "folly" that the Scripture tells us about when stating: The Lord blesses his sons, the same as He blesses those who are afraid of Him (Ps. 102, 13). Zion said: "The Lord has forsaken me, my Lord has forgotten me!" Can a mother forget her nursing child and have no compassion for the son of her womb? But even if that were possible, I will not forget thee! (Isaiah 48, 14-15, 66).

In the Scripture, the first one to benefit from God's leniency is Cain. Although suffering could be interpreted as a form of punishment for the sin of having committed murder, God considers Cain's behaviour and punishes him through love by not abandoning him; on the contrary, God makes Cain known by a mark on the latter's forehead, which, on the one hand, is a form of punishment, while on the other, it saves Cain from the violence of other people (Genesis, 4).

Similarly, the same interpretation can be carried out when talking about the faithfulness of the Jews to God, or of every single man, for that matter, since the same old theological structure can be applied to the authoritarian reward – punishment relationship.

God's interference in people's lives happens only to make justice, even if The Law of Talion should be the case. By making justice, God preserves his relationship to the chosen people (Gagliardi, 2010, 48). This dynamics is beautifully illustrated in the episode concerning the 10 punishments of Egypt in the Book of Exodus. What makes God interfere is exactly the shed tears of the enslaved people. The grievance of the people, oppressed by Egyptian slavery, sets in motion a wide salvation mission to which God himself participates effectively (Exodus, 2, 23-25). The 10 punishments of Egypt stand for the divine punishment both of the pharaoh and of the Egyptian people against Israel being released from their service. This is a clear example of the biblical pattern meant to reconcile suffering: suffering, pain is the punishment for the committed sin (Ballabio, 1999, p. 125).

This mediation of suffering as a form of punishment, intended to break the divine law, has been recurring all throughout the history of the Jewish people. Starting with the punishment of 40 years' wanderings into the wilderness of Sinai, for idolatry, and ending with assuming responsibility for Christ's crucifixion (Mt. 27, 25), suffering is understood in close connection with the sin as a form of defiance and infringement on the divine law. And yet, the story of Job or the complaints in the Psalms and Isaiah are somewhat different

## **3. JOB – A GENUINE ACCOUNT OF FAITH KEPT IN SUFFERING**

The Book of Job is the genuine account of a man touched by an enormous physical pain on top of which there lies the feeling of loneliness, forsaking by God and by friends and family. At a first sight, the story of Job might suggest itself like a particular, singular situation which nonetheless assumes a universal anthropologic value (Chiodi, 2006, p. 339).

Like Adam, Job stands for the universal Man. In everyone's solitude there is a fight between good and evil, light and darkness, love and hatred. The word Eybah, which translates "enmity" (Preliceanu & co, 2006, p. 294) belongs to the same family of words as that of the word "love", Ahabah. Therefore, both

Job's and Adam's stories are not so much about the mystery of suffering as they are about the mystery of God's endless love for man (Popa, 2003, p. 3).

Besides, what the Scripture actually accounts about Job is his power of faith (Grelot, 1986, p. 117). With reference to Job's trial because the devil challenged God, the following question inevitable rises: Will Job still believe once all the suffering is gone? Deprived of all logic, the answer does not fall in any retribution theories recurrent in the entire history of the Old Testament: suffering is itself the reward for the sin (Chiodi, 2006, p. 339).

In the end, it is exactly this judgment that Job comes to contradict: he grows to believe in God and love Him disinterested, having no expectations in return (Ricoeur, 2007, p. 55). To Job, as it is the case with all the sapiential books in the Old Testament, (Proverbs 1, 7; 9,10; Ps.110, 10), this is the principle of wisdom.

Saint Gregory of Nyssa tells that the fear of God which arises out of faith is a tremendous source of righteousness, making the one in suffering wiser by remembering the things passed so as to beware the future ones. By mastering the soul and chasing out all our evil thoughts, fear is born of light-heartedness and so all wrongdoings are stifled (St. Gregory of Nyssa, 1863, col.479C).

A former righteous and prosperous man, grieving over because of all the evils come upon him, Job is an outstanding example of someone who suffers because of their human condition. His pain is infinite all the more because the reason of his suffering is unknown to him (Ballabio, 1999, p. 125).

He is not a mere righteous person who, in the name of his innocence, revolts himself against suffering, but he is aware of not being righteous before God. He is aware of the fact that he cannot feel guilty for a particular thing alone, and that is exactly why he keeps invoking his innocence, although he does not reject the theory of retribution according to which sin and suffering are connected. He feels God's presence in his life, which makes him doubt himself and start asking about his sins by constantly looking into his conscience, and so his suffering becomes a good opportunity for him to know his own vanity (Chiodi, 2006, p. 440).

Nobody can ease his pain: neither his family nor the society - symbolically personified by the three friends who share the Old Testament philosophy according to which Job's previous sins have led God to punish him: i.e. there is no punishment without a sin, or, if someone suffers it is because they have previously committed a sin (Grelot, 1986, p. 27) By embodying this particular traditional philosophy, Job's friends hold the utilitarian belief that virtue brings about happiness and sinning, suffering (Spinsanti, 1990, p. 14).

Therein, The Book of Job can be considered a genuine icon of suffering which is assumed, a catechesis on the need to be faithful to God, against all compromise, a figment of Christianity and a prophetic anticipation of Christ.

Although it was not until the fourth century that, for the most part, the Orient (Popescu, 1935, p. 75) started considering Job a "symbolic icon" of the Christ, thus heralding the Gospels (St. John Chrysostom, 2012, p. 27), setting an example for all Christians and embodying an angelic life gained by virtue of suffering, (St. Gregory the Theologian, 1857, col.1179B-C), in a prophetic manner, one might say that not only does Job anticipate the image of the Christ (Larchet, 2008, p. 156) who is pierced on the Cross but he also timidly hails the joy of resurrection: I know that my Redeemer lives, and at the end He shall stand on this earth. My flesh may be destroyed, yet from this body I will see God. Yes I will. (Job 19, 25-27).

Consequently, even if he dies without having a full understanding of suffering and its role in a man's life, it is due to his prophetic dimension that Job becomes a part in God's Plan regarding His pledge in the Old Testament (Gagliardi, 2010, p. 47; Spinsanti, 1990, p. 187) and the place where God reveals himself to man. Moreover, through the New Job, embodied by Christ himself, God shall reveal the accomplishment of his Plan concerning man: with Christ, the "Road of the Cross" becomes "the Road of Resurrection" (Popa, 2003, p. 4).

In the Latin world, the problem of Job and particularly his identification with Christ is first referred to by Zeno of Verona (S. Zenonis Episcopii Veronesis, 1845, col.439-443) who preaches a series of homilies about suffering and later by Gregory the Great (St. Gregory the Great, 1849) for whom Job is

the central figure in his “Morals” and which represents the symbol of all righteous men in the Old Testament who have waited for Messiah.

Job marks a movement away from the anthropology of suffering to one that is genuinely theological. Job is such a strong believer that the mystery of his own question “why do the righteous suffer?” cannot be reasonably understood by the means of a theological theorem and remains the mystery that undermines all reason. “Which is this infinite mystery” – Saint Gregory the Theologian asks himself (St. Gregory the Theologian, 1857, col. 866). And he replies: In fact, in the Scripture there is a similar mystery and time is not enough to enumerate all the whispers of the Spirit which lead me to it. And yet who could count the sand of the sea, or the drops of water, or the depth of the abysses? Who could fathom God’s wisdom which spreads itself everywhere and which He used to create all the things according to His own will and mind? In fact, as the Saint Apostle says, it is only enough to admire difficulties rather than explain them, to contemplate and then move further: Oh, the depth of God’s knowledge and skill! How unknown is his judgement and how obscure his way! And again: If truth be told: Who has known God’s thoughts? Or who was his advisor? (Rm. 11, 33-34) Who had access to His wisdom? Job asks himself (15, 9) who is the wise man to understand all these things (Os. 14, 10) or rather to measure against what is unfathomable, and exceeds all measure (St. Gregory the Theologian, 1857)?

#### **4. CONCLUSION**

According to The Book of Job, the same faulty tradition of the Old Testament retribution is persistent in other texts of the Old Testament; one such illustrative example bearing a prophetic intention is to be found between chapters 52 and 53 by the prophet Isaiah. The text speaks of a person, the Lord’s servant who, by performing a sacerdotal act, uses his own life and suffering as a salvation for many (Chiodi, 2006, p. 351; Beauchamp, 2002, p. 267).

The righteous man is doomed just like a sinner. For that reason, the death of the righteous one reveals the sin of his accusers blaming him: his death is a gift made by God’s “Servant” for everyone’s salvation. Surely He has borne our grief and bore our suffering. Yet we esteemed Him stricken, smitten of God and afflicted. But He was pierced for our transgressions and crushed for our iniquities. Upon Him was the chastisement that brought us peace, and with His wounds we are healed. We all like sheep have gone astray, everyone to his own way and the Lord has laid on Him the iniquity of us all. He was oppressed and He was afflicted, yet He opened not his mouth; He is brought like a lamb to the slaughter and like a sheep before her shearers is dumb so He opens not his mouth (Is. 53, 4-7).

Hence, there is a connection between sin and suffering, but, both in the Book of Job and in Isaiah 53, he who suffers does not suffer for his sins; there is a clear reference here to delegate suffering, i.e. bearing suffering for another. Once this point of view changes, everybody is surprised to discover a type of pain that overthrows all evil and suffering, not as a form of punishment but as a salvation spiral for all of us (Chiodi, 2006, p. 353).

Isaiah’s prophecy is taken over by the Holy Gospels which describe the accomplishment of this prophecy through Jesus Christ. “The Servant” who suffers for the sins of humanity is Christ, the one who relinquishes His life for our transgressions. His Passion and Death become a universal gift and a grace.

The life and experience of the righteous Job is valuable to illustrate the fact that, on the one hand, God is not the doer of all evils that come upon him, and on the other, we are presented with the way a man suffers without being guilty and the way he assumes suffering in his relationship with God.

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## **MCDSARE: 2018**

# **International Multidisciplinary Scientific Conference on the Dialogue between Sciences & Arts, Religion & Education**

## **IMAGO THERAPY AND ORTHODOX THERAPY ON COUPLES AND MARRIAGE**

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### ***Abstract***

The present paper presents a theoretical scientific approach of therapy for couples, basically focused on two therapeutic orientations with subsequent similarities and differences; on the one hand, Imago therapy, which is mainly a therapy for couples experiencing emotional disconnection and orthodox therapy for couples, which is mainly included in a priest's task insuring the balance and equilibrium for couples experiencing a marriage crisis. The psychological premise of this theoretical paper is that surrender of illusions and fears in fellowship with others is at the core of life. The background principle of this approach is that Imago Therapy may be a natural adjunct of couples' spiritual beliefs and their commitment to helping each other achieve fulfilment in their marriage relationship. For more than a decade, The Imago Model in Action has been used regularly by therapists interested in this effective and now well-known model of working with couples. If we look at the core of this model in action, we see that the effect is merely the same both at the functional and psychological level. Both persons reconnect and reconstruct the emotional fundamentals of their marriage. Still, the significant differences appear at the level of principality. For the orthodox perspective, the very notion of marriage as a sacrament presupposes that a man is not only a being with physiological, psychological, and social functions, but that he is a citizen of God's Kingdom; whereas the Imago model focusses on healing the childhood wounds and reconnection which can keep marriage relationships fresh and dynamic.

**Keywords:** Psychotherapy; Religion; Education; Psychology; Social and Cultural Studies;

### **1. INTRODUCTION**

For the past thirty years, in Romania, the institute of family and the concept of couple have been threatened by the transformation of the different understanding of the free union on man and woman. The orthodox perspectives perceives it as an indispensable condition for marriage whereas other society trends such as secularization and moral relativism prefer to ignore the sacral nature of marriage. As for the

therapeutic approaches, Imago therapy seemed to have been one of the unique forms of therapy that has similarities to the perspectives of orthodox view on marriage. Moreover, it has been proven a highly effective form of relationship and couples' therapy that has positively affected thousands of couples around the world. It is the only form of therapy which goes beyond reuniting the couples and seeks to bring back the sacred sense of universality and transcendence that the union between a man and a woman has had since its beginnings.

## **2. PROBLEM STATEMENT**

The orthodox therapy for couples encompasses the following key concept: orthodox marriage and orthodox family (it does not accept to offer support for other types of families, being restricted to orthodox family). The Imago therapy includes the following key concepts: Imago Relationship Therapy (IRT), imago dialogue (through conflict to connection), Imago model in action (healing the wounds on invisibility), short-therapy.

We shall shortly describe the key concepts involved in the each of the two therapeutic approaches.

### **2.1. Orthodox family/marriage**

The institute of family is threatened today by such phenomena as secularization and moral relativism. The Orthodox Church asserts the sacral nature of marriage as her fundamental and indisputable doctrine. In the Orthodox Church, marriage is considered to be the oldest institution of divine law since it was instituted at the same time as the first human beings, Adam and Eve, were created (Gen. 2:23). Since its origin this union was not only the spiritual communion of the married couple – man and woman, but also assured the continuation of the human race. Blessed in Paradise, the marriage of man and woman became a holy mystery, which is mentioned in the New Testament in the story about Cana of Galilee, where Christ gave His first sign by turning water into wine thus revealing His glory (Jn. 2:11). The mystery of the indissoluble union of man and woman is the image of the unity of Christ and the Church (Eph. 5:32). The emphasis is on the Christ-centered nature of marriage. The sacred nature of the God-established union allows it to be regarded as 'a small church, an image of the Church. Therefore, all counselling regarding this union shall be performed also in the church except for cases of illness. Through God's blessing, the union of man and woman is elevated, for communion is above individual existence as it introduces the spouses to a life in the image of the Kingdom of the Holy Trinity. A necessary condition for marriage is the faith in Jesus Christ to be shared by a bridal pair, husband and wife. The foundation of unity in marriage is unity in Christ, so that the marital love blessed by the Holy Spirit may reflect the love of Christ and His Church as a mystery of the Kingdom of God and the eternal life of humanity in the love of God (Hierotheos Vlachos, 2001).

The protection of the sacral nature of marriage has always been of crucial importance for the preservation of the family which reflects the communion of those tied by conjugal bonds both in the Church and in the whole society. Therefore, the communion accomplished in the sacrament of marriage is not simply a natural conventional relationship but a creative spiritual force realized in the sacred institution of the family. It is the only force that can ensure the protection and education of children both in the spiritual mission of the Church and in the life of society.

The orthodox doctrine views marriage as the heart of the family; and the family is realization of marriage. In today's world, a real threat to Orthodox Christians is constituted by the pressure to recognize new forms of cohabitation. The deepening crisis of marriage is a matter of profound concern for the Orthodox Church not only because of negative consequences for the whole society and a threat to internal family relationships, the principal victims of which are married couples and, in the first place, children because regrettably they usually begin to martyr innocently from their early childhood.

### **2.2. Imago Relationship Therapy (IRT)**

Imago Relationship Therapy (IRT) was created by Dr. Harville Hendrix, author of the best-selling "Getting the Love You Want: A Guide for Couples (1988)." The term Imago is Latin for "image," and refers to the "unconscious image of familiar love." More than two decades ago Dr. Harville Hendrix and Dr. Helen LaKelly Hunt started providing resources for couples, therapists, or individuals seeking to find a way to be more effective in their life and relationships (<http://imagerelationships.org/>).



After Freud, the fields of couples' therapy and family therapy, under the influence of the emerging relational insights, began more and more to focus on interpersonal variables of healing and on more efficient models of therapeutic change. At the same time, cultural shifts in the mental health field led to the development of managed care, which limited therapeutic access for clients to less than 10 sessions in contrast to the requirement of most short-term dynamic and relational models, which recommended 20–40 sessions.

While the influence of psychodynamic and relational therapies continued to focus on unravelling the complexities of the past and the unconscious, much marital therapy focused on communication skills, conflict resolution, behavior modification, and problem solving (Wade Luquet, 2007).

The Imago therapy is a short-term therapy. Why did we choose a short-term couples therapy? Wade Luquet (*Short-term Couples Therapy- The Imago Model in Action*, 2007) has cleverly and efficiently devised a model of couple therapy consisting of six sessions (although he also briefly describes the same program in formats of 8, 10 and 12 sessions respectively), which offers couples an easily understandable and adaptable philosophy of relationships, along with the appropriate communication and problem-solving skills in a time-limited framework.

Nevertheless, this model is well balanced, sensible and clearly structured and wisely acknowledges that most of the couple work takes place outside the therapy room. In Romania, therapists undergo formation and supervision in this type of therapy only for the last 10 years. Couple therapy in itself has no longer been regarded as shameful also for the past 10 years. Our country does not have a tradition in couple therapy approaches as America does. Nevertheless, we chose Luquet's short-term couple therapy model with its clearly structured and concisely described time-limited amount of sessions as fitted perfectly for a properly designed comparative study to the orthodox approach. There are, of course, other types of couple therapy that may undergo this SWOT comparative analysis that we are about to perform in this article. But we limit our comparative perspective to only these two. We prefer this therapeutic approaches as they both describe a model of couple therapy that is practical, intelligent, accessible, logical, respectful, and immediately useful for both clinicians and researchers.

In contrast to the skill-based marital therapies, Imago included identifying the impact of childhood on marital choice and marital dynamics and the importance of acquiring relational skills. The central relational skill was the Imago Couples Dialogue, and the role of the therapist was radically altered from "expert" to "facilitator" of the dialogue process.

Imago Dialogue became a powerful therapeutic intervention to help couples restore connection in their relationship and thereby repairing the rupture of connection in childhood (*Short-term Couples Therapy- The Imago Model in Action*, 2007).

Therefore, The Imago therapy involves the "Imago Dialogue" process; the latter is meant to help partners move from blame and reactivity to understanding and empathy. Before opening and bearing this dialogue, there is an important psychological premise that the therapist has to consider: there is often a connection between the frustrations experienced in adult relationships and early childhood experiences. For example: If one frequently felt criticized as a child, he/she will likely be sensitive to any criticism from, and feel criticized often by their partner. Likewise, if one felt abandoned, smothered, neglected, etc., these feelings will come up in their marriage/committed relationships. Most people face only a few of these "core issues," but they typically arise again and again within partnerships. This can overshadow all that is good in the relationship, leaving people to wonder if they have chosen the right mate.

The Imago dialogue therefore focusses not only on current practical problems of the couple but also on understanding each other's feelings and "childhood wounds" more empathically. Only then the partners may begin to heal themselves and their relationship, and move toward a more conscious relationship. With this process, a family formed of a man and a woman can transform conflicts into opportunities for healing and growth, and connect more deeply and lovingly with each other.

The ultimate outcome of a dialogical relationship is the creation of a conscious relationship within which both partners experience the restoration of the original condition of connection to all parts of oneself, to one's physical and social context, and to the cosmos—the experience of oneness which was lost in childhood.

### **3.PURPOSE OF THE STUDY**

The purpose of this study is to find similarities and differences between the two therapeutic approaches as well as to suggest ways in which both types of therapies may interrelate and contribute together at helping the couple reunite. Therefore, we shall present a descriptive approach of each and starting from SWOT type analysis for each to envision a further interrelation.

### **4.RESEARCH QUESTIONS**

This article is meant to identify lines where the two different approaches come together. Particularly, the priest may still be a counsellor and advisor for those who trust him as a person mainly but not necessarily as a messenger of God by appealing to Imago therapy. Paradoxically, in practice most orthodox priests in Romania apply techniques used in Imago therapy without even knowing it has a name. Imago therapy is new even for most Romanian psychotherapists and not known at all among orthodox priest in Romanian who do not seem to be open to apply psychotherapy techniques.

The next question is what brings forth orthodox therapy? From our point of view, it introduces another so-called “partner” in this relationship: that is Jesus Christ. The orthodox perspective on relationship explains the role of Jesus in the mirror of the orthodox conceptualization of the union. Therefore, what we are going to do next is to explain what are the similarities and differences between the two approaches.

1.If the psychological approach uses the two partners as the only resources for the case, the orthodox therapy brings forth a third partner, who is the most important part of the relationship.

2.The next key matter is that concerning the degree of religiosity of the partners and their faith. If they are true believers, that is they believe and accept there is this empowered third instance who can help them along with the solving of their conflicts then the therapy may develop smoothly according to the stages performed and established mostly by the priest. In they are not believers but appear to have asked for the priest advice, the letter may still help them by using techniques specific to Imago therapy (<https://ortodoxiatinerilor.ro/tinerii-biserica/psihologie-ortodoxa/17384-tehnici-de-psihoterapie-vazute-din-perspectiva-ortodoxa>).

In Romania, the general perception and position of Orthodox Church to psychotherapy is that of rejection. So the main question that arises here is why in many European and American countries the counselling provided by the priests is considered therapeutic and embraces many techniques from psychotherapy (of different orientations) and in Romania psychotherapy provided by specialists (psychotherapists, psychoanalysts and psychologist) is still considered something very different and even dangerous for the respective person involved in the process. More specifically, in Romania there are very few priests who are open to psychotherapy as a way of helping people and rather views it as a Devil’s infused work.

Very few initiatives have been taken to defense psychotherapy and view it as a way of helping man reconstruct his personality. One of them was initiated by the Association of Psychologists and Orthodox Psychotherapists together with the Faculty of Sociology and Psychology from Timisoara. They organized an international symposium with the following theme: “Therapeutic valences of orthodox spirituality and main directions in the development of contemporary psychology in 2013.”

Therefore, one core issue to debate is to find ways if there are any to validate both therapeutic approaches: Imago therapy is scientifically and empirically validated, their authors being well-known couple therapists who have witnessed the healing of hundreds of couples over the years whereas orthodox therapies in Romania are barely concepts and paradigms and recognized as such by very few priests. Most priests tend to avoid the term therapy when they talk about couples who ask for their help and prefer to see it as encompassed in the process of confession. Most of them see confession as a primary condition for further counselling. And this issue arises another research question: if offering couple counselling is pre-conditioned by the act of confession, wouldn’t it be better for the people who do not attend church as much as requested by orthodox dogma to be offered first counselling and then requested to come for confession? Doesn’t the act of confession request a great amount of trust of the individual first in the person of the priest? The authenticity of the act of confession isn’t it given first by the act of trust that the

believer puts in the hands of the priest? From this point of view, Imago therapy comes with a major advantage: it starts from a perceived reality that most of us have developed very good defense against accepting advice, especially if it looks like maybe we are in the wrong and are being told to do things right. Therefore, Imago couples' therapy takes a radically different approach. Imago therapy doesn't work to "fix" partners; it invites you to join within the therapeutic frame in working on the relationship as a whole. In Imago, nobody is right or wrong. The challenge is to learn how to talk together about things which really matter, in a way that feels safe, supportive, and positive (<http://imagorelationships.org/pub/about-imago-therapy/what-is-imago>).

During the process of Imago therapy both partners learn to work on the relationship themselves, they have the most power and they become the experts on their own relationship by learning to find out what is really going on for each partner, and understanding how things in the present have a deep emotional connection to their past. In the orthodox approach the assumption is that one partner should do something to undo the wrong the other one has done. The emphasis laid on right and wrong may amplify the feeling of guilt. Repentance, the feeling of regret and the striving to obey rules of the church is the main target of orthodox family therapy whereas the Imago therapy is not judgmental at all. It seeks to heal wounds of both partners and help them reconnect at the emotional level.

Therefore, another research question envisions advantages and disadvantages of both types of therapy.

### **5. RESEARCH METHODS**

We shall draw and fill in the template of SWOT analysis, after we have clearly defined the concepts each therapy deals with.

#### **ORTHODOX THERAPY**

<b>INTERNAL FACTORS</b>	
<b>STRENGTHS (+)</b>	<b>WEAKNESSES (-)</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-the purpose of marriage is wisdom, love and the unity of partners and the fruit of this love are the children</li> <li>-orthodoxy in itself is regarded as a therapeutic education (Ioan Romanidis)</li> <li>-the priest has as model of therapeutic approach the Holy Fathers of the Church, therefore he has previous models of success regarding deification, the final purpose of orthodox therapy</li> <li>-the real therapy starts there where specific passions are eliminated. The sole therapy is found in the elimination of self-love, which is the root of all those passions; this may be considered a strength as the priest knows best where to start from.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-the key element is the priest; he is the main person leading the couple to healing; he shall be endowed with qualities of a therapist therefore it is assumed that he has already successfully underwent a process of healing himself</li> <li>-the role of the priest cannot be performed by a woman; still the most therapeutic qualities belong to the anima part of us Jung); the priest asks the woman in the relation to be calm, obedient and patient and most of the times to help the man recover from his illness or weaknesses</li> </ul>

**EXTERNAL FACTORS**

**OPPORTUNITIES (+)**

-it resembles medicine as it cures the person

-the meeting with a priest (endowed with the gift of healing) is a chance for each partner to reach the beatitude of the state given by deification

- in the healing process of the respective couple, each partner starts with the model of Christ; they are supposed to find within the Church and in their relation to the priest the connection with God they need to rebuild their relationship

-according to the orthodox dogma, the Holy parents, theology is in correlation to health and the fight for healing); it is mainly and before anything else, a scientific therapy (Hierotheos Vlachos, Orthodox Psychotherapy); however, this perspective is not embraced but psychiatrists and psychologists or research psychologists (not yet)

**THREATS (-)**

-if healing means reaching the state of deification, then it may be possible that the partners don't get access to this unless the priest has done it before; therefore, the healing process is not so much in the hands of the partners but in the priest's.

-heading someone to deification without having a previous experience is a bad thing; it may be regarded as a fall in itself; the priest has to be worthy of such a therapeutic task of deification

-the healing process is not a scientific approach but an art; it is a gift one transmits forward in different shapes and forms chosen by the priest; the main forms follow the holy tradition of the church along with the orthodox marriage rules; still the priest has to be a visionary person, as not all rules and methods apply to all couples and therefore it is not a moral healing but a theological one empowered by the Revelation of God

-external intervention is necessary in the process; an intervention that for us was realized, in the Person of Christ. Christ is the only truly "healthy" Person - not because He is also God (as the notions of "healthy" or "sick" do not apply to God) - but because of His human nature, which is unaffected by any inherited deterioration, and permanently joined (voluntarily and freely) thanks to the hypostatic - the personal - union with God, He has transcended deterioration and death. Consequently, no therapy (as a true and radical elimination of sickness) can be considered without Christ.

**IMAGO THERAPY**

<b>INTERNAL FACTORS</b>	
<b>STRENGTHS (+)</b>	<b>WEAKNESSES (-)</b>
<p>-The basic thesis of Imago Relationship Therapy is that each person is a creation and function of relationship and in turn is a creator of the relationship in which he or she functions.</p> <p>-the goal of therapy is to help couples co-create a conscious marriage. The role of the Imago Therapist, in contrast to that of both traditional long-term and short-term therapists who function as experts and the source of healing, is to facilitate a therapeutic process that empowers the partners in the relationship to heal each other and grow toward wholeness</p>	<p>Happy and stable couples are able to feel into each other's experience and have a visceral understanding of the other's feelings, whether of anger, frustration, confusion, or joy. Still, many partners aren't able to access empathy; even if they have cognitive empathy they may lack affective/emotional one. Counselors working with couples who lack attachment and empathy skills will need to create a sense of safety from which empathy can be born, helping the listening partner listen fearlessly to a partner's feelings, and then validating the partner's experience rather than trying to marginalize or replace it with his or her own version.</p> <p>-Although love is a powerful impetus for husbands and wives to help and support each other, to make each other happy, and to create a family, it does not in itself create the substance of the relationship—the personal qualities and skills that are crucial to sustain it and make it grow. Special personal qualities are crucial for a happy relationship: commitment, sensitivity, generosity, consideration, compromise, and follow through with joint decisions.</p> <p>-people form union by marrying for a lot of reasons and love is not always the first or the most important reason.</p>

<b>EXTERNAL FACTORS</b>	
<b>OPPORTUNITIES (+)</b>	<b>THREATS (-)</b>
<p>-the goal of therapy is to help couples co-create a conscious marriage. The role of the Imago Therapist, in contrast to that of both traditional long-term and short-term therapists who function as experts and the source of healing, is to facilitate a therapeutic process that empowers the partners in the relationship to heal each other and grow toward wholeness. To help them become therapists for each other, he functions as a coach rather than as expert or source of healing.</p> <p>-If the work is with an individual not in relationship, the focus is the same—his or her functioning in relationship. Since the dialogical process can be learned quickly, the need for the therapist becomes healing may take years, but the</p>	<p>When couples come for couples counseling, many will have an eroded base of respect and trust for each other; that they usually come as a last resort and they have built up enormous resentments by the time they get into therapy (an enormous amount of resentment can build up in that time)</p> <p>-Escalation is a communication style that fans the flames of the conflict and brings about intense emotion. Invalidation occurs when a partner negates, counters, or ignores the experience expressed by a partner. Couples who don't manage to learn structured communication techniques, such as the Couples Dialogue of Imago won't be able to prevent these corrosive</p>

internalization of the process can be achieved in a few weeks.

- a family formed of a man and a woman can transform conflicts into opportunities for healing and growth, and connect more deeply and lovingly with each other.

behaviours from occurring in their conflictual interactions.

## 6. FINDINGS

Although orthodox psychotherapy includes apparently all cases of people, it refers to all people, one cannot get access to it unless he or she agrees to the orthodox tradition and have faith. So even if one is born orthodox by tradition, he cannot get help from an orthodox priest unless he deeply agrees and is committed to understanding and living the family relationship according to the orthodox rules, dogma and beliefs. According to Orthodox Tradition, after Adam's Fall, Man became ill, death entered into the person's being and caused many anthropological, social, even ecological problems. In the tragedy of his fall man maintained the image of God within him but lost completely the likeness of Him, since his communion with God was disrupted. However, the Incarnation of Christ and the work of the Church both aim at enabling the person to attain the likeness of God, that is, to re-establish communion with God. By adhering to Orthodox therapeutic treatment as conceived by the Holy Fathers of the Church, Man can cope successfully with his thoughts and thus solve his problems completely and comprehensively. As for the marriage dysfunctionality or problems, the final purpose in marriage should be not merely emotional reconnection like in Imago therapy, but healing and salvation. As for the stages of healing, they are known and encompassed in the orthodox dogma or theology which is understood here as a therapeutic approach. The priest is the representative of Theology which is regarded in the orthodox therapy paradigm as the person endowed with the gift of guiding the couple achieve this state of healing. He is supposed to have experienced it before and be a model just like the Model of Christ.

The basic thesis of Imago Relationship Therapy is that each person is a creation and function of relationship and in turn is a creator of the relationship in which he or she functions. Each person begins life essentially connected to all aspects of himself and to his physical, social, and cosmic context. He is whole and experiences a oneness with everything. The human problem results from a rupture of this essential connection, a rupture caused by unconscious parenting which does not support the maintenance of original connection. This results in separation from self-parts and alienation from others which create the problematic character of the social context in which we live—flawed mental health, interpersonal tension, and social ills. The fundamental human yearning is to restore this original connection.

In the process leading to marriage, it seems that we choose to make a pair especially with a person who unconsciously recreates a relationship with a person similar to our original caretaker. Still at the unconscious level, each of the partners anticipates the healing of their emotional wounds and the recovery of their wholeness. The attempt at reconnection inevitably fails, however, because the similarity of the selected partner to the original parents results in the recreation of the original, wounding childhood situation, resulting in the power struggle. The goal of therapy is to help couples co-create a conscious marriage. The role of the Imago Therapist, in contrast to that of both traditional long-term and short-term therapists who function as experts and the source of healing, is to facilitate a therapeutic process that empowers the partners in the relationship to heal each other and grow toward wholeness. To help them become therapists for each other, he functions as a coach rather than as expert or source of healing. Essentially, the therapist helps partners in a committed partnership make contact with each other and eventually achieve empathic connection through a process called dialogue. The conscious and consistent use of the three phases of dialogue—mirroring, validation, and empathy—ultimately restores connection between partners, and this connection leads to healing of emotional wounds, resumption of developmental growth, and spiritual evolution.

As a conclusion, we may state that the two types of therapies are not similar from many points of view: firstly, at the level of content or dogma, secondly from the perspective of the person who leads the

therapeutic process (the orthodox therapy is performed by a priest, within the Church-in Romania he does not need to go through other therapeutic formation or experience other form of counselling except for his own process of healing.); thirdly, they differ a lot in the final purpose. They may interfere at the technical level, as all levels of the psyche are involved, but they are very different in the common goal: whereas in orthodox therapy the final goal of marriage is to attain the mutual salvation, after the healing performed by the priest who is supposed to have undergone these stages himself.

However, the two do not share similarities at the process of learning either. Once each of the partners knows the aspects of the personality he or she has to work on, the need for the therapist as a healing assistant is very necessary in orthodox therapy, each of the partners has to present progresses by doing something within the relationship and the church, whereas in Imago therapy, once the internalization of the process has been achieved in a few weeks, both partners can exercise it on a regular basis and check progress with the therapist only if they feel the need to.

## **7. CONCLUSION**

From our point of view, what is needed is a new theoretical orientation at the level of a paradigm shift from the individual as the locus of being and individual pathology as the human problem to an ontology of relationality as constitutive of being and its rupture as the source of the human condition. Such a shift has been in the making for decades with the appearance of conjoint therapy for couples, family systems theory, and group therapies of all sorts. These innovations registered our awareness of the restriction of the individual paradigm and the need for a more inclusive vision of the human situation, but they are halfway points on the journey to a new paradigm because they tend to use the dynamics of the individual as the model for the dyad, family, and group. In addition, some of these therapies focused on the individual in context (conjoint therapy and group psychotherapy) while others lost the individual in the context (family systems therapies and group therapy).

The needed new theoretical orientation must understand relationality or inherent connectedness as the structure of being and preserve the individual as points of connection. Such a theory will see the reciprocal effect of context on individual psychodynamics and intrapsychic functioning, and the influence of the latter on the former. In other words, all things, including persons, are in relationship, and they are what they are because of their relationship to each other, and their relationship to each other is a function of who they are individually. Relationship is seen as the essence of being at the personal and cosmic level. Imago Relationship Therapy is an example of such a paradigm. The challenge and inspiration which led to its development were to create a couples' therapy that was effective in helping partners understand and maintain their relationship.

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## MCDSARE: 2018

# International Multidisciplinary Scientific Conference on the Dialogue between Sciences & Arts, Religion & Education

## AN EXISTENTIAL MODEL FROM THE PERSPECTIVE OF SAINT MAXIMUS THE CONFESSOR

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### **Abstract**

By taking a brief look at the history of human thinking, we find that people are constantly preoccupied by existence. From the perspective of cosmological models, one can even speak of their philosophical and scientific history. In Greek theology, Saint Maximus the Confessor is the author of an existential model that integrates both the cosmological and the anthropological dimensions. Its particularity consists of the fact that it describes the fundamental stages of existence in terms that are found in the Platonic and Aristotelian philosophies. This vision is permeated by the pre-Christian Greek philosophical tradition in which Saint Maximus found elements compatible to Christianity. His existential model is based on the Christian revelation expressed in philosophical and theological concepts, with an obvious tendency for objectivity. The three coordinates of Saint Maximus' existential model are *existence - the good existence - the eternal existence*. The fundamental concepts of Saint Maximus' existential model that determine the quality of the human way of living are nature, power, energy, movement, and free will. More specifically, the way in which the formation of good habits is described by reference to the rationale of human existence reflects a hermeneutical capacity that synthesizes Aristotle's Nicomachean ethics and Christian ethics. For this reason, Saint Maximus' existential model can be a reflection base for contemporary philosophy and anthropology.

**Keywords:** existence; theological model; philosophical perspectives; Aristotelian terms;

### **1. INTRODUCTION**

In *Ambigua*, the intention of Saint Maximus the Confessor (580-662) to theorize an existential model according to a paradigm that expresses the origin, the ontological development and fulfilment of rational beings is quite clear. Based on divine revelation, this existential route is explained through hypotheses that turn into theses. St. Maximus explains the terms of the existential triad in a relational and gradual way, advancing to formulations that predominantly assimilate ontological philosophical terminology in complete harmony with the theological argumentation.

By establishing the ontological difference between the Creator and the creature, St. Maximus demonstrates that rational beings are necessarily moved ( $\tau\alpha\ \lambda\omicron\gamma\iota\kappa\acute{\alpha}\ \kappa\alpha\iota\ \kappa\iota\nu\epsilon\iota\tau\alpha\ \pi\acute{\alpha}\nu\tau\omicron\varsigma$ ) from the beginning to their purpose ( $\acute{\omega}\varsigma\ \acute{\epsilon}\xi\ \acute{\alpha}\rho\chi\eta\varsigma\ \kappa\alpha\tau\grave{\alpha}\ \phi\acute{\upsilon}\sigma\iota\nu$ ), for the fact that they exist ( $\delta\iota\grave{\alpha}\ \tau\omicron\ \acute{\epsilon}\iota\upsilon\alpha\iota$ ), to their



final purpose (πρὸς τέλος), according to their own will (κατὰ γνώμην), to good existence (διὰ τὸ εὖ εἶναι). The existence (τὸ εἶναι) being the gift of God, the ever-good existence (τῷ ἀεὶ εὖ εἶναι) is in turn the reward He gives as a result of their movement towards their purpose, and the good existence (τὸ εὖ εἶναι), is the result of the effort of moving in accordance with their reason to be. The rationale of being (τοῦ εἶναι λόγον) originating in God, the eternal existence depends on its awareness (*Ambigua I*, 7). At this stage of the conception of the existential model, the components of the triad are related to the concepts of beginning - purpose, essence, movement, wilful choice and rationality. Identity of Origin - Purpose - God is the key association of concepts underlying the fulfilment of human existence in relation to Him.

The identification of the three existential levels (εἶναι - εὖ εἶναι - ἀεὶ εἶναι) with the general modes of creation (καθολικοὺς τρόπους) clarifies the use of nature's works (φυσικαῖς ἐνεργείαις). The observation that, by following nature's rationale (λόγον τῆς φύσεως) which leads to its Cause (τὸν αὐτῆς αἴτιον), one can acquire the true existence (τὸ ὄντως εἶναι) highlights the understanding reached by the saints of existence as contemplation of the accessible ratios of God, while emphasizing the idea that assuming it requires practice (*Ambigua I*, 10).

The relation between the general modes of creation and the levels of existence (making - existence, γένεσις - τὸ εἶναι; Baptism - good existence, βάπτισμα - τὸ εὖ εἶναι; Resurrection - eternal existence, ἀναστάσις - τὸ ἀεὶ εἶναι) expresses an approach inspired by the Christological work of the recovery of the world through God. St. Maximus considers the ways of man's movement, according to or contrary to the reason of existence (τὸ εὖ - τὸ φεῦ εἶναι) as being determinative of the types of existence that he can voluntarily acquire. The level of eternal existence is distributed according to the criterion of personal assumption of the received existence. St. Maximus insists that the continuity of existence and the persistence in God or not depends on the type of skill (ἐξίς) formed voluntarily, (*Ambigua I*, 42). The demonstration in *Ambigua I*, 65 constitutes the synthesis of the stages that configures the existential model of St. Maximus the Confessor. The three levels of existence are related to anthropo-ontological triads (being/ nature - will - grace/ οὐσία - προαίρεσις - χάρις; power - energy - rest/ δυνάμις - ἐνεργεία - ἀργία) which emphasize that receiving the eternal existence depends fundamentally on the way in which the data of nature is accessed and on the constant movement towards the cause of eternal existence. These references from *Ambigua I* (ΜΑΞΙΜΟΥ, 1863), corroborated, reveal the intention of St. Maximus the Confessor to propose a new way of interpreting the concept of existence.

The ontological terms used by Saint Maxim in the argumentation of the existential tripartite project are also found in Aristotle (Aristotle, 1933, Plato, 1942), but also in Saint Dionysius the Areopagite (ΔΙΟΝΥΣΙΟΥ, 1857). St. Maximus selects from Aristotle the concepts that define human nature (Aristotle 1926) structurally and fits them into his existential paradigm in a new way meant to create an important premise for the dialogue between Philosophy and Theology.

## **2. PROBLEM STATEMENT**

Although the references to the existential triad are found in the main works on the theology of Saint Maximus the Confessor (Balthasar, 1947, Sherwood, 1955, Thumberg, 1995), , this subject was not analysed distinctly. For this reason, research into this tripartite existential paradigm that emerges in *Ambigua I* may be a starting point for its deepening. The components of this existential model require a deeper investigation due to the anthropological implications it implies (Larchet, 1996). The theory of rationales integrated into the conception and the development of the multi-levelled Maximian existential model is closely united with their meaning which are revealed gradually as it is assumed. The interest of this study lays in the structure of the maximal existential project, and its novelty lays in the connections established between the divine given and its spiritual purpose.

## **3. RESEARCH QUESTIONS**

The purpose of this study is to highlight the existential model of St. Maximus the Confessor in which his synthetic spirit can be observed at the level of the terminology he uses. It seeks to bring back to the attention of the philosophers a great author who managed to translate in ancient Greek terms the wisdom of the theological vision of existence. The main questions that arise in this regard are:

- What has favoured the assimilation of the concepts of Plato and Aristotle into the Maximian existential model?
- Can we see in the myth of Er, the soldier of the Republic of Plato, a reference compatible with Christianity?
- What are the ultimate consequences of the proposed model?
- Can we talk about a philosophical re-evaluation of the Maximian existential model?

#### **4. PURPOSE OF THE STUDY**

This study seeks to highlight the anthropological perspective based on responsibility, which St. Maximus the Confessor devised on the basis of divine revelation, and transposed it through philosophical terminology. The relationships established between ontological and anthropological concepts indicate an interdependence between the way of living and the quality of existence (Christou, 1982). The importance given to the human ontological given and the explanations are not limited to the present, space-temporal, life but opens to eternity. Maximian explanations contain possible solutions to contemporary crisis situations, which often ignore their biological given and their spiritual potential. They stimulate the will to improve human thinking and humanity by greatly elevating the cause and purpose of existence. The rationality of the Maximian perspective and the argumentation technique indicate a high level of reflexivity that invites to dialogue with modern philosophy. Knowing the subject matter addressed by St. Maximus the Confessor is a way for modern man to rediscover his modernity.

The present research seeks to highlight the fact that the investigation of the data that allowed the appropriation of important ontological terms of anthropological relevance from ancient Greek philosophy indicates an effort to adapt them to the Christian existential vision and a flexible theological mentality. St. Maximus's selection of the philosophical vocabulary is based on the revealed perspective he is trying to explain. It proposes to analyse from different angles the concepts that make up the Maximian existential model, and the re-composition of the overall vision of human existence, from the reason of its pre-existence in its cause to its fulfilment.

#### **5. RESEARCH METHODS**

This study is based on a research method focused on investigating working hypotheses and reconstructing the existential model of St. Maximus the Confessor. The research of hypotheses can lead to new perspectives on the way in which the modern man relates to life. Also, the reconstruction of the Maximian existential model is necessary for the author's global conception of existence.

The study of the existential model of St. Maximus also implies the analysis of the type of argument he uses. Maximian ideas are often presented in a hypothetical way, not exposed without demonstration. The study of the argumentation of the hypotheses advanced by St. Maximus the Confessor constitutes a critical research into the premises of his thoughts and interpretations.

The investigation of classical Greek philosophical sources containing concepts and perspectives compatible with Maximian thinking is part of the comparative study necessary to the understanding of the author.

#### **6. FINDINGS**

As a theologian open to philosophy, St. Maximus does not impose axioms, but hypotheses that he rationally demonstrates. The novelty of the existential model of St. Maximus the Confessor consists in the design of an existential path through which man can develop his ontological given from his cause. At the vocabulary level, the relationship between theology and philosophy can be seen through the identification of the cause with God, in which we find the reasons for everything there is.

Another finding as a result of the comparative research of sources is that not only in terms of terminology, but also in terms of the overall vision of perpetual existence, there are important similarities between St. Maximus and Greek philosophy. The myth of Er with which Plato concludes the Republic (Plato, 1942) transmits a series of ideas through which the author expresses his conception of human existence as something that does not end with death. Although he wrote in a non-Christian context, Plato

spoke of the resurrection and of the reward according to people's actions on earth. The criterion for receiving eternal happiness and/or unhappiness is the quality of ethically distinct human actions. These ideas express an impressive perspective on the belief of the ancient world in eternal existence, which is a natural continuation of the earthly one. If Plato chooses to express his vision of existence through a myth, St. Maximus the Confessor prefers a reasoned discourse to make known not his personal conviction, but an existential perspective of the revealed Christian faith. The similarity of Plato's ideas in the Republic with those of the Maximian existential model in *Ambigua I* indicates a close approximation of the concept of existence. The compatibility of Plato and St. Maximus with regard to the way of assuming existence and accepting it as a divine reward according to good or bad living can be the premise to the intimate research of the philosophical vision and of the implications of the Christian existential model proposed by St. Maximus.

Although he did not specifically conceptualize his existential model, but used it for hermeneutical purposes according to various theological contexts, St. Maximus had the intention of making it known in various phases culminating in an integrative, synthetic, formulation. Its positive character results from the emphasis placed on the fulfilment of man as a result of an act of self-understanding. Through this model, St. Maximus wanted to present the framework of human spiritual development from a Christian perspective, showing how the natural given of the flesh should be used in the quest of inheriting God. The prospect of missing the fulfilment of existence occupies a second and more didactic place. It is mentioned more in terms of accountability towards the power naturally received by man to move closer to God. Saint Maximus greatly emphasizes the prospect of man's fulfilment in God as a result of exercising his free will through the formation of good habits in which His purposes are found. From this point of view, the Maximian existential paradigm can constitute a basis of reflection for psychology as it is marked by a strong motivational character, insisting on the fulfilment of the purpose of human life. The idea of human fulfilment through the use of the nature of its intrinsic qualities is intended to encourage acceptance of the given existential path. The concept of existence as a gift is meant to give a sense of security, and rediscovering it in the terms of Saint Maximus can help balance many people who do not know where they come from and where they are heading to.

Through its paradigm, St. Maximus can offer a therapeutic solution to anguish as it demonstrates convincingly that everything that exists has a meaning. He proposes a model of ascendant existence that pre-exists in God, and leads to the eternal existence in His love. Fundamental to St. Maximus' thinking is the statement according to which the existence as a gift from the Master is not intended for dissipation but for eternal support. The anthropological implications of these ideas are obvious as man is essentially linked to existence, and its quality depends on understanding and choosing the way it is going.

## **7. CONCLUSION**

Theologian and philosopher, Saint Maximus remains a voice open to the dialogue between theology and philosophy. The model of tripartite existence conceived by St. Maximus the Confessor can be a starting point to be taken into account for interdisciplinary academic dialogue. He is the expression of the translating into the ontological, philosophical concepts of the existential Christian way, which is explained according to the divine revelation, and therefore he remains open to philosophical hermeneutics. He is the expression of positive and dynamic Byzantine patristic existentialism, which exploits human potential through education in complete freedom. Discussed in comparison with the existential humanist models of the 20th century, the Maximian paradigm offers not only a concrete answer to the meaning of human existence, but also a way to learn, understand and fulfil it. The Christian existential model built by St. Maximus, through its structure, remains open to philosophical and theological approaches, being the expression of a synthesis in which the voices of patristic tradition and those of philosophy developed in the same cultural space of dialogue and harmonization are heard.

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## FAMOUS CRIMINAL PHRASES: LIBERTÉ, ÉGALITÉ, FRATERNITÉ

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### *Abstract*

The history of mankind has recorded numerous proverbial phrases of great cultural significance. The present study aims to highlight some of them by focusing on phrases with socio-political significance. By enumerating some of them, we will retain only one for further discussion, considering the example chosen enlightening for our intention of carrying out a much broader study. From the ancient divide et impera or the mediaeval limpieza de sangre, under the scrutiny of the Inquisition pyres, moving on, to the modern age, to find phrases such as liberté, égalité, fraternité, arbeit macht frei, что делать?, or time is money. Beyond the universal “loudness” of these phrases, they conceal discrimination and crimes against humanity and, at the same time, speak volumes of the character of the peoples from which they emanated. In order to illustrate these theses, the present paper will focus on the phrase Freedom, Fraternity, Equality.

**Keywords:** freedom; equality; republic; revolution; crime;

## 1. INTRODUCTION

The French Revolution, with its complexity and dilemmas, has remained a vivid historic event in European consciousness, having never ceased to produce interpretations and reinterpretations among historians, most of the time, beyond scientific curiosity and exigencies of objectivity. With their deeds, the protagonists of the Revolution have left a matrix source to posterity, a source of legitimizing the action that they dreamt to imprint on the present. Thus, both republicans and socialist revolutionaries would conjure the Jacobin or Thermidorian spirit, the conservatives, that of a constitutional monarchy, which is not only valid for France, but also beyond its borders. Even though the Revolution has been always synonymous with the Republic in the French consciousness, one still notes that the revolutionary waves constantly brought Monarchy to the shores in the nineteenth century, as it dominated that century. This is a significant fact which can be explained from the perspective of the attempt at national reconciliation and regaining of historical identity, but also from that of the failure of the Revolution or its continuity from 1789 until the defeat of the Paris Commune (May 1871).

When does the French Revolution commence and end is still an open issue, as it is still a part of contemporary history, which it moulds, unable to free the scholar from pure and neutral reflection. Along

its course, it was marked by political crimes, sometimes bordering genocide, as is the case with repression in the Vendée. This dramatic episode of the Revolution proves how much present it still is in France's present-day political and scientific life. Everything started in 1986, with the publication of the book *A French Genocide: The Vendée* by Reynald Secher. There has been constant debate ever since between those who regard Vendée as "the first genocide in modern history" and the leftist trend, which rejects this statement.

## **2. PROBLEM STATEMENT**

In what this study is concerned, we attempt to grasp the phenomenon of the crimes of the French Revolution, which started under the generous aegis *liberté, égalité, fraternité*, without placing ourselves on any ideological platform, without supporting one historiographic trend or another. We are exclusively interested in facts, which is why, an attempt will be further pursued at answering the question, how could such generous values of humanity patronize genocide?

## **3. RESEARCH QUESTIONS**

Are the values, in truth, the causes of political assassination?

The slogan *Liberté, Égalité, Fraternité* (Liberty, Equality, Fraternity) entered the revolutionary circuit on December 5th, 1790, with the speech delivered by Maximilien Robespierre, On the Organisation of the National Guard, distributed at a national scale by the popular societies. It was not the only slogan of the Revolution, but one out of many, such as: *La Nation, la Loi, la Roi* (The Nation, the Law, the King), *Union, Force, Vertu* (Union, Strength, Virtue), *Force, Égalité, Justice* (Strength, Equality, Justice) or *Liberté, Sûreté, Propriété* (Liberty, Safety, and Property)

Antoine-François Momoro, typographer and radical revolutionary, who would end up under the guillotine in March 1794, against the background of Federalist revolts and foreign invasions, imposed in 1793 the slogan *Unité, Indivisibilité de la République; Liberté, Égalité, Fraternité ou la mort* (Unity, Indivisibility of the Republic; Liberty, Equality, Fraternity or Death), which was first engraved on the facades of all public buildings in Paris, and then across the country. During the Jacobin dictatorship, other phrases were also imposed: *liberté, unité, égalité; liberté, égalité, justice; liberté, raison, égalité*. The Thermidorian reaction to terror excluded fraternity from the revolutionary discourse.

The phrase *liberty, equality, fraternity* completely disappears under the Empire and the Restoration, returning on the lips of the revolutionaries of 1830 and subsequently imposing itself as the official slogan of the Second Republic, after the 1848 Revolution. On July 14th, 1880, the Third Republic consecrates this formula as the official symbol of the state. It will remain as such until the Regime of Vichy, which adopts a new symbol: *work, homeland, family*. After the liberation, the republican formula is enforced again, being inscribed as a national symbol both in the 1946 and the 1958 Constitution.

This brief inroad is intended, aside from providing us with a vision on the natural selection of the values produced in revolutionary times, to give us a framework of the constant, decisive options to which the French society has always aspired: this is what defines its national specificity. A specificity that we must not regard as a historical given but sooner as a process and product of a historical experiment.

While analysing, in turn, the three types of values, it is necessary that we should trace their nature and the extent to which they can be compatible and able to form social balance.

Liberty and equality were born at the dawn of the Revolution. The Declaration of the Rights of the Man and of the Citizen defines these values from its very first article: "Men are born and remain free and equal in rights. Social distinctions can be founded only on the common good." Articles 4 ("Liberty consists of doing anything which does not harm others: thus, the exercise of the natural rights of each man has only those borders which assure other members of the society the fruition of these same rights. These borders can be determined only by the law") and 5 ("The law has the right to forbid only actions harmful to society. Anything which is not forbidden by the law cannot be impeded, and no one can be constrained to do what it does not order") state the nature of liberty, which is political. From the same first article of the Declaration, one infers the juridical nature of equality: the law must be the same for all citizens ("men are born equal in rights").

As far as fraternity is concerned, it is not defined by this document, but is inferred by experts from the oath taken by deputies on June 20th, 1789, that of not separating until they have elaborated a Constitution. The fraternity of the deputies, as a radical form of opposition to Louis XVI's attempt at dispersing the assembly of the deputies of the Third Estate will be the revolutionary step that transfers the power from the King to the nation and to its representatives. Five days later, the deputies of the Third Estate proclaim, as a result of the "fraternity of rebellion", the National Constituent Assembly.

While liberty and equality are constantly called upon in the development of the revolution, fraternity only rarely reaches its discourse. It is probably because this value, pertaining to community and not to individuality, was perceived as incompatible. However, the engine of the French Revolution is represented by social discrimination, not by fraternization. Hence the crimes of this revolution. When the passion of the events cools off and their being reflected upon becomes possible, fraternity better defines its nature and acquires its legitimate right of being harmoniously placed together with the other values. Thus, it is understood that it belongs to the domain of moral obligation, and not to that of law or justice, that it moulds interpersonal relations, determining the formation of a balanced social body. This value will be the most mature and the remotest gain of the French society, which had to pay for it the price of unimaginable crimes and atrocities.

Before we understand this crimes, let us answer the question opening this paragraph. The values are not the causes of the political assassination. The answer can only be negative, and this, not only because they do not represent an existential subject, but precisely as a result of their nature. They are the product of human aspirations and have a universal nature, in the extent to which aspirations can be universalized. However, in the beginning, the protagonists invoked liberty and equality, which actually overlapped the large aspirations of the enlightened classes. Fraternity was not for these protagonists to invoke, it will smoulder in the hearts of the folk, and it is only the demagogy of the political fractions what takes it to the surface of history, in moments of crisis, until it finally imposes itself in the system of the aspirations of the French society.

#### **4. PURPOSE OF THE STUDY**

How can we explain the crimes of the French Revolution?

The weakness shown by Louis XVI created the awareness of a power vacuum, of the fact that there was power to take. François Furet, in his *Interpreting the French Revolution*, emphasises the fact that, if in the Old Regime, the power was the owner of the society, at the moment zero of the Revolution, the society became aware that it was the owner of power: "power belongs only to the people, that is, to nobody" (Furet, p. 69). In 1791, the National Constituent Assembly finishes its work, and the King takes the oath to respect the Constitution and ratifies it. Apparently, France has a democratic, constitutional government, based on representative legitimacy. Nevertheless, before the elaboration of the Constitution, at the same time with the Assembly, various popular and patriotic societies carry out political activities. Spontaneously born out of the enthusiasm of freedom, they claim a form of direct democracy, as an alternative of the will of the people. Between representative democracy and direct democracy, opinion settles – the power of the word legitimized by the people. It is on this political background that the revolutionary slogans flourish, mobilizing "the people" in moments of crisis. Equality is the key word and it first and foremost means the dissolution of the privileged social classes. The enemies of the revolution are momentarily identified, the aristocrats and the king himself are associated with their plot. Without this plot to be exposed, aristocrats make it obvious with their mass emigration, and the king, with his attempt to leave Paris – which opens his path to guillotine – confirming the idea of the existence of counterrevolutionary forces. Along this path of separation between the good and the bad, the aim was the formation of a new collective identity.

The Revolution has an unlimited field of action with the proclamation of the Republic. Direct democracy imposes itself through the power struggle which starts between the camps of various Societies, all with the same ideology: action in the name of the people. The will of the people, just like the plot, is "a delirium on power" – they make up the two facets of what can be called "the democratic imaginary of power"; for the Revolution, the plot is "the only adversary of sufficient stature to warrant concern, since it

was patterned on the Revolution itself. Like the Revolution, it was abstract, omnipresent and pregnant, but it was secret whereas the Revolution was public, perverse, whereas the Revolution was beneficial, nefarious, whereas the Revolution brought happiness to society” (Furet, p. 76). The legitimacy of the power of the clubs leaves representativeness on a second plane, as it functions based on the efficiency of denouncing the aristocratic plot. Not only do aristocrats fall in this process, but also some democrats, who, in the ardour of the power struggle, become adversaries. If they manifest weakness (“moderation”), they are accused of plotting with the aristocracy and sent to the guillotine. Paradoxical is the fact that “the obsession with conspiracy is a general discourse employed by both parties. By those excluded from power in order to conquer it. By the men in power, to denounce this constant and formidable threat of the other power, less fragile than their own, in front of the people” (Furet, p. 78).

Robespierre had the most insightful ability of manoeuvring this ideological mechanism, eliminating, in turn, all his political adversaries and unavoidably instituting the Reign of Terror. The discourse of the Incorruptible, of this “fanatic of morals” on equality and virtue which give significance to the action of the people is founded on the death of the guilty ones: “the guillotine is the instrument of separating the good and the bad”.

Furet frames the Terror in the logic of this power mechanism: “the common, successive project of the revolutionary groups, which consists in radicalizing the revolution, that is, of making it consistent with its discourse, arbitrates the political struggle at all times and ends up bringing the purest figure of this discourse into power. (...) Space of the power struggles, instrument of differentiation between political groups, means of integrating the masses in the new state, ideology ends up being, for a few months, coextensive with the government itself. Since then, any debate has lost its reason to exist, as there cannot be another space to be occupied between idea and power, nor another place for politics except for consensus or death” (Furet, p. 93).

During this frozen consensus, although the guillotine spread equality every day, everywhere in France, the Thermidorian Revolution was still possible. The initiative belonged to the National Assembly, the representative organism of the nation, which used the same dialectics of the people and the plot in overthrowing the tyrant. Bronislaw Baczko, in his work, *Ending the Terror: the French Revolution after Robespierre*, draws our attention to the absurdity of the accusations: Robespierre wanted to proclaim himself king, to marry Louis Capet’s daughter; as evidence, rumours were spread that a seal with the lily flower had been found, that the nuptial contract had already been concluded, etc. Vadier, President of the Committee of the General Security and one of the artisans of the overthrowing of the Jacobin dictatorship, asked many years after the event how could they invent the seal and all the other absurd evidence to unmask Robespierre as king, replied: “the fear of losing one’s head stimulates the imagination”.

It is indeed impossible to create unanimous consensus around values. And the illusion of the French Revolution was actually based on this credo, which reached its peaks during the reign of terror, when the society was divided into two classes: fear-inspiring and fearing. Tallien, one of the members of the Convention that forbade Robespierre to speak on Thermidor 9, an agent of the terror himself, but living the terror at the same time, made the following confession from the stand of the parliamentary forum, not long after the decapitation of the tyrant: “The terror degrades the man and turns him into a beast; it is the degradation of all physical forces, the commotion of all moral faculties, the derangement of all ideas, the destruction of all affections... being an extreme affection, the terror is susceptible of no more and no less. But a government cannot spread terror and manages to make everybody tremble only by constantly threatening them with this punishment... only by threatening against any form of action and even inaction” (Baczko, 66). Thus, the terrorised terrorists were those who plotted to overthrow the system on Thermidor 9.

At this moment of the revolution, the representative government takes the stage. The Jacobin club is effectively shut down, and this association’s right to manifestation is restricted to the public space, without access to the political one.

Walking in Furet’s footsteps, Baczko remarks that the year 1789 did not open the French society towards a pluralist political system, this being represented as a unitary space. The democracy invented by the revolution combines individualism and unanimity, the representative rule with the refusal of the right to representation for any interest against the general interest, the wish for a transparent political life with



the obsessive chase after plots. The protagonists “are not capable, at any stage of the Revolution, to agree to disagree in order to accept that, at the basic principle of the functioning of the society is its conflicting nature and not a vice that need be eradicated” (Baczko, 133). Neither did the 9 Thermidor Revolution abdicate from the principle of excluding the adversary in the name of the Nation or of the Republic. Not only did the restoration of the representative system perpetuate this principle, but also added a revanchist policy to it, targeting the terrorists and the agents responsible for the reign of terror. Although calls to pardon and forgetfulness were generously declaimed, hatred and the wish for revenge prevailed. Although the abolition of the death penalty was brought into discussion, it was postponed until the day when the general peace was pronounced. Sporadically, the guillotine continued to function as an instrument of reactionary justice, of the repression of the sans-culottes riots or of the conjurations of the equals.

The relative peace and social stability inaugurated by the Directorate and continued by Napoleon, General, Consul and Emperor, put an end to the equality by guillotine, deviating it towards the battles of France with the Kings of Europe. Thus, the values of the French Revolution, going beyond the borders of the eighteenth century, also crossed the borders of their homeland.

## **5. FINDINGS**

There is a balance, although the exact number will never be known, of those sacrificed in the Revolution, of those fallen during the war, of those who await for their sacrifice in the name of liberty, equality and fraternity, in all revolutions of the 19th century, but especially in the Bolshevik revolution and in what followed. As in wartimes, during radical and violent changes, the loss of human lives is inevitable. But to find in this game of conflict manifestations of bestiality, acts of cruelty against the civil population – women, children, elders - , and torture induced for the sake of the show or as a pathological form of jouissance is not honourable for the historical event and especially for mankind as a species. The French Revolution had its knightly honour translated in the symbolic formula: “Robespierre, knight of the guillotine”.

## **7. CONCLUSION**

In the fourth chapter, “The Part Played by the People in Revolutions” in his work, *The French Revolution and the Psychology of Revolution*, Gustave Le Bon underlines the idea that the mind of a people is formed by centuries-old slow accumulations of traditions, sentiments, ideas and prejudices, all combined determining its strength. This aggregate must acquire certain stability, without crossing the limit that would make malleability impossible. The author infers the following: “without rigidity, the ancestral soul would have no fixity, and without malleability, it could not adapt itself to the changes of the environment resulted from the progress of civilisation. Excessive malleability of the national mind impels a people to incessant revolutions. Excess of rigidity leads it to decadence” (Le Bon, 33). England is given as an example of a society that has experienced the balance of stability and malleability, despite of its going through two revolutions.

The author does not pursue an in-depth analysis of the French national specificity, but along the book, just like in other studies, he insists on the malleable nature of the Latin mind. Drawing from Le Bon’s perspective, one could construe the Old Regime as having closed itself in a fatal rigidity, refusing to find support in the representative organism, the Estates General, for almost two centuries. The whole political power emanated then from the royal councils and offices. During this period of time, the society excluded from power evolved along the lines of philosophical and scientific creation, producing a coryphaeus of rationalism, as is Descartes, or a European trend of rethinking the society, as is the Enlightenment. While the political mind remained rigid, the French national mind, through the civil society, was connected to the idea of progress, change, renewal of the social contract, without having experience or historical tradition in this respect. The affirmation of the values of liberty and equality is produced on this moving theoretical ground and, when the rupture occurs, they become the banner of the Revolution. We have traced the way in which only the incessant revolutions will give authentic significance to these values, so as to make them national symbols of France, but at the painful cost of the crimes.

Both in the Old and the New Regime, France was and remained a country of values. This made possible for its people to affirm them against demagoguery, manipulations and impieties, at the same cost of the sacrifice by which they succeeded in asserting themselves.

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**THE REGULATION OF THE NEW MEDIA AND THE**  
**“ROAD TO SERFDOM”**

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***Abstract***

This paper investigates current attempts to regulate the new media (digitised electronic communications), especially in the context of privacy issues emerged in the case of Facebook, and its effects on freedom of speech and freedom of thought. Based on the theoretical framework of the Austrian thinker Friedrich A. Hayek, we will discuss the political implications of government control over social platforms and the effects of this kind of regulation on political responsibility of governors. Tracing back to Étienne de La Boétie, we discuss and apply his argument that people have the tendency to enslave themselves. Going deeper into the analysis of the Panopticon supported by the new media, we identify the consequences of this paradigm on the notion of truth. We analyze the concept of post-truth and explain the relation between democracy and security of the social corpus. Furthermore, the new media as structure of communication tends to create „truth bubbles”, „echo-chambers” in which different groups enhance their own identity and seem to live isolated from other groups, thus contributing to the atomisation of societies. This is the ideal framework for the raise of dictatorship and generation of „truth discourses” convenient to oppressive regimes.

**Keywords:** New media; censorship; regulation; freedom; post-truth era; panopticon;

**1. INTRODUCTION**

In March 2018, a scandal broke out, shaking the entire world, when Christopher Wylie, former employee of the company Cambridge Analytica, provided information about the method through which its former employer collected personal information from 87 million Facebook users (Solon Olivia, 2018), in order to use it both for the Donald Trump campaign in the United States of America, as well as in the Brexit campaign in Great Britain. After this information saw the light of day, the debate on privacy in the new media, the impact of social media on politics in democratic regimes and the issue of “fake news” broke out all around the world.

Mark Zuckerberg, CEO and founder of Facebook, the greatest social media platform, was called to testify before the United States Congress in April 2018 and before the European Parliament in May 2018. The most discussed issues during these hearings have been the identification of security breaches that have led to the leak of data and the new regulations to be imposed by states or international organisations in order to prevent such events from occurring again. The General Data Protection Regulation is the most recent regulation becoming directly applicable in all European Member States in May 2018, as well as in EEA countries. In the United States, the Federal Communication Commission regulates traditional media, but the internet is also regulated through 11 federal laws that are in force (for example Computer Fraud and Abuse Act, Cybersecurity Information Sharing Act).

One justification for the increasing tendency to regulate the “new media” (“computer technology used as a distribution platform”) is that this type of environment allows dissemination of fake information used to manipulate the masses of users. Since recently, social platforms such as Facebook have not even defined themselves as media, but as a platform for communication. Thus, its owners and administrators could not be made responsible for the content uploaded there by users. However, since the data leak scandal, Facebook has announced increased safeguarding of the platform, building better controls and new technology to prevent abuse, increasing investment in security:

“It’s not enough to just connect people, we have to make sure those connections are positive. It’s not enough to just give people a voice, we have to make sure people aren’t using it to hurt people or spread misinformation. It’s not enough to give people control of their information, we have to make sure developers they’ve given it to are protecting it too. Across the board, we have a responsibility to not just build tools, but to make sure those tools are used for good.” (Mark Zuckerberg, 2018)

These words of Mark Zuckerberg indicate that the pioneer of social media has become aware of its tremendous role in the shaping of societies nowadays and, essentially, in the evolution of democracy in Western countries.

At the same time, the vulnerable position that Facebook was cast in by this scandal has opened the door for a more perverse effect: the transfer of responsibility from professional politicians involved in democratic processes to the new media and the temptation to over-regulate an area that is, by definition, one of freedom of expression and thought. If social media is responsible for fake news, manipulation, illegal data-gathering, no politician is responsible for surprising political outcomes such as Brexit or the election of Donald Trump as President of the United States of America.

This is the context in which this paper will analyze if this tendency of the state to regulate further and further is just one step on the “way to serfdom” (Friedrich Hayek, 1946).

## **2. PROBLEM STATEMENT**

The issue of limitation of freedom of expression is certainly not new and the literature dealing with this topic is vast. Liberal and libertarian thinkers like Étienne de La Boétie, Friedrich Hayek, Robert Nozick have warned against the danger of censorship for centuries now. Their work is the main source of inspiration for defenders of freedom all over the world.

Nonetheless, these philosophical landmarks must be interpreted in the new context of “new media” regulation since this presents certain particular aspects that we will refer to in this paper: the new social effects of social media on community building, the shifts in political responsibility generated by this new type of communication, the danger of over-regulating the Internet. This paper brings together these new events with great significance and philosophical concepts that have proven to be timeless.

## **3. RESEARCH QUESTIONS**

The question that this paper attempts to answer are:

- 1) How is Jeremy Bentham’s Panopticon embodied in social media?
- 2) What are the main effects of the social media on democratic regimes?
- 3) What are the main effects of regulating social media on freedom?

## **4. PURPOSE OF THE STUDY**

In order to answer the research questions above the paper will aim to:

1) Explain that social media is an example of self-imposed Panopticon, through its constant information flow and omnipresent virtual socialization.

2) Show how social media influences democratic regimes by facilitating access to information, involvement in public discourse, collective action, generating freedoms. At the same time, it can easily be used by governments or occult actors for propaganda and manipulation and it may generate “echo-chambers” that contribute to the atomization of society.

3) Prove that regulating social media will negatively impact freedom of expression and will contribute to the shift of power from the hands of private actors to governments and political elites.

## **5. RESEARCH METHODS**

This paper will begin with a presentation of the concept of Panopticon and its manifestations in social media nowadays. Further, we will discuss in more detail the ways in which social media shapes democracies in Western countries. Finally, we will present the negative consequences of regulating the social media.

## **6. FINDINGS**

6.1. Jeremy Bentham, founder of utilitarianism, was the first to define the Panopticon, a type of building and an architectural model for a penitentiary, in which the guardian can constantly monitor all the prisoners, without them knowing it. The necessity of this concept arose from the desire to improve prison management: the number of guardians could be considerably reduced since the prisoners would feel the pressure of constant monitoring, without it actually happening. The concept could be applied in many institutions, such as schools, asylums, construction sites, hospitals, reducing the number of people in charge with supervision. The innovation consisted precisely in inducing the feeling of permanent surveillance that leads, implicitly, to behaviour regulation. Hence, an impeccable discipline mechanism is generated which is applied all over the world, due to its effectiveness. In totalitarian regimes, such as communist Romania, Panopticism was reflected by the all-encompassing eye of state surveillance.

In the context of social media, Panopticism is present through the benevolent contribution of users. Obviously, there is no comparison between state surveillance and the voluntary sharing of information, however private and intimate, over a social network. The scandal of private data harvest raises the issue of protection of data, but, at the same time, this falls into the responsibility of the social platform and it is not the prerogative of the state whether it is democratic or totalitarian. Essentially, one can always delete a Facebook account and stop using a social media platform without being limited in this action by any constraint.

What we have found is that this type of socialization, generated by the social media, bears in it a strong element of Panopticism as it involves constant exposure of the self to be observed by others. Moreover, the technological developments that made gadgets such as smart phones and tablets available to the masses have generated a ubiquitous character of this type of communication. The user is always connected in a constant exchange of information with other users. This too is significant since it shapes a new paradigm of existence that involves always being present, active and willing to share.

6.2. Starting from the impact of social media Panopticism, we have found that this impact is not only reflected on individuals, but also on democratic political regimes.

First, platforms such as Facebook or Twitter facilitate access to information since they are the ideal relay for communication, especially in countries in which the classical media is censored or under the control of media moguls.

They are also a great platform for public discourses of all types (even negative discourses such as hate speech), which stimulates the involvement in public issues, since it appears more at hand than access to a television or newspaper.

It is an excellent engine for collective action. In his address to the House of Representatives, Mark Zuckerberg underlines that “Just recently, we’ve seen the metoo movement and the March for Our Lives, organized, at least in part, on Facebook. After Hurricane Harvey, people raised more than \$20 million for relief. And more than 70 million small businesses now use Facebook to grow and create jobs.” (Mark

Zuckerberg, 2018) In Romania, all anti-corruption rallies in January 2018 have been organized through Facebook and entire social movements have been created. This new type of communication also generates new freedoms, such as the freedom to demand political change. (Shirku Clay, 2011)

So, social media platforms contribute to political participation since they can mobilize citizens for a certain cause. At the same time, the issue with online participation is that it creates the illusion of involvement, turning classical participation methods such as going to the polls or running for an office obsolete. In fact, they create the perfect environment for people to get rid of frustrations simply by expressing them, but it can become an outlet through which political energies can be lost. This is indicated by the voter turnout rate trend:

“In Europe, the region which experienced the highest level of voter turnout between the 1940s and the 1980s, voter turnout has decreased significantly since the 1990s. The decline in Europe is more significant than the decline in the other regions. In Asia and the Americas, the trends in voter turnout appear more stable over time.” (Solijonov Abdurashid, 2018)

Besides this negative effect, as it has actually happened in more than one case, social media can easily be used by governments or occult actors for propaganda and manipulation. Thus, it is a useful tool both for democratic, as well as totalitarian regimes.

Cass Sunstein warned against the danger of the so-called “echo-chambers” that contribute to the atomization of society:

“Although millions of people are using the Internet to expand their horizons, many people are doing the opposite, creating a Daily Me that is specifically tailored to their own interests and prejudices.” However, more recent studies such as that of Seth Flaxman from Oxford University have shown that “It seems counterintuitive, but direct browsing often just consists of one or two sites that you regularly read – such as the BBC and CNN – while by its nature, social media will expose you to a number of other sources, increasing the diversity.”(Sunstein Cass, 2018)

Consequently, social media platforms, despite their true potential for creating protected areas where one’s opinions are not challenged, still have the advantage of exposing users to a larger variety of views on current issues. Moreover, after the personal data scandal, Facebook pledged hiring fact-checkers to verify any news that enters the users’ newsfeed, made their advertising policy stricter and took down thousands of fake accounts belonging to spammers.

After analysing Zuckerberg’s testimony before the House of Representatives on April 11 2018 and the consequent application of the measures included in the document, it can clearly be stated that such an important private player on the social media market responded quickly and effectively in order not to lose profitability and image capital.

6.3. In a chapter visionary called “The End of Truth”, Hayek states that: “The effect of propaganda in totalitarian regimes, from the perspective of results, is different both from the perspective of span as well as from a quality point of view from the propaganda performed with different purposes by independent companies that are in competition. If all information sources are under unique control, we don’t have to worry about convincing people.”

Acknowledging the role of propaganda in democratic regimes is necessary in order to have an honest debate about the limits that must be imposed on it. However, when more and more regulations are imposed on a private actor by the state in order to determine it to censor the content uploaded on a social media platform by its users, the danger of centralization is high.

That is not to claim the uselessness of regulation for the improvement of services or for the protection of fundamental human rights. But, this should be more of a self-imposed regulation, like that taking place with Facebook nowadays, one that is generated by the effort to maintain a top position on the market. Besides the danger of reckless censorship and limitation of freedom of speech on these social media platforms, regulation by the state of these networks will lead, sooner or later, to a tendency to turn them into scapegoats for every electoral defeat. It will no longer be the responsibility of politicians and statesmen to explain the importance of informed voting to citizens, but their lack of interest and absenteeism from the polls is blamed on the manipulation of the social media.

When applying the extraordinary philosophy of La Boétie on the current issue of the regulation of the Internet and, more specifically, on social media platforms, we can refer to two of his ideas. The first

one is that tyrants are not, as one might presume, always in power by force. "There are three kinds of tyrants: some receive their proud position through elections by the people, others by force of arms, others by inheritance." (de La Boétie Étienne, 1975, 58) So, it is not exceptional that tyrants become autocratic rulers by democratic elections. European history offers the infamous example of Adolf Hitler. The potential for tyranny is only reduced and not eliminated through democratic structures of society. Citizens must always keep alert to protect their freedom as the tendency of power is to accumulate more power. And how would a modern tyrant proceed in order to obtain that "voluntary servitude" that the French thinker so brilliantly presents? Speaking about tyrants, La Boétie says: "they never undertake an unjust policy, even one of some importance, without prefacing it with some pretty speech concerning public welfare and common good." (de La Boétie Étienne, 1975, 71)

Any state intervention is justified traditionally, especially in democratic regimes, by the common good and the safety of every citizen. That is why reasonable citizens sometimes approve of state actions that excessively limit their freedom since it seems only natural that the common good prevails. And so it is, but the question remains: aren't there other mechanisms of regulation? In this particular case of social media, like in many others, the efforts of writing the wrongs are more naturally coming from the private actors involved, than from the state whose innovation potential is limited. Finally, the danger of placing the power of censorship in the hands of governments is too significant to ignore.

## **7. CONCLUSION**

Social media is a significant and powerful modern Panopticon. It influences behaviour of exposure, sharing and participation. From a political perspective, its qualities in favour of democracy are numerous: access to information, expression relay, and community organization platform. At the same time, its tendency to create "echo-chambers" and to generate the illusion of involvement are real. The regulation by state institutions of these issues related to the social media is bound to have more negative effects on freedom of expression than those generated by the development of new ground rules by the private actors involved in this business.

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## MCDSARE: 2018

# International Multidisciplinary Scientific Conference on the Dialogue between Sciences & Arts, Religion & Education

## KARL JASPERS, COMMENTATOR OF PETER DAMIAN

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### *Abstract*

Karl Jaspers was one of the most important contemporary philosophers, who had a significant contribution to developing modern philosophy and theology in the Western cultural space, together with his co-nationals Martin Heidegger and Paul Tillich. In his book, *Der philosophische Glaube angesichts der Offenbarung*, Karl Jaspers considers the well-known treaty by Peter Damian called “On Divine Omnipotence”, and the present article aims at evincing the manner in which the German-Swiss philosopher deals with this topic of omnipotent divinity, as well as the perspective he has on the doctrine of the famous Benedictine monk and cardinal of the 11<sup>th</sup> century; last but not least, the article focuses on highlighting the importance of this topic in the past and present philosophical-theological debates. This article approaches the topic of divine omnipotence in a wider context, thus reviewing the nuanced answers given by the most remarkable thinkers of the Western Antiquity and Middle Ages to questions about the manner in which the divinity interacts with the order of the created world. It is certain that Peter Damian has an innovative view on time, history and natural necessity. To Peter Damian the past does not escape divine omnipotence, it is not merely history, it is not consumed, exhausted and fixed once and forever, but instead it is dependent on divine omnipotence. Consequently, the present article attempts to show the logical consequences that this novel point of view has at the beginning of the 2<sup>nd</sup> Christian millennium.

**Keywords:** Karl Jaspers; Peter Damian; Jerome; divine omnipotence; philosophy; theology;

### 1. INTRODUCTION

The question of divine omnipotence has been one of maximum importance in the philosophical and theological literature of the two Christian millennia, both in the Western and Eastern European cultural spaces. The Bible repeatedly states that God is almighty: the first book of the Old Testament claims that nothing is “hard for the Lord” (Genesis 18, 14); Job (42, 2) admits that God “can do all things” and that nothing can oppose to His purpose; the Archangel Gabriel confesses that “no word from God will ever fall” (Luke 1, 37), and Jesus Christ Himself asserts at some point that “what is impossible with man is possible with God” (Luke 18, 27). Starting from this last verse, one could be inclined to believe that impossibility as such only exists for men, and not for God. However, what exactly means that

everything is possible for God, how wide is the area of divine omnipotence? How could these verses from the Old and the New Testament be correctly construed? Is our world completely dependent on a God who can choose to do anything? Isn't the divine omnipotence a topic for reflection that rather conceals than reveals? (Oppy 2005)

This topic and the way in which it has been approached throughout history, generally speaking, undoubtedly targets the human condition and the significance of human life, the domain of human liberty, as it foregrounds the matter of the creation's dependence on the sovereign transcendence, underlining at the same time the contingent nature of our world and of its order. The subject is extremely complex, and this is the reason why the so-called "solutions" and "verdicts" can bear the mark of ambiguity. In our post-deontic, democratic and pluralist century (Lipovetsky 1992, Bauman 1993:20-21), in our individualist, atheist and materialist postmodern age (Bauman 1993), marked by moral relativism and dominated by the cult of efficiency and of subjective rights, by science and technology, an age that gave up on the supernatural, favouring the natural, on the sacred, favouring the profane, on the shared interest, favouring the personal one, on metaphysics, favouring physics, on altruism and generosity, favouring the personal comfort, a world in which interpretation prevails over facts (Nietzsche 1999:315), it seems slightly odd to bring the famous letter of Peter Damian back on the table. However, this short writing of the renowned medieval author is rich in ideas, and not few are the contemporary theologians and philosophers whose attention was drawn by it, as they identified relevant aspects pertaining to the relation between transcendence and immanence, between necessity with contingency, and between created and uncreated freedom in it

## **2. PROBLEM STATEMENT**

There is extensive philosophical and theological literature related, on the one hand, to this topic of divine omnipotence (Brink 1993), and on the other hand, to the importance of the famous letter of Peter Damian for contemporary thought. In what follows, we will outline a short review of the most important works that deal with these aspects.

It would be useful, beforehand, to mention that Peter Damian was translated in the main international languages, i.e. in English (Damian 1998: 344-386) and French (Damien 1972: 384-489), and also in the Romanian language (Damianus 2014: 54-167). The Latin text can be found in an edition of Peter Damian's letters published in Munich about three decades ago (Reindel 1989:341-384), in the French translation published in the collection *Sources chrétiennes*, as well as in the old and famous collection *Patrologia Latina* (1845:595-622).

The Middle Ages debates on divine omnipotence, the relation between *potentia Dei absoluta* and *potentia Dei ordinate* are discussed, among others, by William J. Courtenay (1985:243-284). In his work, entitled *Covenant and Causality in Medieval Thought*, he posits the question "Whether God Can Undo the Past" (Courtenay 1984: 224-256), a question in direct relation to some ideas in the present paper. Focusing on medieval thought, Heiko A. Oberman (1963) pursues a comparative analysis of the two divine powers, taking Gabriel Biel's works as point of reference.

Peter Damian's interesting view on time is considered, among others, by two authors (McArthur and Slattery 1975) who warn us that the positioning of the scholastic theologian in what concerns God's unlimited power and the uncertain nature of the past is not easy to grasp, but it could be somehow drawn graphically, mathematically. Peter Damian's doctrine on the past events, i.e. on cancelling the past, is also a concern of Irvn M. Resnick (1988). Can divine omnipotence regain what has been lost as if it had never been lost? And if it can, what is the significance of such ability? Can the past be altered, can it lose its identity? Is it changeable in the presence of divine omnipotence? Is the past equally open, permeable and fluctuating as the future in the presence of God's power?

The "radical" opinions in *On Divine Omnipotence* are also considered by Peter Remnant. The past can be reduced to zero. Peter Remnant (1978: 261) makes reference to Maurice de Wulf, who believed that, if natural necessity was not an obstacle for divine omnipotence, in Peter Damian's view (Holopainen 2006:116-117), then, in what the latter was concerned, God would not depend in His actions on the principle of contradiction, and the methods of dialectic would not apply to theology.

Therefore, for Peter Damian, the past is contingent and not necessary, an idea completely surprising and striking for human logic. The claim that God can undo the past “was not popular” among medieval thinkers (Gaskin 1997:229). Openly against it were, among others, Aristotle, Augustin and Aquinas. The Greek philosopher noted in the *Nicomachean Ethics* that “For of this alone even a god is deprived: To make undone whatever things have been done” (Aristotle 2011:117). Among the supporters of this thesis are alongside Peter Damian, according to Richard Gaskin, Anselm of Canterbury, Gilbert of Poitiers, William of Auxerre, Thomas Bradwardine, Peter of Ailly and, to a lesser extent, Gregory of Rimini.

Logically speaking, in Peter Damian’s view, God’s power has a wider domain than that of God’s will – practically, God can do more than He wishes, God can do things that He does not wish to do (Ekenberg 2009:90), which draws the relation between will and physical ability. This is the variant that best puts forward the divine omnipotence. Peter Damian’s reasoning, according to Thomas Ekenberg, is as follows: “Si nichil, inquam, potest Deus eorum, quae non vult, nichil autem nisi quod vult, facit; ergo nichil omnino potest facere eorum quae non facit” (Reindel 1989: 343-344). “If God can do none of the things that he does not wish to do, he does nothing but that which he wishes; therefore, he can do none of the things at all, which he does not do” (Damian 1998:346).

Whether Peter Damian’s reasoning is valid or not, it is obvious that the author in focus has a philosophical rather than theological perspective on the divine omnipotent transcendence. This specific perspective is difficult to grasp, given the diverse contents of the letter in question (Resnick 1992: 40). Put in relation to omnipotence, time seems to alter its intimate structure – we are left with the impression that, for Peter Damian, time better highlights the extent of divine power. For Peter Damian, moral order is more important than physical order, and moral law is more powerful than the laws of nature. As Anthony Kenny (1979: 101) rightfully observes, underlining the close connection between time and morality, if a woman lost her virginity in an undignified manner and against her will, “only a change in the past can make her a virgin again”.

Therefore, for Peter Damian, the past depends on divine sovereignty as much as the future because God transcends time; for God, time is not asymmetrical and linear, the past is not irreversible (Vuillemin 1996: 96). The divergent interpretations (Genest 1992:119) of this famous text are explainable, considering that Christian philosophers and theologians almost unanimously claim that nothing is higher and more mysterious than God’s will, which cannot be reasonably explained (Trego 2010: 131). The logical criteria do not fully apply to theological problems, “in the everpresentness of His eternity, God sees past, present and future in a single glimpse” (Marenbon 1988:93), God’s power cannot be restricted by human logic (Marenbon 2007:117), the possibility of the occurrence of an event does not rest on human logic, but on God’s will (Alanen and Knuuttila 1988:22).

### **3. RESEARCH QUESTIONS**

The present paper does not aim to provide a bird-eye view over a certain problem, e.g. over Peter Damian’s view on time or divine omnipotence. Providing significant bibliographic reference, the paper stresses that one of the most important German philosophers, Karl Jaspers, a contemporary of Martin Heidegger and Paul Tillich, focused, on one particular occasion, on the famous letter by Peter Damian. Thus, in his book, *Der philosophische Glaube angesichts der Offenbarung*, Karl Jaspers deals with the idea of God as a *person*, asserting that this anthropomorphist formula is not, in fact, suitable, as personality is only comprehensible in the horizon of finitude, whilst divinity has nothing to do with finitude. Karl Jaspers points out that, in Christian thought, not only was God seen as personal, but also as almighty. Omnipotence suggests power that meets no obstacles, no limits. Jaspers also notes that, in Christian Antiquity, St. Jerome asserted that, although God could do anything, He could not give her virginity back to a girl who had lost it disgracefully, as the result of sexual aggression. Peter Damian, Karl Jaspers states (1973: 252) strongly and indignantly refuted this idea that jeopardized God’s unlimited power. Peter Damian argued that if God allowed that a woman who gave birth remain a virgin, He could also make a woman who lost her honour become a virgin again (Jaspers 1973: 252-3).

#### **4. PURPOSE OF THE STUDY**

Starting from the structure and ideas of Karl Jaspers' book, the present paper states that, although extensive literature on divine omnipotence is available, the German philosopher Karl Jaspers still regards Peter Damian's view as the most appropriate and truly illustrative for the domain in question, that of divine omnipotence. The German philosopher claims that the entire argumentative demarche of the medieval thinker is practically a counterpoint to dialecticians, to European rationalist philosophers living one millennium ago, who wondered whether God could make Rome truly disappear, disappear as if it had never existed! Peter Damian's answer is positive, Karl Jaspers notes (1973: 252), if God was unable to change the past as He wished, then He would not be able to change the present and the future either. And then, from such findings, would result that God would be lacking power in relation to all moments in time, which is unacceptable!

#### **5. FINDINGS**

Among other aspects, Karl Jaspers has the merit of providing a very good abstract of Peter Damian's ideas. God is not limited by either time or space, He is eternal and transcendent in relation to space and time; the moments in time only exist for us, humans, not for divinity (Jaspers 1973: 253). Man is a limited being, he places omnipotence in the horizon of temporality, and wrongly so, because divinity does not acknowledge temporality. In addition, it is wrong to insist on the power of divinity to take out from history something that exists as such in history, because God does not annihilate but creates, He does not send into nothingness that which exists, but takes out from nothingness that which does not exist, through the very act of creating the world *ex nihilo*.

#### **6. CONCLUSION**

Everything that exists in our world, the principles of logic included, is founded on divine will. The Creator is not reducible to His creation, the Heavenly King is above the order instituted by Him, the laws of nature and the entire human logic, and the miracles, as Karl Jaspers rightfully observed (1973: 254) are incontestable proof of this. Nothing in our universe can stand against God's plans, the sense of history has been drawn from the beginning, and man has no power to make it detour. This type of thinking is meant to encourage man to show humility and piety. Although he was a philosopher, and not a theologian, Karl Jaspers managed to grasp the philosophical significance of Peter Damian's letter and, to some extent, the latter's relevance for the metaphysics of our age.

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**MCDSARE: 2018**  
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**THE EVOLUTIONIST ROLE OF RELIGION; SOME**  
**ARGUMENTS**

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***Abstract***

In this article we analyze religion from the perspective of a stage necessary in the evolution of humanity, contributing to the birth of society, to the creation of specific dimensions of the human mind prior to the emergence of philosophy and then of science. We explore the possibility that mental religious resorts have facilitated the transition from group to society: the existence of a set of mental instruments that can be called the "religious package" has provided integrative meanings and goals, mediating the transition from small groups to large societies, from hunters-gatherers to agriculture and sedentariness. We bring some arguments for the state of religion of social survival strategy: through the cooperation it establishes in the multiple plans of human existence it favours the groups with the highest degree of coherence. Several evolutionary advantages of religion: generates predictability through the systems of human classification and ordering of the possible relationships among the peers (social context stabilization), namely of ordering reality (cosmos), shaping existential models. Religion is an explanatory system of reality and normative for human existence, while ensuring the social framework necessary for outsourcing, thereby facilitating the development of the mind. Religion is an integrative meta-narrative: it is a reference framework for integrative narratives (contexts that make the meaning possible) that reduce the pile of information that invades the mind to some schemes of understanding. Religion could be the most appropriate example of geno-cultural co-evolution, clarifying this assumption being attempted through an appeal to anthropological and neuro-science research.

**Keywords:** Evolutionism religion; religious package; survival strategy; adaptive strategy; evolutionary advantage;

**1. INTRODUCTION**

If society is essential to humanity and religion has a well-defined place in human evolution road, then we must meditate on the role of religion in the emergence and existence of society. In this sense, we share the views of authors concerned about this issue regarding its importance. „Explaining religion is a serious problem for any evolutionary account of human thought and society.” (Atran, 2002) We believe

that religion has emerged as a specialized tool in everyday life. We do not exclude the effect of contamination on other groups played by the social success of those who were religiously structured. But its autonomous emergence in different populations seems to indicate that religion is a necessary route in the evolution of any human group. McNamara resorts to a much wider perspective, closely linking the religion to humanity: "Humanity not only creates religion but is also created by it." (McNamara, 2009: IX) While the understanding of the social role of religion risks distorting either perspectives (the positioning of researchers within one or other religion), either by overcoming (at any cost) religion, analyzing the evolutionary role of religion, we believe it is an approach more suited to the cognitive approach of science.

## **2. PROBLEM STATEMENT**

The approach of religion from an evolutionary perspective is not new, and there is already a significant bibliography on the subject. In this article, we refer to the ideas we considered the most important of the works we have gone through. Most often, research is geared toward identifying brain structures specialized in religious experiences and behaviours, trying to demonstrate the causal role of neural correlates. Given that this type of causal explanation proves true, religion could be positioned from an evolutionist point of view and explained according to the brain functions / neural substrates that ensure its existence. One of the authors who proposed an explanation based on the causal role of neuronal correlations of consciousness is Michael Persinger, who attempts to experimentally demonstrate that transcranial magnetic stimulation of the temporal lobe generates religious experiences (Persinger, 2002).

The fact that Granqvist (Granqvist et al., 2005) did not succeed in replicating the results of Persinger's experiment should be interpreted in the sense of an extensive integration of religious experiences into everyday life, as these are part of all the cognitive tools and interpretations used in all experiences. In other words, we believe that religion does not refer to strictly specialized neural structures, and that it is part of all the structures responsible for integrating man into the world. It is true, system dependence is not specific to religion, as it seems to be a feature of all cognitive functions. In a certain sense, the absence of neural regions strictly specific to religious experiences is argued by a radical change in the human brain's paradigm of knowledge, characterized by the shift from the pattern of specific cognitive functions located in the determined areas to the model of cognitive functions generated by the interaction of several brain structures. Given that the latter model analyzes the interaction of brain structures developed at different times along the evolutionary path, it also opens up the horizons of relevant discussions on the minimal brain functions / structures necessary for the emergence of religious behaviour / religious experience. The structural model of consciousness that I have proposed elsewhere (Rotilă, 2013) can be considered as an argument at least for the impossibility of a strong isolation of a structure of the consciousness responsible for religion from its other structures, indicating the need for a systemic approach.

## **3. PURPOSE OF THE STUDY**

The main objective of this article is to point out some relevant arguments regarding the status of religion of social survival strategy, showing mainly that, through the cooperation it establishes in the multiple plans of human existence, it favours the groups with the highest degree of coherence. At the same time, we explore the possibility that mental religious resorts have facilitated the transition from group to society: the existence of a set of mental instruments that can be called the "religious package" has provided integrative meanings and goals, mediating the transition from small groups to large societies hunters-gatherers in agriculture and sedentariness.

The attempts to demonstrate the possibility of morality before religion, going until the identification of the roots of humanism among primates, such as Frans de Wall (de Waal, 2013), tend to open up the cognitive context for alternative research: the evolution of humanity in the absence of religion. To the extent that they explore the alternative past, such approaches share all the shortcomings of counterfactual histories, being located rather on the imagination area than in the reality. We believe that humanity has reached its present level going through religion. It is difficult for us to demonstrate a

causal link between religion and humanity because it could be a simple correlation; for example, both may have another common cause. In this article we try to point out some arguments in favour of the evolutionary role of religion for humanity, exploring the variant of religion as a necessary moment in the evolution of humanity. We note, however, that the starting point of this approach, namely the omnipresence of religion over historical periods, is insufficiently substantiated: in the absence of a strong religious definition in religious manifestations, behaviours that may belong to other types of systematization are often included. In other words, we admit that our point of view may be contaminated by the omnipresence of religion in the eyes of the viewer. A change of cognitive paradigm brings with it the possibility of highlighting such a limitation. If humanity can be proved in the absence of religion by moving humanity to hominid destiny, then the fundamental premise of this article - religion as a necessary moment in the evolution of humanity - will be cancelled, leaving behind only the discussion about possible influences

#### **4. RESEARCH METHODS**

Assuming that the analysis of religion makes possible several levels and explanatory contexts, we focus our attention in this article on the cognitive and practical benefits of religion, evaluating its role in an evolutionary context. From this perspective, we propose some explanatory interpretations of the emergence and existence of religion, exploring some variants of framing it within the evolutionary mechanisms. None of the variants presented is empirically verified through research conducted by the author, and from this perspective they are speculative. Consistency with other data and plausibility are the main arguments in favour of the proposals we make.

Functionalism takes into account in a considerable measure the method of analysis of the role of religion that we use in this approach, its initiator being Emil Durkheim. Functionalism attempts to demonstrate the practical role of religion and rituals associated with it. The most important role of religion is dealing with life, being an adaptive tool (in an existential meaning). But religion also has significant contributions to the development of culture; for example, it is a fundamental proof of the importance of imagination in the cultural existence of people, this being one of the essential areas in which it has been exerted and developed. Analyzing the impact that a course of neuroscience and religion has on students, Klemm goes even further in the functionalist direction, suggesting the presence of positive effects of religion even in the case of a scientific approach such as the one mediated by neuroscience: "religion should not be dismissed as irrelevant to human experience, but rather that religion not only affects beliefs and attitudes but actually influences brain function and behaviour." (Klemm, 2017) We will continue to indicate other functional roles of religion relevant to the evolutionist context of understanding, trying to argue the relevance of the perspective we are proposing.

We start from the premise that religion is a surviving social strategy with the greatest success of all the competing strategies in its field of existence: meta-existential narrative. The premise lies between a research hypothesis and a personal conviction for both extremes but lacking the possibility of experimental verification. The success of religion can be compared with other narratives that aim at social integration, but the latter influences society only in the context of religion, not in its absence, and can only be the subject of mental experiments. From a historical perspective, we can consider the survival of non-religious societies as unlikely. Even though history records some allegedly a-religious social experiments, we believe that both the members of those societies and their institutions have undergone an intense process of "religious contamination", thus not fulfilling the necessary conditions to demonstrate the possibility of a society without religion.

#### **5. FINDINGS**

##### **5.1 Individual selection vs. group selection**

From the perspective of evolutionism, the most appropriate theory for analyzing the role of religion is that of multilevel selection, combining genetic evolution with cultural evolution and individual and social perspectives. Edward Wilson provides an evolutionary explanation of good and evil through multi-layered selection (Wilson, 2013): Individual selection is responsible for competition for survival



and reproduction within the group, generating selfish tendencies while group selection characterizes competition between societies, being responsible for the altruistic tendencies towards the members of their own group. Man is trapped between these tendencies, respectively between good and evil, his oscillations generating a necessary adaptive flexibility in the order of evolution. In terms of multi-level selection proposed by Wilson, religion corresponds to group selection, which is the specific level of promoting virtue (Wilson, 2014: 27). Some religions contain complex encodings of the prohibition of the individual selection mechanism (being directed against sin). It is obvious that the article is quite close to the role that Wilson attributes to religion through belief: "From a biological point of view, faith can be seen as a Darwinian instrument of survival and increased reproduction." (Wilson, 2014: 123)

If society can be thought of as a self-contained entity, an over-organism emerging in the history of evolution, then religion has its place on this path, being one of the great ferments that have contributed to the emergence of the present dimension of the society. The key concept is cooperation, religion being a relevant mediator of success in this field. The later life promised by most religions has an ideal community structure, the beyond society being a form of organization freed from temporal conditioning.

### **5.2 Religion as a survival strategy**

Religion is a social survival strategy, favouring groups with a higher degree of coherence. It is obvious that belonging to different religions generates different levels of coherence, the history of humanity permitting an analysis from this perspective; the social survival provided by one or other of the religions in the context of significant group competition is discussed. If we admit the differences between religions in terms of social successes, we have to agree that they involve various ways of mental structuring, the latter involving both specific forms of the use of brain resources and specific forms of structuring of the minds of the members of each of the religions. These differences may explain the differences between the results of the numerous researches aimed at identifying brain areas activated during religious prayers / meditations specific to some religions, as presented by Bulbulia and Schjoedt (Bulbulia et al., 2012: 171-173).

From this perspective, we consider religion as an adaptive strategy, the diversity of religions indicating solutions developed by different communities for the existence of various social models. We can assume that switching from small groups of hunter-gatherers to bigger ones and then switching to agriculture and sedentariness are made possible by the set of mental instruments and social innovations that are part of the "religious package", which provides integrative meanings and goals from the social point of view. The last stage of the evolution is the society, to the emergence or development of which seems to have decisively contributed agriculture (stabilizing factor) Either agriculture or directly the society was influenced by religion, as mediator of the social life.

The meme hypothesis, launched by R. Dawkins, a promoter of the reductionism of religion to evolutionary explanations (Dawkins, 1976) (the hypothesis was explored by other authors, eg Atran (Atran, 2002: 236) brings to discussion the possibility that religion-specific survival strategies and religion as a macro-survival strategy to explain the omnipresence of religious behaviours. If the hypothesis turns out to be correct then the contamination explains the success of religion, cancelling its character of necessary road in the evolution to humanity. In this variant, copying behaviours and what makes this copying possible (common transcendence) would be one of the possible common causes.

We agree with Atran that religion implies cognitive mechanisms to respond to fragmentary information under conditions of uncertainty (Atran, 2002: 78), but we prefer to think about that from a functional perspective. Insofar as it constitutes a condensation of experience, religious principles offer the templates of answers to the everyday questions of people. The specific moral code leads to a form of cognitive structure of reality, prescribing its horizons of possibilities. From this perspective many of the religious behaviours must be interpreted from the perspective of specific cognitive strategies developed by different societies.

### **5.3 Dealing with death**

If we are consider some studies results showing the role of death reminders in amplify religious commitments then we came in to the conclusion that a function of religion is to suppress death-anxiety, thus sharing one of Persinger's arguments (Persinger, 2009). The fact that religious people have better cognitive and (consequently) emotional stability in confronting the unknown, because of the belief system

they adhere to, is a common place in everyday thinking. To the extent that this intuition is scientifically proven, we can talk about a functional role of religion in increasing the capacity of confronting people with the unknown and with death. The association of religious beliefs with the reduction of anxiety level in the face of the unknown, as indicated by Inzlicht et al. is one of the possible explanations, the cerebral mediator being anterior cingulate cortex (ACC) (Inzlicht et al., 2009: 389). Even if it is only a correlation, as the authors suggest, it is not clear whether religious beliefs reduce reactivity in ACC or "lower ACC activity and its associated cognitive style) incline people toward religious belief" (Inzlicht et al., 2009:391), the effect is to increase the ability to confront the unknown (including the supreme one, death) at least for certain categories of people. If the proofs allow the transition from correlation to causality then they will emphasize the functional role that religion plays in the anguishing encounter of human consciousness with its own disappearance.

#### **5.4 Religion contributes to social fitness**

The idea expressed by Azari et al., "The results suggest that an essential dimension of religious experience involves social-relational cognition" (Azari, 2005), may constitute a proof of the social role of religion. We believe that religion is a form of social organization that brings it closer to the structure of an over-organism. It may have generated the essential framework for the cooperation needed to move from group to society. It is certain that religion participates in the existence of the social through: the ethical norms it contains, being a form of being together by adherence to sets of common beliefs, and other effects; by encoding the rituals - organizing them in systems - and organizing the space by participating in donating the character of place (the social organization of space reproduces the relationship here and there based on the sacred-profane model); through the specific temporal organization it generates, intervening with its own forms of ordering in the course of time; by donating group identity, generating sufficient differentiation criteria from other groups. The identity of the context / likeness facilitates the semiosis, increasing the efficiency of the group. Religion is one of the facilitators of collective consciousness, that being a necessary characteristic of the group identity.

The religious mind has prepared humanity to look for what is "beyond", thus arranging a part of the field on which science subsequently developed. The role of religion in the emergence of science can be explored on the basis of analysis of current practices specific to scientists. Generating the cognitive context that allows the progress and contribution of the community dimension are important variables, both contributing to the emergence of scientific thinking and practice.

#### **5.5 The Role of Rituals**

The social impact of rituals is analyzed from a variety of perspectives by a number of authors: Atran has an analytical approach to the impact of rituals, showing that they "conceptually forge personal identity and memory according to cultural parameters" (Atran, 2002: 149). Boyer and Lienard's. Research developed by Boyer and Lienard (Boyer et al., 2008) indicated a particular functional dimension of the rituals: the reduction of behaviours determined by the "precaution system" through movement-distractors. McNamara is of the opinion that religious practices contribute to the creation of a unified self-consciousness and an ideal "executive Self." (McNamara, 2009: XI-XII). At the same time, the author indicates that religious practices can determine a form of self-decentralization, which is replaced by a more ideal or complex Self-concept (eg that of the saints). From our point of view, this decentralization has two essential characteristics for the perspective of the evolutionary role of religion: it is a temporary (temporary) re-centralization on ideal forms of the self common to a religious belief, being a form of meeting of individuals in common perspectives that contribute to the birth community, and generates the possibility of another perspective, thus participating in the process of complex understanding of reality.

Analysis of rituals from the perspective of cognitive adaptive strategies should focus on the crucial role they play: centering. Religion is a center-building (centers), with rituals bringing about behaviours designed to express these kinds of positions. The centering of the person is essential for the birth and the maintenance of the orientation, that is of meaning, both in its linguistic-cognitive meaning and especially in the existential one.

#### **5.6 Religion generates predictability**

Because it generates a system of classifying the humane and of the possible relationships among the people with an important predictive role (thus stabilizing the context of existence), religion offers an

evolutionary advantage. It accumulates the descriptive role (the historical organization of cognitive experiences) with the prescriptive role (ordering behaviour on rituals and ethical criteria). If we admit the assumption from which Bulbulia and Schjoedt start in analyzing the role of religion, ("From a biological perspective, neural circuitry evolves for prediction and control: prediction of the world and control of body states and processes, in response to the world" (Bulbulia et al., 2012: 169), then we have to identify the contribution of religion to the advancement of predictive and control processes. But even if we agree with this simplification of the role of the brain, it does not exclude the possibility that religion is not related to the causes that led to its appearance, being a by-product. In other words, this approach does not necessarily help to solve the problem.

#### **5.7 Religion meets the need for meaning**

A strong argument in favour of integrating religion into the dynamics of evolutionism may constitute its role in the history of the need for meaning of humanity, offering a use of the "excesses" that the need for meaning knows. Religion means specialized operation with symbols, mediating forms of entry into culture. Moreover, religion provides a set of narratives generating meaning, that is, explanations that mediate individual and social self-understanding. It thus manages to provide a (yet unparalleled) meaning to human life through the milestones it establishes in individual existence, the most visible being rites of passage. The rites of passage are powerful social reference points, integrating the individual's life into that of the community and the community in the individual's existence. If the will of purpose is a by product, to the extent that religion has emerged to meet this need, it can be considered a derivative product or a by-product of existence.

In order to generate meaning, reducing the notion of information that invades it to some schemes of understanding, our mind needs integrative narratives. For a long time, religion has played the role of a reference framework for integrative narratives, being an integrative meta-narration: it provides the necessary explanatory closures (often just symbolic) for questions that would otherwise not find the answers. In its absence, we are witnessing a context full of explanatory gaps, losing the construction of a coherent discourse universe, so necessary for the birth and the maintenance of meaning, respectively of the society.

Religion is an explanatory system of reality, being the first form of systematic organization and codification in an intelligible system of human experiences, doubled by the prescriptive dimension of behaviours. In other words, religion integrates a cognitive ensemble with a set of behaviours consistent with prescriptions developed on the basis of a specific form of knowledge. Its continuation, philosophy, rarely managed to maintain this unity of knowledge with behaviour, being part of the lost paradise of philosophers (the ritual remembering of Socrates belonging to the remembrance / recall paradigm). Only the rupture of the theory of practice, that is, the breaking of the coherence between knowledge and behaviour, is the end of the religious period.

#### **5.8 Externalizations**

Religions also fulfil one of the essential conditions for social existence, namely externalizations. Externalizations define the exteriorization of some of the cognitive processes in the charge of social mechanisms, which take over the tasks of the individual mind / consciousness. The full meaning of the term we consider to have its outline by reference to the pre-IA IT tools, but it fulfils a way of being the humane being outlined throughout its social existence. The writing and set of practices that we consider to be related to the field of consciousness are relevant examples of externalization. The specialization of people in different cognitive domains can be seen as a specific form of externalization. In case of religion, externalizations can include cognitive processes who take place "elsewhere" (for example, by people specializing in certain practices) and, in particular, cognitive shortcuts, that is, predetermined answers to people's possible questions.

#### **5.9 Some ideas on the relationship between conscience and religion**

In the context of neuroscience, religious consciousness exists only in the sense of a field of consciousness. The concept of the field of consciousness (the structural vision of consciousness) provides a possible explanation for the relationship between consciousness and religion, and can contribute to clarifying the hypotheses of causal relationships between the two. Augustin Fuentes suggests an explanatory theory for the emergence of religion that is based on the theory of mind. (Fuentes, 2017);

Kapogiannis et al. bring arguments for the causal link between the theory of the mind (ToM) and the emergence of religion (Kapogiannis et al., 2014), thus suggesting the dependence of religion on the structure of our neural networks. Even if it tends to suggest that religion has a by-product character in relation to brain evolution, this research direction is an implicit argument in favour of religion as inherent thing to the emergence and development of humanity. We believe that the possibility of co-dependence between the birth of consciousness and the emergence of religion cannot be ruled out, the latter being an integral part of the society (participating in the contribution of the social to structuring of consciousness).

## **6. CONCLUSION**

We believe that the mere existence and spread of religion is a sufficient argument in favour of its importance to the humane. For example, if we accept in principle that most of the rules established by religions participate in the construction of a moral system, then the role of the social structuring of religions becomes visible. Religion may be the first attempt to systemize the experience; which makes it essential to the process of learning and of social adaptation. Given that evolutionism is the appropriate context (at this moment) for the study of humanity then the analysis of the meaning of religion should be performed against this explanatory background.

Even if it proves its limitations, we must observe that religion has been and is a good mediator of the transition to another form of humanity's positioning, namely that before nature, taking into account the change of paradigm specific to the birth of science. One of the challenges posed by the analysis of religion is the moment when religion exhausts its positive role for humanity, passing the other side of the barricade. Obviously, it first assumes accepting such a position, provided that its scientific evidence seems impossible at this time. In the absence of such a distancing we are still deprived of the proper context for a complete understanding of the role that religion has in the evolution of humanity. For now, it is enough to take steps in this direction, this being the main purpose of this article.

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#### BRIEF CONSIDERATIONS REGARDING THE INDIVIDUAL' POSITION TOWARDS STATE AND FAMILY IN CONTEMPORARY SOCIETY

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#### *Abstract*

A major issue in contemporary society, one that engenders debates and disputes among philosophers, sociologists, psychologists, jurists and other specialists refers to the drastic change of the structure and functions of the traditional family. Due to the great number of people who prefer to live alone, divorce, in single-parent families or consensual unions, the values of the traditional family are questioned and often seem totally outdated. In this article we aim to analyze the changes produced into the content of the notion of family in the contemporary society in contrast to the traditional family ideas and values. We believe that, as society and the state evolved becoming increasingly complex, the role of the state in the individual's life grew and the family's influence diminished. From our point of view, one of the reasons why the contemporary family is so different from the traditional family is due to the increased influence of the state in the individual's life through its institutions and the legal order: social protection, ensuring a decent living standard, education etc. In order to support this idea, we will present a series of philosophical and legal arguments through which we will try to demonstrate that the major influence of the state and the law in the individual's life constitutes an essential element that has led to a decrease in the influence of the traditional family.

**Keywords:** traditional and non-traditional family; state; philosophy of law; legal frame; social protection; human rights;

#### 1. INTRODUCTION

In the previous centuries, the traditional family had a certain structure, stability and influence in the individual's life as the state intervened much less in the private lives of people than it does today (welfare, child protection, free education, free medical services, etc.). For a long time throughout history, it was the family that exclusively decided the children's destiny, education and marriages and the state did not intervene in this process. A few centuries ago a child separated from his family, without its support, had nearly no chance to survive (in some states of the world, unfortunately this is still happening). A

similar fate had women. Today the state is providing social assistance; there are institutions that protect all vulnerable social categories. Through education, each person can acquire one or more vocational qualifications and can earn a living. For the most part, individuals no longer depend on families to live and have the necessary living. Notwithstanding, the family is still remaining an important emotional and material support so that one cannot speak of its disappearance, but only of its conversion into a non-traditional family.

At the current time, as always, the family is a fundamental social institution, a core cell of the society. This is because we spend most of our lives within the family, and failure in family life affects the successes on other (professional, financial, etc.) plans. Each family has its mysteries which, in certain cases cause tragedies and misfortunes (violence, adultery, inadequacies, psychic abuse, etc.) whose secrecy is kept, even at the expense of great suffering, sacrifice and psychic impairment.

According to the law doctrine in Romania, "the family is [...] the natural and fundamental element of the society generated by the legal act of marriage, concluded under the law, between a man and a woman, made up of spouses, children without full exercise capacity, as well as other persons expressly provided by law, where the relations between its members are legally regulated and governed by the principle of solidarity." (Dariescu, Nadia Cerasela et.al., 2009, p. 15).

Thanks to its special social importance, the family institution has been legally regulated since ancient times. The family is prior to the state, and the development of human communities from tribes and tribal communions to states (from the initial form to the extremely complex present form) has always protected this institution, even though, over the years, it has taken some of its prerogatives. Depending on mentalities and religious beliefs, most legislations only allow heterogeneous monogamous marriage, others also monogamous homosexual marriage, polygamous marriage (a husband and several wives) and, very rarely, polyandry marriage (a wife and several spouses).

## **2. PROBLEM STATEMENT**

Clearly, our society needs to understand the causes that led to the modification of families in modern society. Nowadays, traditional family is still considered as the most suitable and appropriate type of family but non-traditional family gains more and more territory every day. This situation has been analyzed, criticised or simply accepted by communities and scientist. The changing which take place in the law system, society, technical evolution affect and modify the structure of the traditional family and this is not necessarily a bad thing as long as children are being raised safely (emotionally and physically) and with healthy attachments towards their natural parents, adoptive parents or tutors. The growing of the state's influence and the multiplication of laws has a very important role in the apparition and evolution of non-traditional family.

## **3. THE FAMILY FUNCTIONS AND THE STATE ATRIBUTIONS**

This study aims to analyze the structure and role of traditional and non-traditional family and the way that the number of non-traditional families increased to the detriment of classical, traditional one.

Today, the family origins are still being a mystery, being hidden somewhere in our DNA and the prehistory of mankind (a period when there were no written sources or other types of evidence to explain its appearance). If by family we understand a relatively steady social unit made up of parents and their children (Mihăilă A., 2010, p. 204), then the first thing noticed by a researcher refers to the fact that this form of social organization is not exclusively specific to the people, being also found in other species (e.g. primates). The remarks of experts have revealed that, within the primate groups, there are social behaviours similar to those human (for example, prohibition of incest).

As for the family evolution, from primitive to contemporary forms, some authors believe that the changes were due to the economic evolution of the communities and ideas relating to property rights and, implicitly, we add, the manner in which the community/state in question these have been regulated. Thus, according to Friedrich Engels' view (Engels, Friedrich, 1987), the first type of family that appeared (in chronological order) was the blood-related family, "in which the spousal groups are divided into generations - all grandparents being the spouses of grandmothers, all fathers being the husbands of

mothers, and the children constituting a third circle of common spouses" (Mihăilă A., p. 206), incest between parents and children being forbidden. The next type of family appeared was the punalua family, within which incest between brothers and sisters was prohibited; only those who belonged to the same generation and were not close relatives were allowed to conclude marriages. The couple family was the next in the order of appearance, being the effect of strengthening the emotional bonds between the couple partners; in this type of family only men were entitled to occasional extra-marital relationships, dissolution of the marital relationship was allowed, and, in such situations, the children remained at the mother. These families were matrilineal and had a low stable character. Subsequently, the patriarchal family (which could be both monogamous and polygamous) appeared, within which the woman lost many rights, and the man having even the right to kill her for infidelity. The nuclear family is composed of mother, father and children, without other relatives, unlike the molecular family being formed of "all relatives with common hereditary lineage who lived on a property" (Mihăilă A., 2010, p. 208).

If initially the molecular family had a greater weight in society as it evolved, people's need to live in the extended family decreased. The state gives individuals the right to education, thus there are kindergartens and nurseries where small children can be left to be supervised and educated, the professional activity of parents allows them to earn enough money to pay for babysitters etc. The extended family, the presence of grandparents, uncles, aunts and other relatives in the same house is no longer necessary. The nuclear family is able to become independent thanks to education, economic development, the development of large urban settlements, etc.

Furthermore, the functioning way of modern society has also led to a decrease in the need of nuclear family to live and manage together and has generated an unprecedented increase in the number of divorces, with the consequence of an increasingly large volume of single-parent families. But, in our view, the increase in the number of single parent families should not be interpreted as a decline of the family concept or as a threat of extinction in the future of the family of any kind. It is happening that the traditional family loses its character of typical, majority model in the society. We consider that the current way of life in society will not had the consequence of family disappearance, but only the disappearance of a certain type of family - the traditional one, much-idealized, where appearances mattered more than the frustrations and needs of individuals, and divorce was considered a social stigma.

The functions and advantages of family life are currently a controversial issue, especially as the traditional family has lost much of its specific weight and responsibilities. Thus, the specialists, starting from the premise of the universal nature of the nuclear family, have shown that it has four functions: sexual, reproductive, economic and educational or socializing (Murdock, G. P., 1949). It has also been considered that the fundamental and exclusive functions of the family are those of primary socialization of the descendants with the purpose of their proper integration into society and of ensuring the emotional security of adults. (Talcott, P., 1951). The family functions identified both by legal experts and by sociologists include a number of aspects that we will discuss in what follows. The function of reproduction ensures the perpetuation and survival of human species by permanently replacing the society members who get old and die. The family is considered to be the most conducive environment for child procreation because, as a rule, it is easier (financially, social protection, etc.) that the two persons who conceived the child to actually raise and educate him or/her. At the same time, within the family, incest is forbidden, thus being prevented the birth of children with malformations, mental illnesses, etc.

The perpetuation of human species within the family has progressively become less important following the economic and social changes. Thus, the growth of economic means and resources has made the single parent status not seem so frightening anymore. An increasing number of single women are choosing to parent alone and have children through donor insemination. These mothers, often referred to as "single mothers by choice" or "solo mothers", have not experienced marital conflict and are less likely to have experienced the economic hardship or psychological problems that commonly result from marital breakdown and unplanned single parenthood. Nevertheless, their children often grow up not only without a father but also without knowing the identity of their sperm donor. There is little research on this new family form. However, a comparison between solo mother families and two-parent families, all with donor-conceived children, found no differences in parenting quality apart from lower mother-child conflict in solo mother families (Golombok S., Zadeh S., Imrie S., Smith V., Freeman T., 2016).



Although the children in solo mother and two parent families did not differ in psychological adjustment, parenting stress and financial difficulties were associated with children's psychological difficulties in both family types.

On a different note, as a consequence of adopting in the legislation of some states the marriage between persons of the same sex, this family type no longer fulfil its primary function, of reproduction. Studies of parenting by lesbian mothers were initiated in the 1970s. At that time, it was argued that lesbian mothers would be less nurturing than heterosexual mothers and would show higher rates of psychological disorder, and that their children would develop psychological problems as a result. It was also thought that the children of lesbian mothers would show atypical gender development such that boys would be less masculine in their identity and behaviour, and girls less feminine, than boys and girls from heterosexual homes. In a comparison of adoptive gay father, lesbian mother and heterosexual parent families with 3–9 year-old children, the differences identified between family types indicated more positive parental wellbeing and parent–child relationships, and lower levels of children's externalizing problems, in gay father families (Golombok S., Zadeh S., Imrie S., Smith V., Freeman T., 2016). As stability and continuity of care are widely accepted to be prerequisites of children's secure attachment relationships with parents, it is noteworthy that adoptive gay fathers were less likely to dissolve their relationship in the first 5 years of parenthood than were comparison groups of lesbian and heterosexual adoptive couples (Goldberg A., Garcia R., 2015, 29:394-404).

Responding to the pressure of social change, the new Romanian Civil Code establishes a new institution, that of the medically assisted human reproduction with a third party donor (Chapter II, Section II of the Civil Code), showing that parents, in the meaning of the Section in question, can only be a man and a woman or a single woman (Article 441 par. 3 of the Civil Code)

Since the birth of the first baby through in vitro fertilization in 1978 (Steptoe PC, Edwards RG: 1978), more than 5 million children have been born through assisted reproductive technologies (Adamson D: ICMART world reporting: preliminary 2008 data. 28th ESHRE Annual Conference; Istanbul: 2012). In vitro fertilization involves the fertilization of the mother's egg with the father's sperm in the laboratory and the transfer of the resulting embryo(s) to the mother's womb.

It has often been suggested that the creation of families through reproductive donation may be detrimental to positive family functioning (Cahn N., 2009). Contrary to the concerns that had been raised, the findings indicated more positive parent–child relationships in these families when the children were in their preschool years than in the comparison group of natural conception families, irrespective of the type of reproductive donation used (Golombok S., et al, 2004, 2005). The children themselves showed high levels of psychological adjustment but did not differ from the naturally conceived children in spite of their experience of highly involved parenting.

In a study dedicated to the consequences of new types of families on parenting, S. Golombok concludes that new family forms are characterized by positive parenting and well-adjusted children. This is perhaps not surprising as the children were much-wanted by their parents and, by necessity, planned. From a theoretical perspective, what these studies tell us is that the number, gender, sexual orientation and biological relatedness of parents to their children are less influential in children's psychological development than are family processes such as the quality of family relationships and the social environment in which the children are raised.

The function of socialization is equally important for the individual as biological reproduction since the human species children have few adaptive mechanisms at birth. Thus, they must be permanently taken care of, taught to walk, speak, and interact with other members of society. This role is accomplished by the family, which must teach the child everything he/she needs to become functional and live a satisfying and independent life as an adult. Along with the family, the child acquires social skills in schools, libraries, theatres, concerts, socializing groups. Through them, the cultural values of an individual can become different from those of the home family.

Relatively recently, the society evolution has been indicated to be among the factors that negatively influence the family as it has caused the development of social differentiation, which has led to the genesis of individual aspirations, to the disadvantage of those of group/family (Radu D. D, 2018). In other words, individual aspirations, potentiated inclusively through the guarantee and protection of

complex individual freedoms by the state, have the downside of diminishing the degree of family cohesion and blurring the traditional family model. Also, against the background of economic growth, which allowed the state to grant in various forms allowances, aid, or subsidies, the parental authority or clan, which relied on it, appeared as irrational.

Ensuring protection and emotional support is achieved by protecting the child from the dangers of any kind in the environment (children must be fed, dressed and protected from dangers and accidents, educated, etc.) The emotional support of the family is permanent, not being limited to childhood. Throughout the state development, the protection of the individual began to be ensured by the public authority, which replaced in this way the role of the family in this regard.

Following the recognition of family problems specificity and the need for the state to contribute effectively to solving them, within the traditional judicial systems there have been created courts specialized in settling the disputes arisen related to minors and family problems.

The adversarial system is often unsuited for unravelling and remedying societal ills that spill into the courtroom, especially when rehabilitation rather than punishment is the goal. The result has been a proliferation of specialized courts, including family treatment courts (FTCs), drug courts, and mental health courts, that deviate from the adversarial model and use a problem-solving approach, often relying on therapeutic jurisprudence techniques. (Lens, Vicki, 2016)

Problems such as substance abuse, child maltreatment, and criminality connected to mental illness require a court to do more than decide a dispute or assign guilt. Often, they require behavioural interventions, especially if recidivism is to be avoided or families repaired. In recognition of this, specialized courts were created with a very different mission and approach than traditional courts (Lens, Vicki, 2016). The first such specialized court was the family court, established in the early part of the twentieth century, first to adjudicate juvenile delinquency cases, and then in the 1960s expanded to cover other family issues, including private matters involving divorce and custody and public matters regarding child maltreatment. (Babb, Barbara, 1998). While the first problem-solving courts, drug courts, were initially envisioned as a solution to case overload in traditional criminal courts, over time they shifted to a more therapeutic approach (Spinak J. M., 2008), and while not all problem-solving courts are guided by the philosophy of therapeutic jurisprudence, this approach exemplifies some of these courts' best practices, notably in them mental health courts. (Lens V., 2016)

A common feature of therapeutic courts is the use of psychological insights and methods to motivate behavioural changes. Instead of treating individuals as deviant and condemning their behaviour, therapeutic courts employ healthy doses of respect, empathy, and forgiveness. This approach is bolstered by enhanced access to treatment resources, individualized treatment plans, and a collaborative team of community-based and institutional professionals. Traditional courts suffer from a dearth of all of these, and the additional burden of high caseloads. Lacking both time and resources, judges in a traditional courtroom seemingly have little incentive to employ a therapeutic approach. (Lens, Vicki, 2016)

The decrease of necessity to accomplish the functions of socialization and of ensuring protection and emotional support within the family is also indirectly established through the adoption legislation which enables it to be carried out either by a single adopter or by an adopting family (Article 2 (b) and (i), Article 12, Article 36 of Law No. 273/2004 on the legal regime of adoption).

The economic function is of particular importance in the family, which is the social group where there are provided to the children (but also to their parents or grandparents when they are in need) the incomes necessary for the survival and satisfaction of the physiological and spiritual needs.

In the traditional family, the woman was kept by her husband; she did not work outside the house, her occupations consisting of doing the housework and taking care of the children. Family policies not only oblige (and at the same time: enable) the family to meet the care needs of its members, they also enforce the dependence of people in need of care on their family. In this perspective, de-familiarization means not only taking away care responsibilities from the family. De-familiarization also reduces the extent to which the satisfaction of individual care needs is dependent on the individual's relation to the family (McLaughlin E., Glendinning C., 1994).

This function of the family was, perhaps, to the largest extent affected by the society development and, in some aspects, supplied by the state. During the last 15–20 years, European welfare

states increasingly have taken the value of unpaid care work into consideration, at least partially. With regard to the care of young children, most European countries have installed or extended parental leave regulations, many in connection with cash benefits for the carer. A trend towards low level, conditional payments has emerged. In addition, the quality of social rights granted to the care provider has been improved, e.g., protective labour market legislation for carers and pension recognition of care periods. As far as caring for elderly, ill and disabled people are concerned, European welfare states increasingly subsidise private informal care arrangements. (Leitner S., 2003).

If originally the large majority of economic activities were carried out in the family, at present, it has been reached a separation of the occupational economic activities, in the sense that they are performed in offices, stores, factories, workshops, etc. In this way, the family, from producer of goods, becomes predominantly a consumer unit. The function of sexual behaviour regulation is another important task of the family. In most traditional societies, the sexual relations legitimate were those maintained within the family, and usually men had a larger freedom than women, to them being allowed temporary extra-marital relationships. The loss by the religion of a share of the influence, at the same time with the development of the secular state, has also caused important changes at the social level in this respect. The 19th century sexual revolution broke the link between marriage and sexual relations. Currently, in many countries, in the public school system there are disciplines such as Sexual Education, which has the role of educating future adults also in this respect.

Achieving a social status implies two aspects: the social position of the parents which, if high, it helps children to better obtain a superior social status (in politics, in certain professions, etc.) and the status of a married person which gives the individual a easier access to certain important positions (for example, in politics). Despite the openness of the social mentality, encouraged by the state, it is probably one of the functions that cannot be replaced by non-traditional families. Cloaked by an illusion of shared meaning, employees with alternative family structures are often marginalized for not engaging in common workplace communication. In most workplaces, people talk about family (Dixon, Jenny; Dougherty, Debbie S., 2014). Lewis explains that “‘normal’ information exchanged by organizational members includes the ability to speak publically about one’s primary relationships, friends and activities” (Lewis, A. P. 2009, p. 191). LC/MD suggests that if one’s family differs from what is expected within the “normal” exchange of information, such communication would keep certain co-workers on the margins of everyday conversation.

Exclusion from workplace conversation and family-friendly policies represent little D-discourses that produce subtle forms of marginalization. Whereas earlier gay and lesbian research examined work environments in which employees felt obliged to keep non-straight sexual orientation a secret (Spradlin, A. L. 1998), later research depicts workplaces as both accepting and discriminatory at the same time (Schilt K., 2010). The mixed bag of acceptance and discrimination gains complexity because workplace policy can be at odds with “little d-discourse” within the workplace (Kirby E. L. & Krone K. J., 2002).

According to the Dixon's relatively recent study (2014), working mothers and non-traditional families are allied in that they both violate the straight male breadwinner norm. Programs designed to create work/family balance have been effective at allowing middle-class women to have both employment and a family, and allows women who have children to retain their place in the middle class. The goal of this project is not to regress the programs that have done so much to improve the lives of women but rather to open up the policies to ensure that there is not a double standard that negatively impacts others. To avoid double standards in the policy, it is important to recognize that women are not always the primary caregivers of children, adult parents, or other family members. Therefore, it is necessary to not only complicate the meaning of family, but also to create a more complex formation of work/family balance.

#### **4. RESEARCH METHODS**

This study is based on the research method of the document analysis. This method is often used in social sciences in order to support the fact that the state, through its prerogatives, has influenced the

structure and functions of the family. For the purpose of formulating our arguments, we used the literature, Romanian legislation, statistics etc.

## **5. CONCLUSION**

In this study we analyzed the modification of the contemporary (non-traditional) family functions in order to determine if the state's prerogatives influenced the structure of family so that the number of traditional families decreased and the non-traditional family is more and more powerful in society. From our analyses we can draw the conclusion that the apparition and development of non-traditional family was made possible mostly by the changes of legal norms and that several family functions were taken over by the state (child care, education, social protection etc.). We agree that, in contrast to many other fields of public policy, such as foreign policy or labour market policy, family policies usually do not constitute a distinct policy area. Rather they comprise such fields as maternity, parental-leave, and child-care policies and family law. Elements of family policies are often incorporated into other policy areas like health care, social security, housing, welfare, taxation, civil law, and so forth. Family policies may thus be spread over a number of political fields, each of which may be characterized by a different historical and institutional development (Neyer G.; Andersson G., 2008).

In many ways, the contemporary state gave people (especially women) the possibility to raise and educate children on their own, without the father' or extended family' contribution. Through education and well paid jobs, a single parent can provide for children enough money in order to ensure their survey, health control, clothes, toys and everything else they might need. By giving these possibilities to the citizens (not only the state' citizens) the state made it possible for more independent persons to take control of their lives and stop depending of unpredictable, violent, rigid, strict or abusive in any way family members. The emotional family support probably remains problematic in such context, but in any situation the lack of emotional support from one parent is always better than any form of abuse.

Also, the tolerant legal frame allows, in many contemporary states, that the people with sexual orientation other than the heterosexual one form their own families and live in peace with them. So, the non-traditional family brings along a lot of advantages and if it seems to threaten the traditional family, in fact it is an alternative for avoiding abuses of any kind and too much compromise that may lead to personal frustrations or other dangerous situations.

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**ON THE WONDER OF LIFE AND THE FREEDOM OF WILL**

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***Abstract***

In this paper, I shall discuss the problem of evil and argue that our account of good and evil is at its core a deeply romantic narrative – it reflects our idealization of a perfect world. I will present the core arguments and responses from David Hume, Gottfried Leibniz, J.L. Mackie and Alvin Plantinga. I recognize that there are two types of evil – moral and natural, and that the problem of evil exists in two forms – logical and evidential. However, I shall limit my discussion to moral evil and focus on how the free will defense is an attempted logical but not evidential solution to the problem of evil. I aim to strengthen the free will defense with reference to William James’s religious hypothesis and argue that our active faith reconciles the notion of our free will with God’s divine attributes. Our active faith is a deeply personal commitment that transcends objective uncertainty. Our subjective, inward reflections elucidate our deepest meaning of life and our most passionate relation to God.

**Keywords:** problem of evil; faith; natural;

**1. INTRODUCTION**

“It takes some good to make it hurt. It takes some bad for satisfaction” (Mraz, 2010). These two lines from Jason Mraz’s pop song, *Life is Wonderful*, suggest that good and evil are intimately related. On a deeper level, one may even argue that these lines resonate with John Hick’s “soul-making” theodicy. Though Mraz’s lyric is not recognized as a piece of philosophical writing by any contemporary “professional standard”, it nevertheless invites our serious thought.

In this paper, I shall discuss the problem of evil and argue that our account of good and evil is at its core a deeply romantic narrative – it reflects our idealization of a perfect world. I will present the core arguments and responses from David Hume, Gottfried Leibniz, J.L. Mackie and Alvin Plantinga.

**2. PROBLEM STATEMENT**

The problem of evil arises from the apparent tension between the divine attributes of omnipotence, omniscience, and omnibenevolence, on the one hand, and the existence of evil on the other. The Judeo-Christian tradition has affirmed each of the following propositions (Pojman and Rea, 2015):

1. God is all-powerful.
2. God is all-knowing.
3. God is perfectly good.
4. Evil exists.

If God is perfectly good, it seems that God would not want evil to exist. Being omniscient, God must surely know what potentials for evil lurk in the world and what evils will arise apart from divine intervention. Being omnipotent, God is able to prevent any evil that God knows about and wants to prevent (Pojman and Rea, 2015). If God possesses all these divine attributes, then, in the words of Epicurus, “whence then is evil?” Yet, the fact that evil exists is beyond dispute. While both theists and atheists acknowledge the presence of evil, they differ in their interpretations of it.

### 3. RESEARCH QUESTIONS

At the outset, we need to clarify several terms that are significant and widely used in the literature on the problem of evil. First, a *moral evil* is caused by a free agent (e.g. theft, murder), whereas a *natural evil* is caused by mother nature (e.g. hurricane, tsunami). Second, the problem of evil in its *logical form* poses rational challenges for reconciliation the existence of evil and all the divine attributes of the perfect being, whereas in its *evidential form* it presents empirical difficulties in accounting for the extent of evil in our world. Last but not least, a *theodicy* is a positive justification for the presence of evil, whereas a *defense* is simply a demonstration of consistency – an effort to show that there is no formal contradiction between the existence of God on the one hand and the existence of evil on the other.

### 4. PURPOSE OF THE STUDY

I aim to strengthen the free will defense with reference to William James’s religious hypothesis and argue that our *active faith* reconciles the notion of our free will with God’s divine attributes. Our *active faith* is a deeply personal commitment that transcends objective uncertainty. Our *subjective, inward reflections* elucidate our deepest meaning of life and our most passionate relation to God.

### 5. RESEARCH METHODS

In *The Argument from Evil*, Hume argues through his persona Philo that not merely the fact of evil, but the enormous amount of evil, makes it dubious that a deity exists. Hume holds that each of us has strong empirical evidence for the existence of evil: “The miseries of life, the unhappiness of man, the general corruptions of our nature, the unsatisfactory enjoyment of pleasures, riches, honours – these phrases have become almost proverbial in all languages. And who can doubt of what all men declare from their own immediate feeling and experience?” (Hume, 1979). Beyond these moral evils, Hume also accounts for “the curious artifices of nature [which] embitter the life of every living being” (Hume, 1979). In particular, he raises the example of nature’s food chain: “before and behind, above and below, every animal is surrounded with enemies which incessantly seek his misery and destruction” (Hume, 1979). Even when “we surmount those wild beasts, our natural enemies”, we are still plagued by the problem of evil because “[m]an is the greatest enemy of man” (Hume, 1979). The instances of “[o]ppression, injustice, contempt, contumely, violence, sedition, war, calumny, treachery, fraud” (Hume, 1979) appear to be moral evils which are themselves an extension of natural evils in the wider world. In response to these empirical evidences for the prevalence of evil, Hume takes the agnostic position by “assert[ing] that these subjects (the logical problem of evil) exceed all human capacity, and that our common measures of truth and falsehood are not applicable to them” (Hume, 1979). In essence, Hume doubts that we can ever agree on a normative explanation and thus opts to settle on a descriptive account of evil. However, the cost of Hume’s stance is the weakening of God’s omnibenevolence attribute: If God’s goodness is beyond our human understanding, then can we reasonably claim that we know God is perfectly good?

Responding to Hume, Leibniz argues that the fact of evil in no way refutes theism in his essay *Theodicy: A Defense of Theism*. While not disputing the presence of evil, Leibniz offers an optimistic interpretation of it: “*evil is accompanied by a greater good*” (Duncan, 1890). Leibniz credits “St. Augustine, who has said a hundred times, that God has permitted evil in order to bring about... a greater

good, and... Thomas Aquinas (in libr. II. sent. dist. 32, qu. I, art. 1), [who argues] that the permitting of evil tends to the good of the universe” (Duncan, 1890). Building on the ideas of St. Augustine and St. Thomas Aquinas, Leibniz offers his own example: “Adam’s fall [is a] *felix culpa*, a happy sin, because it had been retrieved with immense advantage by the incarnation of the Son of God, who has given to the universe something nobler than anything that ever would have been among creatures except for it” (Duncan, 1890). This “something nobler” is our free will: “it was in accordance with order and the general good that God allowed certain creatures the opportunity of exercising their liberty, even when he foresaw that they would turn to evil, but which he could so well rectify; because it was not fitting that, in order to hinder sin, God should always act in an extraordinary manner” (Duncan, 1890).

Leibniz’s answer, the free will defense, is one of the most famous theodicies addressing the logical problem of evil. If we accept Leibniz’s account that God knows (omniscient) that humans will commit evil, is capable of preventing it (omnipotent), but chooses not to do it in order to achieve a greater good (omnibenevolent), then there appears to be no contradiction between all of God’s divine attributes and the existence of evil. By preserving all four traditional Judeo-Christian propositions, Leibniz seems to have worked out a defense as well as a theodicy.

However, the immediate challenge against Leibniz’s free will defense is its limited effectiveness: while it may address moral evil, it definitely cannot account for natural evil. Moreover, even if we grant that the free will defense, to a large extent, solves the logical problem of evil, we still cannot rationalize why there is such a horrendous *amount* of evil in our world, i.e. the evidential problem of evil is unresolved. Though Leibniz addresses the second challenge by claiming that “it is possible, and in fact very probable, that the glory and the perfection of blessed are incomparably greater than the misery and the imperfection of the damned, and that here the excellence of the total good in the smaller number exceeds the total evil in the greater number” (Duncan, 1890), we are still intuitively unconvinced that any kind of “good” as we know it can justify such horrendous tragedies of our human race as the holocaust.

Perhaps, one way of saving Leibniz’s thought is to understand his claims as an argument-in-reverse: since God is all-knowing, all-powerful, and perfectly good, the world we live in must be the best of all possible worlds. In fact, Leibniz clearly articulates that “this universe must be in reality better than every other possible universe” (Duncan, 1890). Here, Leibniz’s defense of theism begins from a position of *faith*, much like how St. Anselm presents his entire ontological argument in the setting of a prayer. Situated this way, Leibniz’s free will defense paints a rosy picture of the superlative. We need to pay close attention to our most fascinating imagination in order to conceive the best of all possible worlds. In this deeply romantic narrative, we are the heroes of our own tales. Our story is one that passionately embraces all the wonders of our life: think of the awe-inspiring Mt. Everest in its magnificence and grandeur, or the hovering hummingbird fueling its tiny existence via the nectar of a blossoming flower. Better still, think of an amiable stranger who, without any hesitation, lends you a helping hand when you need it the most. These images offer us solace, temporary though it may be, from the blood and gore of many evils. By devoting our attention to the marvelous beauty of nature and the tender acts of kindness in our ordinary human encounters, we can anchor our faith in the wonder of our life. The power of our belief offers us the brightest hope even in the darkest hour of our existence. Indeed, most theists would argue that only a firm belief in God can open our heart to the grace and elegance in every moment of God’s creation. Only by applying the principle of charity can we appreciate Leibniz’s argument in its strongest form.

However, to some atheists our reliance on faith amounts to admitting that our belief lacks rationality. According to Mackie, the religious beliefs we have been discussing are positively irrational because several parts of the essential theological doctrine are inconsistent with one another. In *Evil and Omnipotence*, Mackie argues that the argument from evil demonstrates the incoherence of theism: If there is a God who is all-powerful and completely good, he will be able and willing to eliminate all evil in the world. But there is evil, so no God exists. At the outset, Mackie defines the problem of evil as “a logical problem, the problem of clarifying and reconciling a number of beliefs: it is not a scientific problem that might be solved by further observations, or a practical problem that might be solved by a decision or an action” (Mackie, 1955). Mackie also lays out other premises in what he calls the “additional principles... that good is opposed to evil, in such a way that a good thing always eliminates evil as far as it can, and



that there are no limits to what an omnipotent thing can do” (Mackie, 1955). Based on these assumptions, Mackie identifies two types of solutions.

Firstly, Mackie recognizes as “adequate solutions” those that “[give] up at least one of the propositions that constitute [the problem of evil]” (Mackie, 1955). Here, Mackie explains: “If you are prepared to say that God is not wholly good, or not quite omnipotent, or that evil does not exist, or that good is not opposed to the kind of evil that exists, or that there are limits to what an omnipotent thing can do, then the problem of evil will not arise for you” (Mackie, 1955). Though these solutions can effectively address the logical problem of evil, they inevitably lead to other problems for the theistic tradition. For instance, biting the bullet that God is not omnibenevolent would directly contradict the claim on God’s omnibenevolence in the bible: “The LORD is righteous in all His ways And kind in all His deeds” (Psalm 145:17, *New American Standard Bible*). Here, a strictly coherent logic leads to a rejection of one of the fundamental teachings in the bible. In other words, the adequate solutions defined by Mackie would only strengthen the atheists’ position.

Secondly, Mackie calls to our attention “fallacious solutions which explicitly maintain all the constituent propositions, but implicitly reject at least one of them in the course of the argument that explains away the problem of evil” (Mackie, 1955). Mackie observes that “[t]hese fallacious solutions often turn upon some equivocation with the words ‘good’ and ‘evil,’ or upon some vagueness about the way in which good and evil are opposed to one another, or about how much is meant by ‘omnipotence’” (Mackie, 1955). Here, we need to make a distinction between formal and informal fallacies. On the one hand, a formal fallacy is a logical error that occurs in the form or structure of an argument. This type of fallacy is restricted to deductive arguments. On the other hand, an informal fallacy is a mistake in reasoning that occurs in ordinary language and is different from an error in the form or structure of arguments. Mackie’s idea of “fallacious solutions” appears to be the latter. Unlike formal fallacies which can only be resolved by correcting the argument form, informal fallacies require a clarification solution for the verbal dispute.

Of particular interest to us is Mackie’s objection of the statement “Evil is due to human free will.” The objective of the appeal to free will is to get God off the hook, i.e. we are blameworthy when we commit evil because we have the freedom to choose our actions. Here is Mackie’s presentation of the free will defense: “first order evil (e.g. pain) may be justified as a logically necessary component in second order good (e.g. sympathy) while second order evil (e.g. cruelty) is not *justified*, but is so ascribed to human beings that God cannot be held responsible for it” (Mackie, 1955). Mackie treats freedom as a “third order good” which is superior to deterministically produced second order goods. However, it also accounts for second order evils because they are “logically necessary accompaniments of freedom” (Mackie, 1955).

Mackie raises two challenges to the free will defense. First, “there was to [God] the obviously better possibility of making beings who would act freely but always go right... [God’s] failure to avail himself of this possibility is inconsistent with his being both omnipotent and wholly good” (Mackie, 1955). Second, “there is a fundamental difficulty in the notion of an omnipotent God creating men with free will, for if men’s will are really free this must mean that even God cannot control them, that is, that God is no longer omnipotent” (Mackie, 1955). This leads to Mackie’s notion of the “Paradox of Omnipotence: can an omnipotent being make things which he cannot subsequently control?” (Mackie, 1955). At this point, let us concede that both of Mackie’s challenges indeed offer a solid proof of the logical incompatibility between God’s divine attributes and the existence of evil.

However, this prompted Alvin Plantinga to respond with his strengthened version of the free will defense. In *God, Freedom, and Evil*, Plantinga argues: “The heart of the Free Will Defense is the claim that it is *possible* that God could not have created a universe containing a moral good (or as much moral good as this world contains) without creating one that also contained moral evil. And if so, then it is possible that God has a good reason for creating a world containing evil” (Plantinga, 1974). Through his intensely logical rebuttal of Mackie by way of many examples, Plantinga concludes that “the price for creating a world in which they produce moral good is creating one in which they also produce moral evil.” Taking a step back, we can see that Plantinga’s counter is based on his disagreements with Leibniz and Mackie on how God “actualizes” instead of “creates” a possible world and what it means for an agent

to be “morally free”. While Plantinga’s defense has received wide acceptance among contemporary philosophers when addressing the logical problem of evil, it falls short of providing a justification strong enough for an agent to *act* in faith of God even when there is indisputable evidence of evil in our world.

## 6. FINDINGS

Instead, let us take the pragmatic route. William James’ seminal essay, *The Will to Believe*, is a defense of religious faith on pragmatic ground in the absence of conclusive logical argumentation or scientific evidence. James defines “the religious hypothesis” as two claims (James, 1879):

1. “[T]he best things are the more eternal things, the overlapping things, the things in the universe that throw the last stone, so to speak and say the final word.”
2. “[W]e are better off even now if we believe her first affirmation to be true.”

In essence, James’s “religious hypothesis” is hope writ large – it is a deep faith in the ultimate outcome of the cosmos which is so powerful that it stirs us to active belief at our present moment. For James, this life-transforming experience is a “*forced* option” because “[w]e cannot escape the issue by remaining skeptical and waiting for more light... although we do avoid error in that way *if religion be untrue*, we lose the good, *if it be true*, just as certainly as if we positively chose to disbelieve (James, 1879).” At our level of perceiving the world, we are free to adopt any theological position, including the skeptical position. In this positive sense, i.e. autonomy, our freedom of will is preserved. Indeed, James urges us “to respect one another’s mental freedom” (James, 1879). However, on a meta level, we do not have freedom in its negative sense, i.e. without constraints, because religious faith is of ultimate concern to all of us and we have no way of escaping from making a choice, whether explicit or implicit, about our will to believe. In reference to those mounting logical challenges to religion, James says: “...one who should shut himself up in snarling logicity and try to make the gods extort his recognition willy-nilly, or not at all, might cut himself off forever from his only opportunity of making the gods’ acquaintance” (James, 1879). As such, James lays out a strong pragmatic justification for religious faith that is independent of rationality.

More directly, the free will defense can be strengthened when we re-conceptualize our free will in the context of James’s pragmatic ideas. In *Freedom and Limits*, John Lachs explains James’s response to the problem of evil using the notion of “moral holiday”: “if our obligations are infinite but God picks up the slack and completes what we leave undone, then we might as well break from our labors and let the Deity take over. The urgency of moral action abates the moment we feel assured that God presides over a universe in which the good inevitably prevails” (Lachs, 2014). This is a direct response to Mackie’s first challenge to the free will defense. While we may concede that it is not logically inconsistent for an almighty God to create us as free agents who will always do right, we may still wonder why there is even a need for us to choose right over wrong when we know that God will right all the wrongs in the world. Here, we can attempt to resolve this part of the debate by further clarifying our idea of free will. James’s pragmatic approach to religion suggests that our faith should be *active* rather than *passive*. God offers us free will for us to practice our *active faith* such that the synthesis of our utmost effort to choose right (*active*) and God’s divine powers (*faith*) will always yield the best possible outcome. In this sense, our concept of free will is not *static*. Instead, by thinking about our free will as *freedom in flux* we place our faith in a divine being who will guide us, rather than compel us, towards a higher-order and perfectly stable eternal good.

Now, I shall end my paper by adding an existential spin to our discussion. In *Subjectivity Is Truth*, Søren Kierkegaard recognizes the evidential problem of evil: “When I consider nature in order to discover God, I do indeed see his omnipotence and wisdom, but I see much more that disturbs me” (Kierkegaard, 1844). Here, Kierkegaard also implicitly acknowledges the logical difficulty of reconciling all the divine attributes of God with the existence of evil. However, this “objective uncertainty [is]...precisely...the place for inwardness because inwardness apprehends the objective uncertainty with the entire passion of infinity.” (Kierkegaard, 1844) To Kierkegaard, the risk of objective uncertainty is a necessary condition for faith because “[f]aith is precisely the contradiction between the infinite passion of inwardness and objective uncertainty” (Kierkegaard, 1844). That Mackie frames his second challenge to

the free will defense, the *Paradox of Omnipotence*, as a paradox, in fact bolsters Kierkegaard's existential claim: "When subjectivity, inwardness, is the truth, the truth becomes objectively determined as a paradox, and that it is paradoxical is made clear by the fact that subjectivity is truth, for it repels objectivity, and the expression for the objective repulsion is the intensity and measure of inwardness. The paradox is the objective uncertainty, which is the expression for the passion of inwardness, which is precisely the truth" (Kierkegaard, 1844). While Kierkegaard concedes that "the eternal truth is not essentially in itself paradoxical", he probes us to a deeper, inner reflection by arguing that "it becomes so by relating itself to an existing individual" (Kierkegaard, 1844). In light of Kierkegaard's existential ideas, we need to perceive our *active leap of faith* as the embodiment of subjective truth – our passionately personal relation to God. While faith in this sense is not an epistemic state, it nevertheless constitutes our ultimate concern because the rich history of our current discussion testifies to the magnitude of our thoughts on religion.

## **7. CONCLUSION**

The chorus of Jason Mraz's *Life is Wonderful* plays a soothing melody to a pensive lyric: "Ha la la la la life is wonderful...Ha la la la la life is meaningful..." (Mraz, 2010). Perhaps, to many of us, this seems too good to be true. In our imperfect world, the existence of many seemingly insurmountable evils is undoubtedly disheartening. Life, in its chillingly bleak reality, tests our most fervent faith. However, it is precisely upon this realization that we must give all our light. As Pierre de Coubertin, father of the modern Olympics, puts it: "The important thing in the Olympic Games is not to win, but to take part; the important thing in Life is not triumph, but the struggle; the essential thing is not to have conquered but to have fought well. To spread these principles is to build up a strong and more valiant and, above all, more scrupulous and more generous humanity" (Dixon, 1984). Only by holding on to our blazing passion – our *personal, active faith* – can we ignite a spark of hope that illuminates the wonder of our exquisite life and the freedom of our indomitable will.

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## MCDSARE: 2018

# International Multidisciplinary Scientific Conference on the Dialogue between Sciences & Arts, Religion & Education

## FROM PHENOMENON TO REPRESENTATION. PHYSICAL SPACE AND LOGICAL SPACE – TRANSCENDENTAL COMPLEMENTS

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### *Abstract*

In this article I propose to investigate the mechanism by which we represent a certain phenomenon, how we fit into similar phenomena, whether this representation is unique, unitary, which philosophical and logico-ontological resources intervene in such situations. Graphical, formal, logical, conceptual expression in the field of knowledge is not unique, but reflects a certain natural connection between the phenomenon and its form of representation, which is why we use the term representationism. It is proper to mathematics, physics, logic, sociology, psychology and other disciplines. The relativization of the representative framework of science and implicitly of mathematics is very visible in Wittgenstein's work. There are several opinions under discussion on the theoretical model followed by the Austrian philosopher from *Tractatus Logico-Philosophicus* to his later writings. But they all gain unity in the light of the concept of representationism that I support. In this article, I want to stop only at the physicalistic filiation of representationism, expressed by the connection between the Space of phases in physics and Logical Space (conceived by Wittgenstein). This connection is one of a transcendental possibility: as space and time are a priori intuitions (not concepts, not empirical results), intuitions that underlie the coordinates of physics, the same transcendental contact I have with the existential coordinates of truth ("it exists" and "does not exist": "truth" and "false") that are logically and ontologically coordinates. Here we have in mind the fusion of Space of phases in physics (Hertz, Boltzmann) and the Wittgenstein Logical Space that prefigures the same author's Grammatical Space, as a move from Kantian transcendentalism to constructivism and conventionalism.

**Keywords:** Wittgenstein; representationism; mathematics; logical space; phase space; grammatical space;

### 1. INTRODUCTION

Concepts of *phenomenon* and *representation* are considered in their broad philosophical sense, which implies a subject-object interaction, a transcendent availability of the subject to perceive and represent. The discussion is mainly focused on the field of philosophy of science, the objective and

measurable framing of a phenomenon, such as physical phenomenon integrated into Kantian transcendental structures of space and time, considered the frame of every experience.

In this sense, I consider the term "rational generalization" considered by philosopher Ilie Pârnu (2001) a point of view that unifies transcendentalism with the philosophy of science. There is a "theoretical" model of "rational generalization," Ilie Pârnu shows, followed by Wittgenstein in *Tractatus Logico-Philosophicus* (2001) (called TLP), that of Newtonian mechanics, particularly in Hertz's view of critical reconstruction. Thus, not the philosophy of language in the descendency of Frege and Russell is decisive for Wittgenstein, but the philosophy of science and the interpretations of German physicists: here comes the picture theory of meaning and the representation, with simple terms: Gegenstand, Bild, logischen Form, logischen Raum, logische (mathematische) Mannigfaltigkeit, Strukturen den Sachverhalte, Satz and others. ('Object', 'picture', 'logical form', 'logical space', 'logical (mathematical) multiplicity', 'structure of the state of affairs', 'proposition').

## **2. PROBLEM STATEMENT**

I proposed and used the term representationism (Iulian Grigoriu 2017 a, b) to designate the fundamental feature of Wittgenstein's mathematics philosophy but also as an element of unity and continuity of Wittgenstein's entire philosophy. Representationism is the result of two philosophical facts: on the one hand, there is no "pure" thinking, liberated by symbols, concepts, representations (Leibniz 1972, 13), on the other hand, a representation must faithfully convey a phenomenon turn it into an obvious, valid, verifiable fact that reflects an external need for the suitability of the phenomenon to the best representation.

Exegesa observed that especially in TLP a new theory of representation is being established, called "the picture theory" but it was not considered an element of unity of the entire Wittgenstein philosophy. There are two main sources of Wittgensteinian representationism: one is the theory of representation at Frege and Russell, on the line of philosophy of language and logical atomism, another in German physics (Hertz, Boltzmann), with roots in Kantian transcendental idealism.

I consider all these sources equally valid for the Wittgensteinian representationism. The Austrian philosopher uses them, speculates on them, tries to avoid them and even contradicts them, with the elegance of an insidious vision. Philosophy, unlike science, reveals, shows and *silences*, this being her *form* of expression.

Ilie Pârnu believes that the genesis of thinking in the TLP belongs to the philosophy of science, to Newtonian mechanics and, to the same extent, Kantian transcendentalism and German physics, represented by Hertz, Boltzmann, Helmholtz. That is why I want to apply the *method of rational generalization* based on a concrete case of representationism of a physical phenomenon (I have chosen the amortized motion of an elastic spring to which an object is attached) to highlight the steps of the method in a concrete situation. Finding the connection between the Wittgenstein's Logical Space and the Phase Space of Physics outweighs the simple filiation (in the sense that Wittgenstein is inspired by physics). The Austrian philosopher discovers an *internal structure* of combining truth values, according to which any complex state of reality can be expressed. Thus the unity between those interpretations that see the TLP either in the filiation of German physics - Toulmin and Janik (1973, 139 sqq), Griffin (1965), Harré (2001) - or in the line of Kantian transcendental idealism - Stenius (1960, 214 sqq), Stegmüller (1969, 417 sqq).

## **3. RESEARCH QUESTIONS**

My objective is to exemplify on a concrete case (a simple physical phenomenon) the way in which its representation framework can be transformed. Based on the rational generalization model, I will investigate the theoretical similarities and differences between phase Space and logical Space. Thus, they can explain on what the possibility of representing a phenomenon is based, and why representation is not unique in physics and mathematics, nor in logic. A logical or rational form is not expressed univocally, which is related to the transcendental sources and resources of representation. The concrete objectives of the article are mainly two: the exposure of the rational generalization model approached and its

application in the field of physics, on a concrete example, as well as the problem of the transcendental affinities between the two spaces (physical and logical).

#### **4. PURPOSE OF STUDY**

The purpose of the article is to study the theoretical and functional link between the Wittgensteinian Logical Space and Phase Space in Physics, to find matches at transcendental categorical level (even idealized) between phenomenon and representation. The working hypothesis is to highlight a common background (internal space-time structures and logical-existential truths) between the two frames, logical and physical in which phenomena can be represented.

#### **5. RESEARCH METHODS**

The rational generalization model is not simple and straightforward (Pârnu, 2001, 263-264) but comprises two stages: a "logical and ontological" one, "enrichment of ontologies" where the realm is enriched with ideal entities, "pure possibilities" as a support for the functioning of the theoretical laws; the second stage is "transcendental and metaphysical", the structures generated by the first stage become "conditions of possibility" for reality, they constitute an enriched basis that can generate more generous possibilities of representation in the sense that they can unify various phenomena or a certain phenomena has a more appropriate representation. In this context reference is made to Boltzmann (1974, 226) which postulates the existence of elemental, fictitious objects in order to maintain the applicability and universality of the laws of physics; at Hertz (1899), which involves concealed accomplices in the background of the laws of physics and making them possible; to David Hilbert (1983) discussing "ideal elements" such as complex numbers, transfinite numbers, the point of infinite encounter of two parallel, etc., provided that these ideal elements do not introduce contradictions, in other words, compete to the establishment of a non-contradictory theory.

The second step of rational generalization relates to a "transcendental gambit" (Pârnu, 2001, 267): "there is now a change of ontological weight between the field of empiricism and that of the possible transcendental, in the sense that possible, the ideal, becomes fundamental in the face of the empirical reality" (Pârnu 2001, 265, 2002, 18). It is a metaphysical stage of establishing the theory, which is the kantian transcendentalism that extracts from the laws of physics the a priori structures of space and time and makes them the general conditions of any experience.

And the Space of Phases in Physics and the Tractational Logical Space are the beneficiaries of this "transcendental gambit" and "rational generalization." They extend logic to the abstract level, which intercedes and gives us new resources for our imagination.

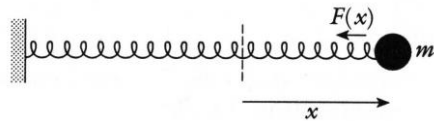
As Hertz observes, our power of representation is based on "the consistency of nature and our thoughts" with the philosophical projection characteristic of a transcendental necessity corresponding to this "profound" level that ensures the generality of correlations between the states of things and their representation by propositions, images, formalisms etc.:

"We form for ourselves images or symbols of external objects; and the form we give them is such that the necessary consequences of images in thought are always the images of the necessary consequences in the nature of the things pictured. In order that this requirement may be satisfied, there must be a certain conformity between nature and our thought." (Hertz 1899, Introduction, 1).

Wittgenstein discusses the theory of representation in the same hertzian spirit (TLP 2.1-3.0321), encompassing physical space, phase space, geometric space, reality in general. In particular, the image is logical if it refers to the logical form of the phenomenon (TLP 2.181). Phase space has in common with Logical Space that it preserves the logic of the phenomenon.

In order to see how this rational generalization model manifests itself in the field of physics, I will further illustrate the way in which the oscillatory motion is represented in space-time coordinates and in the phase space to investigate the elements that appear in a process of mathematical representationism, formally, of a physical phenomenon, and to see what the transcendental resources of representation are. It is finally to reveal on a concrete case how an "isomorphism" appears between language and reality.

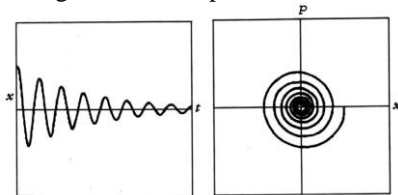
I consider a spring that is fixed to a body of mass  $m$  and oscillates on a surface (with friction) under the action of the elastic force  $F(x)$ :



(1)

That is why the representative frame of figure (1) is "poor" because we do not have here the logical (general) form of the phenomenon, but rather the own form of the phenomenon that remains always individual.

Further, in figure (2), an assimilation of the ideal elements and a mathematical synthesis that more appropriately represents the attenuated oscillatory movement has already taken place: the elongation is a sinusoidal function (whose amplitude decreases in time for a real phenomenon), and in the figure (3) the movement is represented in the phase space ( $p = p(x)$ , the impulse is the position function) where other mathematical representation laws appear. What I want to highlight here is precisely this possibility, this freedom to represent the physical phenomenon. It no longer depends on a certain system of coordinates, a certain image, and everything is done with the preservation of the "intuitive", more clear, the logic of the real phenomenon.



(2)

(3)

A point on the ellipse (as a trajectory in the space of the phases) has the coordinates  $x$ -spatial and  $p$ - impulse,  $p = p(x)$ , the ellipse being directly proportional to the total energy and inversely proportional to the frequency of the movement. When the movement is lossless, their ratio is constant. The spiral is mathematically derived from the ellipse, it is an ellipse that "breaks" because the body loses energy; the ellipse semi-axes diminish when the fictitious body of the Phase Space passes from one dial to another. Figure (3) shows how energy is lost, figure (2) rather how the movement (impulse) is lost.

If under ideal conditions, the oscillatory motion can be easily transposed from the sinus on the ellipse, under real conditions, it becomes a diminished sinusoid, a spiral, which allows us to perceive the phenomenon more easily.

The philosophical problem is: are there any representations that represent (explain by simple representation, transpose our thinking on reality to the end) for any physical-mathematical phenomenon and in addition, the representative framework is unique, immutable, or can the framework change? Is there an orleigh environment? After Kant, the frame is unique and transcendental, a situation to which Wittgenstein inclines to the TLP; more specifically, any representation is based on an a priori possibility specific to the knowing subject; In the second part of his philosophy, Wittgenstein no longer adheres to a single transcendental, logic-ontological representation framework, and language is seen to be better translated into different language games, regardless of transcendental structures. And when it comes to mathematical language games, their only justification lies in the power to represent, but the framework is no longer necessary, but formal, constructivist and even conventional. Space, time, logic are no longer a priori, but interact with the phenomenon of reality, the subject is increasingly viewed in a solipsistic way.

Figures 2 and 3 are closer to the logical form of the physical phenomenon (so the perceptual and knowledgeable subject is closer to his comprehension, "helped" by the chosen logic-mathematical framework).

## 6. FINDINGS

The plurality of representational cadres derives from the fact that the empirical and ideal entities coexist on a superior level of logic-ontological abstraction, where they homogenize: The ontologic has or

gets the same logical form as Logic, becoming an Onto-Logical whole (Wittgenstein said steadily, the Ontologic has in addition to Logic, "The Substance of the World" (TLP 2.021).

This Whole Onto-Logic has formal valences as transcendental possibilities of representation. If at Hertz and Boltzmann it is the "space of phases" (the frame in which the motion of a body in the impulse coordinate according to space, thus being a physico-mathematical representation) in Wittgenstein, the state of things appear in the Logical space, a logical skeleton of the whole possible. It is a "possible" simplified, that is recomposed as the elemental unity of the world, of the facts that take place in it. The difference between the two "spaces" is one of nature, one is a space in physical coordinates, the other in logical coordinates. In the first, an infinite number of trajectories can be represented, so it is a framework in which any trajectory can be constructed, does not bind or constrain in any way the phenomenon, the other, the logical framework, is as generous as the power of representation formal, but not necessarily visual, geometric. Logical space is not phenomena, but links, structures, logical senses of phenomena.

To emphasize the transcendental complementarity between the two types of spaces (physical and logical), we emphasize that Phase space can be considered a transient space between the purely physical (in space-time coordinates) and the logical (it benefits from transcendental resources by which it surprises the logical nature of what it represents otherwise than purely physical space). Simply pure physical space is causal, spatial-temporal, progressive, continuous (it suggests a development, it captures the progress of a phenomenon, a posteriori (it expresses what exists after the phenomenon manifests itself); The logical space appears a-causally, a-spatially and a-temporally, simultaneously, discreetly, expressing a logical sense given at once, a priori (expressing the whole possible before something existed).

The game between a priori (logical) and a posteriori (physical and experimental) is not a rigid one, especially because of complexity, meaning that both spaces are dimensioned according to the phenomenon represented to capture its complexity, the concrete situation on which must express it.

In both cases the phenomenon can be represented in many ways, but it is a normalized transcendental, with a certain meaning. Also, any possible phenomenon is updated in a finite number of representations. The physical phase of phases reduces the multiplicity of occurrence of the phenomenon to two coordinates, the logical, more abstract, is a space of the functions of truth. The representation of the phenomenon hits the manipulation of the complexity of the phenomenon: in the physical space it is the solving of the specific differential equations in the logical space of the degree of the respective logical formula. A representation that simplifies the phenomenon is not a simple one, on the contrary. Evidence to which representation tends usually involves a more complex representation framework than another leading to a weaker record. (To represent here is to establish a correlation between the physical or logical event and its way of appearing, in a specific way, the logical space is predominantly formal).

## **7. CONCLUSION**

The purpose of the study is considered to have been achieved by questioning and highlighting transcendental equivalences and complementarities between Logic Space and Physical Space. Through the highlighted characteristics, they appear as transcendental complements. Phase space can be considered a superior synthesis of them. Hence, in the same representational context, other "representation spaces" that tend to free themselves at least from the a priori categories of space and time may, if not from the whole transcendental charge, tributary to a transcendental unity of sensibility and intellect that is no longer present.

In the TLP, Wittgenstein examines the uniqueness of the logical form by targeting the limits of representationism: we can not say why when we see something, we see it in a certain way and not otherwise, although "everything we see might be otherwise" (TLP 5.634). That is, we could have perceived things in a different way, provided they do not deviate from logic. The fact that any image is logical (and not necessarily spatial) (that is, the case of Phase Space, a perfect transcendental equivalent of the Logical Space that it encompasses) carries a given beyond which one can not and can not be given up, anyway, I would represent a certain phenomenon, physically or mathematically.



Any phenomenon is one that takes place in the Logical Space, and "the existence of this Logical Space is guaranteed by the existence of the parts that make it" (TLP 3.4). The logic of every fact consists of its "vectorial" decomposition of the truth coordinates of the elemental sentences that make up it, within a Logical Space that potentially contains all the possibilities of the combinations of states of things. This is the framework for the reconstruction and generalization of the tractarian propositional sign that will later transform into Grammatical Space, on the same transcendental physicist but also of logical atomism.

Both Spaces investigated here are structured as co-ordinates of coordinates, starting from precise constitutive units: "truth" and "false" in Logical Space, Space and Time in Phase Space. Further, Phase space assimilated space and time (empirical) into a more "expressive" coordinate unit (spatial impulse); there are representations in physics that tend to relativize and eliminate space-temporal determinations. These are representations and formalisms in quantum mechanics, statistical physics, etc. Here either causality is eliminated, or space and time are no longer those basic units of Kant's representation. Such recursive assimilation of the basic coordinates (space-time of physics, truth values of logic) does not guarantee the elimination, but only their overcoming. The logic space assimilates the truth values in the coordinates expressed by the elementary propositions  $p(0,1)$ ,  $q(1,0)$  which in their turn are assimilated by the logic space coordinates (the 16 functions of truth, from contradiction to tautology, TLP 5,101 ). And these can also become coordinated according to which any logical phenomenon can be represented. And Logical Space has internal resources to grow further.

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#### THE POLITICAL CRYSTALLIZATION OF ZIONISM IN THE ROMANIAN DIASPORA: CONFIGURATIONS, PROGRAMMES, STANCES

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#### *Abstract*

Zionism or the national manner of solving the Jewish problem – a result of the failure of Jewish emancipation in Eastern Europe or of their integration in the West – essentially represents the movement for restoring a Jewish State in Palestine, which was initiated at the First Zionist World Congress in Basel in 1897 and finalized through the proclamation of the State of Israel in 1948. Zionism, both in Palestine and in the Diaspora, begins its political crystallization in the interwar period, under the influence of European political currents and ideas. Our study aims at analyzing these types of Zionism – center, left or right –, at comparing their programmes and the influence that they had inside the Romanian Jewish Diaspora.

**Keywords:** Jewish diaspora in Romania; political currents and ideas; Romanian interwar society; the formation of the State of Israel; interethnic relations;

#### 1. INTRODUCTION

"Zionism", derived from the term of *Zion*<sup>1</sup>, expresses the ideal of the return of the "chosen people" in Eretz Israel – the land promised by God to the Jews. This ideal was preserved over the centuries among the Jewish population in exile – the *Diaspora* (in Greek) or *Galut* (in Hebrew) (Buber, 1997). Zionism became an essential part of Hebrew messianism ever since the time of the Prophets, as Judaism was based on God's absolute sovereignty over nature, history, and peoples – *gentes* (in Greek) or *goyim* (in Hebrew). The failure of human (Jewish) society in knowing God brought with it punishment, because for the Prophets the Creator was both Love and Castigation. In its essence, *prophetic messianism* promised the people of Israel the end of exile and the return to the "Holy City" when "Zion shall be redeemed by judgment, and its inhabitants returned to faith by righteousness" (Isaiah 1: 27).

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<sup>1</sup> In *The Old Testament* or the Hebrew Bible (*Tanah*), *Zion* (*Tzion* or *Ṭion* in Hebrew) indicated both a fortified settlement from the time of King David as well as the mountain or hill on which this fortress was situated. On site, archaeologists have identified King David's fortress in the south-east of modern day Jerusalem. For Jews, Mount Zion became the symbol of the lost state.

And yet, although it was prefigured in Judaism, modern political Zionism was to a greater extent born as a result of the failure of Jewish emancipation or integration in the European society, a process that meant exactly giving up the political implications of this Messianic theology – it is not possible to wish to be a citizen of an European country while also continuing to consider yourself as being exiled in that country. On the other hand, modernization was accompanied by the secularization of the European society and state, a phenomenon that had an impact on all religions, whether it was Christianity or Judaism. Secularization implies an exclusion of religion from the public sphere, which is known as the Jewish Enlightenment: "Be Jewish inside your home and a man outside of it" (Eisenberg, 1993: 266). The struggle of the Jews in Europe after the 1789 French revolution to obtain equal rights and freedoms ends in failure and in an increase of anti-Semitism. The new realities determine European Jews to revise their attitudes and to move from civil claims to national ones, more precisely they intend to form a Jewish national state.

Political Zionism was born as a reaction to the lack of rights, the continued oppression and persecution of the Jews in Eastern Europe and, at the same time, to the growing deception of the failure of their Western assimilation. The merit for coalescing all the groups on the continent into a single organization belongs to Theodor Herzl (1860-1904), the initiator of the first Zionist World Congress held in Basel in 1897. The Congress defined the principles and objectives of the new Zionist World Organization, establishing that the movement is aimed at legally obtaining and guaranteeing the existence of a home for Jews in Palestine.

Beyond any other interpretations, modern Zionism renounced the old conception that Jewry was an exclusively religious community; from then on, the Jewish problem was above all a national problem that could only be solved through political means (Nordau, 1897: 194-196).

Being a political movement, modern Zionism could not claim unity of thought on the means to achieve the Jewish national state or on its forms of organization. That is why, especially after the First World War – when various ideologies emerge and grow in Europe and worldwide, in a wide range from the extreme left to the extreme right – the Zionist movement, in turn, suffers influences from these currents, from the Marxist left, the center or the extreme right, from secular movements to cultural and religious ones. Their diversity was given by the fact that the father of modern Zionism, Teodor Herzl, had only indicated that the solution to the Jewish problem was in Palestine and not in the Diaspora. Otherwise, matters of a social nature (whether the Jewish nation's structures in Palestine would be bourgeois or socialist) or those concerning the Jewish identity (whether in Palestine the emphasis was to be put on state, nation, culture, religion, or values) had remained free for interpretation.

## **2. PROBLEM STATEMENT**

The impact of Zionism and Zionist ideas on the Jews in Romania has been a research direction that has experienced temporary historiographical fluctuations. Until the enforcement of Communism in Romania, the great effervescence of the sympathizers of this current was more focused on translating and printing in Romanian the works of the great European Zionist leaders from the end of the XIXth century and the first half of the XXth century or by publishing monographs about them – Theodor Herzl (Herzl, 1896), Leon Pinsker (Pinsker, 1899), Nahum Sokolow (Sokolow, 1916), Chaim Weizmann (Weizmann, 1945), Ahad Ha'Am (Aberman, 1946), Arthur Ruppin (Bainglass, 1947). Also, there were series of publications related to general information (Schweig, 1915), to the important moments in the history of the Zionist World Organization or the Jewish Agency (The historical meeting in Zürich, 1929), or the institutions coordinating the colonization of Palestine (Schweig, 1912). Under the conditions of the interwar political crystallization of Zionism, various Zionist groups tried to make adherents in the Romanian Jewish Diaspora by publishing and spreading brochures in which they publicized their ideas and leaders, with the followers of the right-wing Zionist leader Vladimir Zeev Jabotinsky (Jabotinsky, 1930; Jabotinsky, 1931) being the most active. Romania's transition to Communism (1945-1948) restricted the possibility of popularizing Zionism to left-wing Zionism, which seemed to enter the patterns of Marxism, thus receiving the acceptance of Moscow (David, 1946; Danzig, et al.). As for the history of

Zionism, generally and not with particular reference to the Romanian case, one of the few works that appeared until 1948 is that of Th. Loewenstein (Loewenstein, 1934).

During the Communist regime, Zionism became one of the forbidden subjects for Romanian historiography. In this period, the attempts of some foreign historians to re-establish the course and amplitude of Zionist ideas in Romania were poor and sporadic, perhaps with the exception of Eliezer Ilan's work, written in Romanian in Tel Aviv (Ilan, 1968). The collapse of Communism brought the matter of Zionism back to the attention of researchers, but the analysis undertaken by a number of valuable specialists were limited to discussing the impact that Zionism had, in general, on the Jewish community in Romania (Benjamin, 2010: 279-296; Benjamin et al., 2010; Iancu, 1996; Iancu, 2000; Kuller, 2004; Rotman et al., 2010), without analyzing its political crystallization in the interwar period, the programs of the various Zionist groups operating in the Jewish Diaspora in Romania, or the electoral disputes surrounding the election for the Zionist World Congress.

### **3. RESEARCH QUESTIONS**

Our study intends to answer a number of questions, not unrelated to one another. Firstly, to what extent did the solution of rebuilding the Jewish national state or the Zionist solution become popular among the Jewish community in Romania. Secondly, to what extent was the interwar breakup of Zionism in multiple currents felt among the Jews in Romania. Last but not least, how did these Zionist movements function in Romania, what were their programs, and whether they arose disputes, animosities, and dissensions within the Jewish Diaspora in Romania.

### **4. PURPOSE OF THE STUDY**

The study aims at adding to the knowledge of Jewish history in Romania by analyzing the role of Zionism as an alternative to anti-Semitism in the interwar period, as well as its ability to attract, after its political crystallisation in the indicated timeframe, the elements inclined towards certain political ideologies, especially to the left (Marxist).

### **5. RESEARCH METHODS**

Stories mirror a path taken by a character capable of reaching a superior status (that of a king for instance). Our research primarily combines the inductive and analogical methods. In the first case, in order to draw conclusions we intend to look at the facts by using archival funds. In the second case, we must bear in mind that Zionism was a movement that encompassed Jewry worldwide, and therefore its effects are not only observed among the Diaspora in Romania.

### **6. FINDINGS**

Zionism strongly influenced the lives of Jewish communities, both in Palestine and in the Diaspora. In the Romanian space (both in the Old Kingdom and in the provinces united into Romania in 1918) the Howewe-Zionist current, which prefigured Herzl's political Zionism, had been very popular. The idea of the return of the Jews to Palestine (not necessarily to form a state of their own) had been advocated after 1880 by the Hibbat Zion movement, placed under the authority of Leon Pinsker (1821-1891). In favor of this practical Zionism (thusly named to distinguish it from Herzl's 1897 political Zionism), Howewe Zion societies (translatable as "The Lovers of Zion") were set up in the Romanian port cities of the Danube's maritime sector, and the first national meetings held in Focsani between December 1881 and January 1882 were attended by 51 delegates representing 32 Zionist societies. The headquarters of the Zionist Central Committee in Romania were set up in Galați, where most of the leaders of practical Zionism – Samuel Pineles, Isac Loebel, H. Schein and others – lived. Up until 1919 most Zionist congresses in Romania took place in Galați, Brăila and Focșani, the predominance of these urban centers inside the Zionist movement also being related to the role played by the ports at the Mouth of the Danube as Jewish migration points towards the United States, Western Europe and Palestine (Benjamin, 2010: 280-283). It has been estimated, without very accurate data, that between 1899 and

1904 approximately 50,000 Jews left Romania, with another 40,000 until the start of the First World War (Iancu, 1998: 37).

By the end of the first world conflagration, the Jews of the Old Kingdom as well as those in Russia (Nouzille, 2006: 104-107), to which the state authorities constantly refused to grant full political and civil rights, adopted to a fair extent the utopian ideals of practical Zionism, and after 1897 those of Herzl's political Zionism.

In a first phase, Zionism was a general trend, initiated by Herzl himself. According to his vision, the Jewish state could be founded within international politics through dialogue and cooperation with the great powers. Herzl believed that the legal recognition of the Jewish state, rather than its geographical location itself, was more important, Herzl's name also being linked to the establishment of the instruments of the future state's formation – a political forum (the Jewish Agency or the Zionist World Organization), a bank, a form of national loyalty involving certain obligations, a press organ, a central body, and a leader (Neusner, 2001: 216-217).

At first the representatives of this general current, subsequently named centrists, did not consider the formation of a political party. At the XIIth Zionist World Congress held in Karlsbad in 1921, the first in the interwar period, the popularity of these representatives was very high – about 73% of the delegations chosen by the Jews of Palestine and the Diaspora came from their ranks. Building on this worldwide popularity, the centre denomination, known as General Zionists, imposed and maintained Chaim Weizmann as the president of the Zionist World Organization for the most part of the period between 1920 and 1946. Under the pressure of the growing popularity of left-wing Zionism, much better defined ideologically and organizationally, as well as for some practical reasons, the General Zionists will also define themselves as a political formation in 1931. A few years later, in 1935 the centrists will be represented in Palestine and in the Diaspora by two political parties – the Union of General Zionists and the Federation of General Zionists – which will address the Hebrew middle class, Chaim Weizmann himself being enrolled in the latter. In spite of these organizational measures, the popularity of the General Zionists gradually declined, and by the XXIst Zionist World Congress held in 1939 it only had 32.4% of the total number of elected delegates (Ahituv, 2003: 375-376).

A second trend, asserted ever since the beginning of the Zionist movement, promoted the views of Ahad Ha'Am. His theory on the Jewish joint popular culture emphasized Zion as a spiritual center that had the capacity to unite all Jewish groups. Ahad Ha'Am's cultural Zionism led to the reconciliation of religious Jews and secularized (political and laic) Zionism. The struggle to constitute a nation and to have a national state did not prevent Jews from being loyal to the Jewish tradition and the Jewish religion (Neusner, 2001: 216-218). From a political point of view and derived from Ahad Ha'Am's cultural conception, religious Zionism led to the formation of Mizrachi (or "the Spiritual Center") in 1902 in Vilnius, which relocated its commandment to Palestine in 1904 (Dieckhoff, 2005: 206-208). Members of this trend began by building their own network of schools and institutions, parallel with secularized Zionists, at the same time organizing and conducting their own immigration campaigns. In Weizmann's opinion, Mizrachi encouraged the drawing in of a faulty standard for the Jewish immigrant, namely the wealthy ghetto resident, especially from Poland, who did not intend to work the land but sought to settle in the Palestinian urban centers where he could open capitalist businesses or engage in real estate speculation. The Mizrachi formation was also favored by the new immigration conditions imposed in Palestine in 1922 by the British government. In theory, emigration could be unlimited, but in practice it had to reflect the economic capacity of the country (Palestine) to absorb new arrivals, which translated into the introduction of a \$2,500 fee for each Jew that received an immigration visa (Johnson, 2005: 348). Throughout the interwar period, Mizrachi's influence at the Zionist World Congress was considerable, with an attainment ranging from a maximum of 18.55% of the mandates in 1921 and a minimum of 12.33% in 1939 (Ahituv, 2003: 375).

A third major trend inside the Zionist world movement was the Socialist one. Socialist Zionism had great influence in the Jewish world, especially in the Jewish Diaspora of Central and Eastern Europe, because it brought together the two powerful systems of ideas from the first half of the XXth century – Zionism and Socialism. The roots of Socialist Zionism are to be detected in the causes of the second great wave of migration to Palestine, the "second Alia", which ran from 1904 to 1914. More precisely, the

surge of Russian pogroms after 1903 and the failure of the 1905 revolution determined many young Jewish people in Russia to regard Palestine as their last hope. Politically, many were adherents to the Marxist ideas based on collectivism, and others were social idealists and romantics. Once in Palestine, they discover a harsh reality: Jewish farmers from the first wave of emigration preferred to hire Arab workers, which were better acclimatized and cheaper, rather than the young Europeanized Jewry. The social realities of Palestine reactivated Socialist ideas: the Jewish problem could not be solved within a capitalist setting, but by returning to their collectivist roots. For these reasons, the Socialist Zionists were almost permanently in conflict with Chaim Weizmann, the president of the Zionist World Organization and the centrist representative of the General Zionists (Johnson, 2005: 347-348).

The type of emigrant that left-wing Zionists sought to attract was that of the pioneer (*halutzim/haluṭim*), the one who was willing to do all the hard work so as to no longer depend on the Arab worker. Despite the ideological conflict, left-wing Zionists were forced to work with the movement's bourgeois structures and with Chaim Weizmann. The lands, which Jewish pioneers exploited by Marxist model, were acquired by Keren Kayemet le-Israel (the "Jewish National Fund"), a foundation that internationally collected steady contributions from the Jewish masses of the Diaspora, to which more consistent sums donated by Jewish capitalists were added. The pioneers (*halutzims*) set up a network of cooperative agricultural colonies (*kibbutz*) and political parties that decisively influenced the political activity of the Jewry both in Palestine and in the Diaspora. The first leftist parties were established in 1906: *Po'alei Zion* ("The Workers of Zion") and *Hapoel Hatzair* ("The Young Worker") (Eisenberg, 1993: 308). Amongst some of the most important leftist Zionists was David Ben Gurion, who had a central role in the forming of *Mapai* ("Workers' Party of the Land of Israel") and in the *Hitahdut* union movement (Johnson, 2005: 347-348).

The influence of left-wing Zionism gradually increased in the Diaspora and Palestine, a reality also reflected in the number of mandates which were obtained at the World Zionist Congresses – from 8% in 1921 to 42.5% in 1939 (Ahituv, 2003: 375).

Another important current, appearing relatively later than the others, was that of the right-wing Zionists known as the Revisionist Zionists. Its leader, Vladimir Zeev Jabotinsky, after leaving the Zionist executive in 1923, set up the Revisionist Zionist Alliance in 1925 with the intent to change Chaim Weizmann's moderate politics. For Jabotinsky, the absolute priority of Zionism was not the appearance of institutions (Chaim Weizmann) or the social selection of immigrants (David Ben Gurion), but the increase in their number, meaning that the emigration of Jews from the Diaspora to Palestine had to be achieved in the least time and in mass (What is the Revisionist Zionists' program, 1925: 4).

Jabotinsky treated the preference that the other Zionist currents had on the colonist model that they wanted with contempt. "A follower of *Brith Trumpeldor* [or *Betar*, the youth organization of the Revisionist Zionists, n.n.] may be a stone carver, a teacher, an engineer, or a policeman – above all he remains the pioneer (...). The pioneer may be both one and the other, or today one and tomorrow another (...)" (Jabotinsky, 1931: 7).

The declared aims of the Zionist revisionist ideology included: applying permanent pressure on Britain, which governed Palestine under the mandate of the League of Nations, including petitions and mass demonstrations, for the creation of a Jewish state on both sides of the river Jordan; that control over immigration be in the hands of Jewish politicians and not in those of the British authorities; the re-establishment of Jewish regiments and the introduction of military training for young people. Indeed, this tendency towards militarization and ultra-nationalist ideology included Revisionist Zionism in right-wing political trends (Kaplan, 2015). Each of these Zionist currents also created their own Halutian youth organizations which operated both in Palestine and in the Diaspora. Of these, *Gordonia* or *Dror* and *Hashomer Hatzair* promoted leftist ideas; *Hanoi Hatzioni* represented the centrist group (the General Zionists); *Brith Trumpeldor* or *Betar* was in the political right; and *Hamizrachi Hatzair* and *Bnei Akiva* were inspired by the religious Zionist ideas. Beyond any considerations regarding the political ideology they promoted, these Jewish youth organizations played an important role in the Diaspora, including Romania, by being the most effective means of spreading active Zionism – through recruiting young Jews to be sent to Palestine (Ahituv, 2003: 377-378).

The tensions in the Zionist movement reached a critical point in the early 1930s. In 1931, Weizmann was dismissed as president of the Zionist World Congress, following the instigation of the Mizrahi party. But by far the greatest accusations and mutual blames were to be made between the left and right Zionists. Revisionists accused those around Ben Gurion of complicity with the British and with betraying the cause of the Jews. They were in turn called fascists by Socialist Zionists, and Ben Gurion called Jabotinsky "Vladimir Hitler". Eventually, the Revisionists left the international forum in 1935 and decided to establish a parallel institution called the New Zionist World Organization, which in that same year led to Weizmann's return as president of the old Zionist World Organization (Johnson, 2005: 350).

All these disputes could not take place without leaving an effect on the Jewish community in Romania. First of all, not all Romanian Jews were Zionists. The conflict between the two great Jewish political forces in interwar Romania – the Union of Native Jews (from 1923 on, the Union of Romanian Jews, president Wilhelm Filderman) and the Zionist group (constituted in a political party in 1931 under the name of the Jewish Party) – also reflected on all decisions which had to be adopted by Romanian Jews both here in the Diaspora and in the name of the Zionist ideal. If up until the First World War the political lines between integrationism and Zionism were not so clear and the transition from one group to another, from one trend of ideas to another could easily be made, after 1918 intransigence was the main character trait of the new generations of Zionist militants, coming from the ranks of the students that had been radicalized and politically trained in the anti-Semitic beatings that had taken place around universities immediately after the first world conflagration. Amidst the young "distances began to be marked and struggles widened under the empire of vitality and Zionist exclusivism" (Schafferman, 1986: 129-130).

The formation of Greater Romania determined both the strengthening of the Zionist movement as well as a certain customization of the Jewish communities. Thusly, from the perspective of support for the Zionist cause the most active Jewish communities were those in the Old Kingdom, Bessarabia and Bukovina. Moreover, after 1918 the Zionist Federation's headquarters were transferred from Galați to Bucharest in 1919, and Adolf Bernhardt replaced H. Schein as leader (Iancu, 2000: 211).

Between 1919 and 1930, during which the Zionist Federation was led by Adolf Bernhardt, the centre Zionists – internationally affiliated to Chaim Weizmann and the General Zionists – dominated the Old Kingdom, gaining the majority of votes. Without having a clear political ideology, the centre Zionists were active in the Romanian Diaspora, especially in the wake of elections for the Zionist World Congresses, through delegates sent from the centre and through the influence of leaders of local Jewish communities in major cities. In fact, the centrists focused on achieving local Jewish community leaderships. For example, Adolphe Bernhardt cumulated the Zionist Federation presidency with the vicepresidency of the Israeli Community in Bucharest (Iancu, 2000: 234). As long as they controlled the Zionist Federation in Romania (until the early 1930s), the centre Zionists also promoted their ideas through the Hanoar Hatzioni youth organization ("the Young Zionist") or through all associations opened in local communities (Iancu, 2000: 231).

During this time, throughout the interwar period left-wing Zionism managed to attract the vast majority of Jews with Marxist sympathies. As expected, Socialist Zionism permeated and became very popular among the Israeli communities in Bessarabia, but also in the other provinces, while registering the greatest influence in the region between the Pruth and Dniester rivers. In Bessarabia, archive documents mention the left-wing Zionists under various names: the Palestinian Workers' Party, the Hitahdut Society, the Zeira Zion Organization, and Po'alei Tziyon; or by the Zionist halutzim youth movements Gordonia and Hashomer Hatzair (Odessa Region State Archives, 873: ds 33, 56, 93; Odessa Region State Archives, 891: ds 559, 563). Bessarabia's economic backwardness and the population's orientation towards agriculture – including trade, as this too was based on the export of agricultural products – made the region between the Pruth and Dniester rivers to be a recruitment centre for halutzim, for the pioneers to be sent to Palestine to exploit the agricultural land. For these reasons the Zionist movement, which embodied the great dream of salvation, knew a greater effervescence in Southern Bessarabia than in the counties of the Old Kingdom. The large number of followers, especially among the Jewish youth, generated a very vivid political struggle between the Zionist trends, especially visible during the 1930s. The predominance of the left-wing Zionist ideas in Bessarabia is relevant by analyzing

the provincial preponderance of the members of this organization: in 1928 – 9.7% in the Old Kingdom; 15% in Bukovina; 75.3% in Bessarabia (Iancu, 2000: 232).

Alongside the centrist and Socialist Zionists, the revisionist current makes its debut in the Romanian Diaspora following the 1925 visit of Vladimir Zeev Jabotinsky. The Revisionist Zionist Party of Romania was founded on this occasion, with Abraham Feller as its first president, also the founder of the "New Roads" (Drumuri Nouă) party magazine, which was printed in Galați. The 1933 rupture between Vladimir Zeev Jabotinsky and Meir Grossman, another leading international revisionist Zionist, reflected onto the Romanian movement. Here, a part of the revisionist Zionists remained loyal to Jabotinsky and his creation – the New Zionist World Organization, while others passed on to Meir Grossman and his party – the Organization of the Jewish State (Iancu, 2000: 233).

Religious Zionism was present within the Romanian Diaspora through the Mizrahi organization or Hamizrachi Hatzair ("Young Mizrahi") and Bnai Akiva. Both of these were religious movements whose slogan was Tora Ve-Avoda ("Religion and Work") (Iancu, 2000: 232). In Romania the popularization of this organization was made through rabbis. The Galați branch was opened in 1924 (DJANG, Galati City Hall: ds. 87). In other cities branches were opened later on, although the organization operated alongside synagogues even in the absence of these official structures. For example, in April 1935, in Chilia Nouă, with a section of the society yet to be opened, funds were still being gathered for Mizrahi in synagogues and Jewish assemblies. On this instance, it was promised that he who collects the largest amount of money by August of that year (1935) will win a free ticket to Palestine (Odessa Region State Archives, 873: ds. 93).

Trends and dissensions between these Zionist movements, inside Palestine as well as worldwide, were also reflected in the Romanian Jewish Diaspora. Thereby, we see a decrease in popularity for centre Zionists amid the growth of left-wing (especially in Bessarabia) and right-wing currents (especially in the Old Kingdom). Thusly, the 1930 elections for the leadership of the Zionist Federation in Romania are lost by Adolf Bernhardt and the centre Zionists. The opposition, composed by those around the "Renaissance" circle, which constituted the majority, along with a small group of revisionist Zionists, received 44 votes, compared to the 22 gained by the centrist group. The result generated a change in the leadership of the Zionist Federation in Bucharest, the ensuing presidents being: Samuel Stern-Kohavi (1930-1932); Mișu Weizmann (1932-1933); Leon Mizrahi (1933-1934) and Filip Rozenstein (1934-1935). The instability of their mandates was brought on by the relatively shortlived coalitions made up by various Zionist groups. It was only in 1935, under the authority of Zionist world leader Joseph Sprintzak, which had come to Romania especially for this purpose, that there was a restructuring of the Zionist movement. In order to avoid large fluctuations and disagreements between groups, a Central Committee, chaired by Chief Rabbi I. Niemirower, was formed, in which all the political directions of the Romanian Jewish Diaspora were represented, except for the Jewish State Party (the Revisionist Zionists) which refused to join (according to the model adopted by Vladimir Zeev Jabotinsky at the level of international Jewish organizations leadership) (Iancu, 2000: 233-234).

The biggest disputes between these Zionist currents were recorded around the periodic appointment of delegates who were to represent the Diaspora of Romanian Jews at the Zionist World Congresses. S. Avni, one of the witnesses present, sadly remarked that despite a facade of democracy the appointment of delegates was still done through direct negotiations:

"Up until today I am heartily ashamed with the way the campaign for the Zionist organizations election took place in the Romanian cities. We suddenly stopped being poor. Gold flowed like a mountain stream. Tons of publications were glued to the walls. Enthusiastic speakers spoke seven times a day. Whoever listened to them could actually believe that the fate of the Jewish people depended on the listeners voting the orator's list. As if all the troubles of the Jewish people would be resolved if a certain askan from Bucharest will go to the Basel Congress. In every locality, the weak (in one of the cities we were the weak, in another Mapai, in the third the revisionists, etc.) saw to it that the elections got canceled. Finally, the 15 delegations were divided at the debate table" (Schafferman, 1986: 146).

Looking beyond the author's pathetic tone, the description is typical for a political campaign in which opponents use every means to gain as many votes as possible. The gradual transition of Zionism from currents to political parties was accompanied by an ideological and psychological charge that



instilled a certain degree of fanaticism and political exclusivity to the members of the various groups. Therefore, the dividing lines, firstly between Zionism and the other Israeli political organizations in the Romanian Diaspora, and afterwards even between Zionist currents and parties themselves are increasingly difficult to overcome.

## **7. CONCLUSION**

In the Romanian space, the solution of rebuilding the Jewish national state became popular among the Jewish communities ever since the phase of practical Zionism (after 1880, Howewe-Zionism) or of political Zionism (developed by Herzl in 1897). The political crystallization of Zionism after the First World War and its break into several currents reflected in the Romanian Diaspora. Against the backdrop of centre Zionism's decline, left-wing Zionists (especially in Bessarabia) and Revisionist Zionists (right-wing, especially in the Old Kingdom) grew in popularity in early 1930s Romania.

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## MCDSARE: 2018

# International Multidisciplinary Scientific Conference on the Dialogue between Sciences & Arts, Religion & Education

## CHRISTIAN ETHICS AND HUMAN RIGHTS

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### *Abstract*

In the present study I want to emphasize that only in a saving relationship with God we can speak of the so-called human rights, the human being and continuing to be what he is, only when he centres and stabilizes in God. From our point of view, we will analyse the relationship between human rights and Christian ethics, which common or discordant points of view exist between the two, if they are perfectly compatible or irreconcilable. Christian ethics recognizes the revealed foundation of these rights, and places them at the will of the Creator and the divine in the human being. As a model of respecting human dignity, human rights and freedoms, the Church offers God-the Creator Himself, the Saviour, and Perfection of Man.

**Keywords:** Christian ethics; human rights; freedom; responsibility; God;

### **1. INTRODUCTION**

Due to the fact that the human rights and fundamental freedoms were first issued in a form close to what we know today, during the French Revolution (considered to be an anti-skeptic and anti-skeletal movement), many theologians or Christians are afraid to discuss about them or integrate them into a moral discourse. But if we take into account Divine Revelation, we find that the human being is endowed with rights and has many responsibilities right from creation.

And, if from the ontological point of view we originate human rights in the divine will, the first practical attempt to apply them can be found in the first written legislative code: the Hammurabi Code in Babylonia (Iraq, 2000 BC) or Carta Cyrus, (Iran, 570 BC), initiated by the king of Persia or the Magna English Charter and the Declaration of Rights (1215), elaborated by the English nobles and members of the clergy against the abuse of power of King John I.

### **2. PROBLEM STATEMENT**

In the modern age, we can talk about the fundamental rights and freedoms of man after the Second World War, when after so much violence and disregard for human dignity, especially by the Nazi regime and the great Nuremberg trial (1945-1946), people of all nations decided in New York in 1948 in the General Assembly of O.N.U., to adopt the Universal Declaration of Human Rights.

The Objective of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, elaborated by the General Assembly of O.N.U. on September 10, 1948, is to encourage respect for the human being's rights and freedoms. It promotes the personal, civil, political, economic, social and cultural rights of man.

Among the rights listed in the Declaration, we mention: the right to life, to freedom, to security, to a fair trial, to privacy, to free thinking, to express freely, the right to own opinion, the right to choose a religion, the right to education. Out of its 30 articles, only the 18th article refers to religion: "Everyone has the right to freedom of thought, conscience and religion; this right includes the freedom to change religion or belief, as well as freedom to manifest religion or confession, either alone or with others, both publicly and privately, through teaching, religious practices, worship and the fulfilment of rites. "

Human rights are a topic that has raised interest in the theoreticians and practitioners of law, philosophers and theologians, both secular and religious.

In legal terms, subjective rights are prerogatives that entitle the holder to conduct a certain conduct or to claim the conduct of others, by resorting, if necessary, to the coercive power of the state.

By their degree of opposition, the subjective rights are absolute and relative. Human rights have an absolute character. The absolute right is the subjective right that its owner executes without appealing to another person.

According to Joel Feinberg, human rights are precious and indispensable possessions:

"A world without them, no matter how benevolent and preoccupied with fulfilling their own responsibilities, would suffer deep moral poverty. People would no longer hope for decent treatment from others, based on legitimate merits and expectations. Moreover, they would come to believe that they have no right to expect kindness or respect from others, so that when they even benefit from a minimum of decent treatment, they will rather be lucky than inherently justified to that treatment, and their benefactors will be considered to be particularly virtuous and worthy of gratitude. On the other hand, rights are not only gifts or favours motivated by love or mercy, for which gratitude is the only right answer ... A world with rights that can whenever be claimed is a world in which all people ... are objects worthy of respect, both in their own eyes and in others "(Joel Feinberg, *Duties*, 1966, p. 8).

The author of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights document, René Cassin, founder of the Strassbourg International Human Rights Institute in Strassbourg, the winner of the Nobel Peace Prize, says the ideological origin of the Declaration is in the ten commandments.

This statement seeks to be a minimum guarantor of respect for human dignity in the world, beyond the social, political or religious organization, a true barrier against evil.

Closely related to our subject, is the question of human freedom. Being a creature, man also has a "borrowed existence." The created ones are not free by their nature, due to the fact that they are not the cause of their being. Having a given existence means that freedom is given to man.

In order to find freedom, man approaches God and obeys all His will. Listening to God is similar to consensus with liberty (Georgios Mantzaridis 2006, p. 209). Human freedom is achieved through participation in divine freedom, the necessary condition for participation in divine freedom being our communion with God, materialized in obedience to His commandments. God is hiding in His commandments. Being free is in accord with the human nature. True freedom means not only freedom of choice but also freedom from sin. The man who sins is no longer free. Sin robs and makes man fall from his state. Only to the extent that man restrains himself and complies with the divine will, does he overcome his passions and gains spiritual freedom (Georgios Mantzaridis 2006, p. 213). To fight passions is to fight for freedom. Our freedom ceases where the freedom of others begins. The man who sins does not love himself and therefore can not fulfill the divine command to love his neighbor as himself. Achieving the highest state of freedom consists in obtaining the perfection in the love, towards yourself, others and God. Only the person who truly loves is free to do what he wants, and in this sense, the best of Augustine's quotes "ama et quod quis" (loves and do what you want) can be better understood.

God's commandments are commandments of liberty. The Christian must not only know the commandments but apply them in his life, so that they can save him. Commandments are not mere moral (ethical) norms, but divine works or energies (Georgios Mantzaridis 2006, p. 173). In every command we find God, therefore their fulfilment is the encounter and communion with Him.

Only in freedom man has a right relationship with himself, with God and with his neighbor. From this perspective, human rights can not be broken or separated from the rights of God. Only when they are related to the rights of God, human rights are secured, making man accountable to Him.

Professor Mantzaridis observed this accurately: "The rights of God, which presuppose the following of His commandments, bring with them the application of justice in the everyday life of human beings. When all of these rights are respected, then human rights will also be respected. The respect for man is based on his quality of being "in the image and likeness" of God. And his real value lies in his continuous report to the prototype. It becomes possible in Christ, in which any physical discrimination and truffle is abolished "(Georgios Mantzaridis 2006, p. 272).

Human rights, as they are understood today, whether we are talking about the first article of the French Proclamation of "human and citizen rights" or the first article of the United Nations Universal Declaration of Human Rights that says "people are born and remain free and with equal rights, "are a tribute to a secularized meaning for which God is something to put in reserve.

Unfortunately, today under the guise of the phrase "human rights," we are trying to base a series of things and practices that contradict God's moral order in creation. Thus, for the secularized world in which we live, abortion, homosexuality, euthanasia, eugenics, different practices of genetic engineering, prostitution, etc. can be easily sustained by calling for "human rights" (sic!).

In the present study I want to emphasize that only in a saving relationship with God we can speak of the so-called human rights, the man remaining what he is, only when he centers and stabilizes himself in God. From our point of view, we will analyze the relationship between human rights and Christian morality, which common or discordant points of view exist between the two if they are perfectly compatible or irreconcilable.

### **3. THE CHRISTIAN ETHICS' PERSPECTIVE REGARDING HUMAN RIGHTS**

The question is whether Christian morality recognizes the existence of fundamental human rights and freedoms? Certainly yes, because they are embodied in what Christian theology calls God's image, that is to say, in the unique and defining print of the Creator that exists in man. And if God is love, justice, freedom, goodness, faithfulness, etc. and man, the image of the Creator has these qualities en gardents les propores.

That is why, from a Christian point of view, it is not only possible to talk about these rights, but it is even necessary. We must also bear in mind that the environment of the emergence of these rights is a European one, France of the eighteenth century, even if it was anticlerical, it was still fertilized by the Christian spirit, something of it remained impregnated indestructible in that mentality. And just as Evdochimov showed, only Christianity was the perfect ground for the appearance of even atheism, because in the spaces where it developed, it allowed liberty and justice (The Age of Spiritual Life, Christiana, Bucharest, 1993, p. 17).

We must also note that no right or freedom from the Charter of Human Rights and Freedoms is anti-human or anti-Christian, so from the point of view of Christian morality there is no problem integrating them into its system of values. They are rather, in a way, a political and social application of the Gospel.

The fundamental objections are related to minor issues, such as, for example, that left-wing movements (socialist and communist atheists) promote these rights but forget that these movements have largely violated them, and that the great Western democracy that defends these rights belong to the Christian Euro-Atlantic area (even if the degree of secularization is obvious). Being created in the image of God and towards the endless likeness with Him, man is considered the crown of creation, the administrator of creation (cf. Psalm 8: 1, Jeremiah 28: 12, 14) or a true mediator between the material and spiritual worlds, a joint worker of the creation with God (Berdiaev 1992, p. 87). From the point of view of importance, we could say that the first human right and his first responsibility is to enter into free dialogue with his Creator (Meyendorff, 1996, p. 185).

There is also a classification of these rights, a classification that originated in the Middle Ages and which refers to:

**I. Rights and freedoms derived from human ontological status.** And because most theologians believe that the image of God in man refers to reason, will, and sentiment, they are in turn classified into: *rights and freedoms of reason*, which mainly refer to the right to knowledge and rational organization of creation, *rights and freedoms of the will*, which relate to man's ability to choose his own way of existence, *rights and freedoms of sentiment or love*, which manifest itself in relation to: himself, God, and the his kind.

**II. Rights and freedoms derived from the social organization that have less or no character revealed and are sometimes exclusively human rights.**

Returning to the relationship between fundamental human rights and Christian morality, we must note that Christian morality recognizes the need for these human rights and fundamental freedoms, which have as their primary purpose the observance of human dignity and the preservation of world peace.

Insisting that man is a special creation of God, Christian morality believes that respecting the dignity of man means ultimately respecting the Creator's dignity, and vice versa, dishonoring man, we dishonour his Creator. And the historical experience of man has shown that when man is despised, war and murder is made against man and impiety to God.

The fundamental principle underlying human rights and fundamental freedoms is the promotion of human life that must not be restricted by: slavery, inequality, injustice or humiliation. That is why we can not find any inconsistency between these rights and the fundamental principles of Christian morality, and the analysis of these rights and freedoms through the Christian ethics fully testifies of their humanism (in their Christian sense). Human values, values, such as human dignity, equality, freedom and interpersonal existence are also based on human rights (Nellas, 1994, p. 9).

In terms of freedom and equality in human rights and dignity, as well as brotherhood based on reason and conscience, we can say that they have a profound biblical foundation. The biblical idea of freedom means "the happy state of having been freed from slavery for a life of joy and satisfaction that was not previously possible" (Douglas, 1995, p. 754). So it has a deeply spiritualized, internalized character.

And who does not know that the fundamental postulate of Christian morality affirms that human freedom and his (as God's creation) rights really rise and draw their strength only from the relationship with God, for in God alone, man is truly man (Zizioulas, 1997, p. 46). As man approached God-the source of freedom and justice, he approaches his neighbor and values him correctly. When you are in a living and dynamic relationship with God, you can no longer injure your neighbor.

But freedom is connected in the Christian moral system with the great concepts of good and truth (and hence the concept of *kalocagathia* which expresses in particular the good and the beautiful in the relationship), and especially with gnoseology, because without knowledge there is neither a relationship (with God or with one's kind) nor virtue. That is why, P. Evdochimov, an Orthodox theologian but perfectly embedded in the western cultural paradigm, says "freedom is of spirit, of person. When it rises, at its end it only wishes good and truth" (Evdochimov, 1995, p. 54).

It is also to be noted here that the Incarnation of the Son of God maximizes human freedom (the maximum of human freedom leads to deification if we use the right freedom) and shows the great appreciation that God - the Creator has for man.

So to say that God alone is the freedom of man, it is to give a component, a divine orientation to the human rights. Only in, with, and through the Son of God incarnated, Jesus Christ, can we say that our freedom can be full. By Him, the Great Liberator, man can be free from the constraints of the universe, his own limitations and death. Due to Christ, freedom is called resurrection. In this last devastating century of human ideologies and foolinesses, it has become clearer than ever that the person and freedom, as well as the defense of human rights and fundamental freedoms, are the great revelations and values of humanity. From the Christian point of view, man's ability to be a subject of freedom or law is given by man's quality of being a person, that is, of being open to the other, of being a social being.

For Christian morality, human rights and fundamental freedoms have an inner, spiritual, and external social component. The inner component starts from the fact that the more the man advances in virtue, in inner building and in his closeness to God, the more he respects his own rights and freedoms

and his neighbor. So, between peace or inner disharmony and observance or violation of neighbors' rights and freedoms, there is a close relationship of direct proportionality. Christian spiritual authors and Orthodox moral theology insist on inner purification and struggle against passions as an essential foundation for respect for human rights and freedoms. It is essential to respect yourself, to fulfill your purpose of creation, to fight the slavery of sin, because if you do not respect the rights with which the Creator has endowed you with, if you do not protect your own freedom, you will not be able to respect the rights and fundamental freedoms of your neighbor.

A higher development of this reasoning is found in the first Epistle of St. Ap. John, where he refers to the love of God and the love of the neighbor. There is a close and strong connection between love and human rights, since love and human rights are also based on the idea of respect, an idea that the Church promotes in all times and spaces (Ica jr, 2002, p. 45). We also need to consider the following: a vicious man and a slave to sin can hardly respect the rights and freedoms of his neighbor, for sin calls him to sin. Just following the path of perfection established by the Creator as a human development program and which involves freedom from sin, the human being can appreciate his own dignity and his kind's dignity.

As for the model to follow in respecting human rights and freedoms, it is certainly God, for Who respects better than Him the human being? And who is the developer of human freedom and the Redeemer of man, if not God?

Of course, there are voices in Orthodox theology and not only that denies any Christian foundation for the fundamental rights and freedoms of man, insisting rather on the existence of human duties, but they forget at the juridical, philosophical, logical and theological reality: to every right it corresponds a duty, what for me is an obligation, for my neighbor is a right and vice versa. Or, rather, right and duty are two facets of the same reality (Coman, 1997, p. 34).

The Decalogue itself contains in its prescriptions rights and duties without which the social coexistence of the people would be impossible, and so does the Natural Moral Law which contains the minimum prescriptions that make possible the life of people in society. Human rights are attributes of God's image in man, and therefore we can say that they are in some way divine rights. If we are referring to human freedom, we can say that keeping it is an essential part of man's effort to achieve theosis. To keep your freedom is to advance on the path of holiness, and this is the basic work of the ascetic effort.

Despite the theoretical clarity of these realities, it is nevertheless noticed in everyday life that although human rights are considered universal, and people are born equal in rights and freedoms, not everyone has the opportunity to exercise these rights and to demand respect for them, that is why there are still many inequalities in the world that offend man and his Creator. It is important to bear in mind that human rights, even if they are prescriptions formulated by human political instances, have a strong revealed base and do not contradict Divine Revelation or the religious sense of human life.

Because man is destined for a trinity-like existence (communion of love) with God and his fellows, respecting the rights of one's neighbor and promoting his freedom is a true humanistic act in its Christian sense, a truly perfect act.

#### **4. CONCLUSION**

As we have seen, human rights and fundamental freedoms are human formulations with bases in antiquity but elaborated as we know them today in the modern age, aiming at preserving human dignity, regardless of the government's system, whether it's social, economic or religious.

Christian morality recognizes the revealed foundation of these rights, and considers their origin the will of the Creator and the divine in man. As a model of respecting human dignity, human rights and freedoms, the Church offers God-the Creator, Savior, and Perfection of Man.

But there are also voices in Christian theology that deny the revealed character of these rights, insisting that biblical morality refers only to duties to the neighbor and not to the human being's own rights.

But these opinions do not take into account the intrinsic dignity of man, his exceptional quality of creation of God, and the great honor with which God blessed man: Incarnation of the Son of God. Then

how can man honor his fellow man, when he does not respect himself, when he is not aware of his own dignity. Only by respecting their own rights can they respect (as duties) those of their neighbor.

It is essential that everything makes humans to take into account the principle of love, to act in human relationships only and only in love and to judge and value everything only through the perspective of love. Here, in fact, is the strong link between human rights and Christian morality, being in fact practical applications of love, social and political projections of the Gospel of salvation.

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## MCDSARE: 2018

# International Multidisciplinary Scientific Conference on the Dialogue between Sciences & Arts, Religion & Education

## ROMANIA IN THE INTERNATIONAL CONTEXT OF THE 1918

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### *Abstract*

The beginning of 1918 was difficult for the whole of Eastern Europe, as it began with a strong imbalance in the system of power balance, through the disappearance of the former Tsarist Empire following the "Russian failure of 1917", as Marshal Al. Averescu, the chaos and the expansion as a scourge of Bolshevism among the soldiers on the front, still in the Entente camp, still alongside the Romanian army, on the front of Moldova, in front of the Austro-Hungarian army. Following the military anarchy, the revolt against the Russian commanders, and even their killing, resulted in the breaking of the front, the Romanians allies being themselves assaulted, so only a chance made this state of affairs no opportunity for the Austro-Hungarians to dismantle the Romanian state. A tough year for Romania, which had lost some of its territory and was blackmailed to choose between a territory that had been unjustly abducted in 1812 - Bessarabia and another territory that belonged to Dobrogea - was recovered in 1877. In addition, on January 13, 1918, the state of war with Soviet Russia was established. On the other hand, international relations presuppose arguments and justifications as the basis of discussions and negotiations, and these were offered not only by history but also by the actual decisions and actions taken by the King and the country, by its men, the military, the people politicians and diplomats.

**Keywords:** 1918; Eastern Europe; international relations; power balance; Romania;

### 1. INTRODUCTION

In full war, the international, political, diplomatic and military international context of 1918, was particularly complex for Romania, not only because it had lost 2/3 of its territory in the previous year, but also due to developments in Russia (about events in Russia: Figes, 1989 and Vengoa, 1995) allied in war and whose army bodies were disposed along the eastern slopes of the Oriental Carpathians, as well as on the front line of Southern Moldova, on the Focşani-Tecuci lineage, Galaţi, a total of 50,000 people (Gorun, 2015, 37). Thus, in October 1917, after the Bolshevik coup, Tsar Nicholas II was removed and V. I. Lenin took over the power, establishing a Bolshevik regime.

Romania entered the war in 1916, according to the Treaty of Alliance between Romania, on the one hand, and France, the United Kingdom, Russia and Italy, on the other hand, and the Military Convention signed in Bucharest on 4/17 August 1916 (Ionaşcu, Barbulescu, Gheorghe, 1975, 410-412), signed, thanks to I.I.C Brătianu on an equal foot, after two years of neutrality, under the pressures of

France and Great Britain following the exhortations of Tsarist Russia (Gorun, 2015, 37), with whom he had good relations in 1914, when Tsar Nicholas II had visited Constanța in June (Popa, 1969, 69), but who was interested in Constantinople and the straits Bosphorus and Dardanelles, and could not accept the collaboration with the Romanian army on the Bucovina front in 1916. At the end of the war, as imposing the principle of US President Woodrow Wilson, all the secret treaties to which the United States did not participate were considered to be null, the Treaty of August 2016, as well as the one signed in April 1915 before Italy, would be declared null (Bold, Ciupercă, 2000, 27) has freed the two great powers, France and the Great Britain from any obligation, the texts being used only as a basis for discussion. He will be reproached by Romania and the separate signing of a separate peace, but the reconstruction of the Romanian state's journey between 1916 when he entered the war and 1918 - when the Treaty of peace of Bucharest was signed in May, demonstrates that he had no alternative. At the same time, the fear of blasphemy and the expansion of the extreme left-wing ideology towards Europe, as well as the inability to effectively support the Eastern Front (endowment and effective armed support), so that Romania was in a critical situation, would have been sufficient reasons France and Britain to take responsibility.

## **2. PROBLEM STATEMENT**

Romania's entry into war has occurred under difficult conditions, due to the presence of a European Danube Commission exercising its rights on both sides of the Sulina-Ulm river (Cârțână, Samoilă, 2010, 27) with powers of authority and domination (Bold, Ciupercă, 2001, 45), plus the German capital that dominated the economic market after the Turkish occupation of the straits Dardanelles and Bosphorus (October 1914), already affected by the export prohibitions, which had limited the possibilities of purchasing raw materials, machinery, machines needed for war techniques. (Cârțână et al., 2011, 19). As a result, the industrial branches (oil, forestry, milling etc.) narrowed their activity, so some barely reached 25-20%. At the same time, the entry into the war was to be sustained, according to the promises made, by the Franco-British aid in terms of providing the army, which would be granted intermittently and incompletely (Rudeanu, 1989, 307 ss.), Although they were organized several between the Allies conferences that had the agenda and this issue. The talks during the conferences will highlight a franco-British rivalry for the influence in Romanian space, while Russia had announced its impossibility (Gorun, 2013, 339), as well as the actions on the front and in 1916 and 1917 it had been left alone. At the same time, let us not forget that around, Romania's neighbors claimed territories: Bulgaria- Cadrilater (Durostor and Caliacra counties in Southern Dobrogea) or owned territories inhabited by Austro-Hungarians - Transylvania and Bucovina (including Banat, Crișana, Maramureș and Satu Mare), Russia - Bessarabia. In addition, the Bulgarians could not forgive the Romanian diplomacy the involvement in the Second Balkan War in 1913 (Nastovici, 1968, 132). Moreover, after the Turtucaia disaster (Marghiloman, 1927, 99 ss.), the Romanian soldiers taken prisoners will go through very difficult conditions. One of the causes of the defeats of 1916 and 1917 was undoubtedly the lack of heavy artillery pieces, as well as a concordance between the army's equipment of the armed forces of the Central Powers and those of the Romanian army.

The year 1917 was marked by the entry into the war of the United States of America and the sudden outbreak of war in Russia (by the Truce of Brest-Litovsk, 26 November / 3 Dec 1917), and Romania was the most affected immediately by the decision Bolsheviks. Thus, not only the fifth front was destabilized by the outbreak of Bolshevik Russia during the war, but moreover V.I.Lenin had sent Bolshevik agitators to remove the Russian army from the war (the peace talks commencing on December 22, 1917 at Brest-Litovsk), as was Semen/Semion Rochal, commissioner on the Romanian front at the beginning of 1918. The latter had the task of trying to overthrow the government and reward King Ferdinand I, having quite a lot of experience, though very young (21 years old) , being the one that, in the summer of 1917, had created the Republic of Kronstadt, the Baltic Sea island fortress that defended the entrance to the Neva River Estuary, so the sea route to Petrograd. In Kronstadt being the seat of the Russian military navy, and their victory made Trotsky call him the "pride and glory of the Russian revolution." (Figes, 2016, 98) The officers, including the admiral of the fleet, were executed and the power passed to the sailors, who later have fraternized with Lenin's Bolsheviks. Fabrizio Giulietti (2015,

80) considers that the Third Revolution, after the first of March 1917, against the Tsarism and the second against the democratic bourgeoisie, took place here, culminating in October 1917.

Also, S. Rochal was involved in the annihilation of the General Headquarters of the Russian Army (STAVKA) at Moghilev, which was to assassinate on December 3, 1917, his last commander, General Nikolai Duhonin, who had opposed him V.I. Lenin. The new government of Petrograd appointed S. Roshal as the commissioner of the Russian troops on the Romanian Front. (Serge, 1999, 128)

I.V. Lenin did not have a coherent program, a theoretical basis for what he had set out, and then he staked on propaganda, misinformation and manipulation by promoting a peace that would have brought Russia out of the whirlpool of foreign interests to the interests of the Russian people. The Russian workers' demonstrations took place under the slogan: "Peace, Bread and Liberty," and the first decree signed by the new power was the Decree of Peace. (Vengoa, 2017, 34) The consequences of these action on the front were described by the political man I.C. Brătianu as follows: "The Russian armies became unmanageable gangs, violently poisoned by anarchy, incapable of holding the front and incapable of organizing demobilization for retreat, which without supply is itself a devastating work itself."

On the Romanian front, the Russian armies refused to listen to the orders of their direct general commander, Dimitrie Grigorovici Scerbacev, whose general district was in Iași (Socola). Under these circumstances, General Scerbacev sent a telegram to the German Field Marshal August von Mackensen and Austrian Archduke Joseph, on November 20 / December 3, 1917, proposing "an armistice with the Russian and Romanian troops on the Romanian front". With this initiative, the commander of the Russian troops put Romania in a very complicated situation, as he remained alone in front of the Central Powers. As a result, the next day, November 21, the government of I.C. Brătianu decided to send delegates to Focșani, to negotiate the armistice (Scurtu, 2017, 47). Thus, on November 26 / December 9, 1917, Romania and Russia signed in Focșani the armistice with the Central Powers, whereby the two combatants ensured each other to observe "the obligation not to resume the hostilities except by prior denunciation of the armistice with 72 hours before and with reserve, for the Russians, to consider it provisionally until the issue of war or peace is decided by the Constituent Assembly of Russia. "The Romanian side stated that it was "imposed by a case of force majeure and that it would be purely military." (Antonescu, 1990, 50-51). Russia's exit from the war had also closed the supply capabilities through the Node as well as the Black Sea through the ports of Arhanghelsk, Semenova and Alexandrovsk.

### **3. RESEARCH QUESTIONS**

In the present study we wanted to analyze, based on sources, in what political, diplomatic and military context, Romania had to make the decision signing a separate peace treaty with the Central Powers.

### **4. RESEARCH METHODS**

In Galati, the Russians from the Siberian IV Corps (Păltânea, 2008, p. 267), led by the praporgic (lower officer) Anghelof, participated in battles with a torpedo, a cavalry squadron, a heavy artillery battery and six machine guns, two well-trained and well-equipped machine guns (12,000 people) who fought in the Russian-Japanese war (1904-1905).

The memory of this important event that marked the beginning of 1918 and the southern front of Romanian space was removed by the Communist authorities, who demolished in 1962 the monument raised by the inhabitants of the city as a tribute to those who had joked in those days of January 1918, opposed not only to the rebellious Russian soldiers who wanted to destroy the city, but also to the bolshevism of this space. Fortunately, we can reconstruct these moments on the basis of a Memorandum signed by Captain Musateanu, the 21st Infantry Regiment, kept in archives (A.M.R., Military Clergy Inspectorate, file 5, f.43-44).

The Romanian Army on the Galați line was headed the Military Commander of Covurlui County, Captain Commander Constantin Niculescu Rizea, who had received the order to defend the city (Păltânea, 2008, 267), helped by the other officers, Commander of the operative troops for defending

Galati ", the 8th Infantry Brigade belonging to the Fourth Division of the Romanian Army - Colonel Bucur Bădescu, Commander Puricescu and the crews of the four stars and the cruise ship equipped with machine guns, as well as by the Coast Guard Marine Battalions, the pilots of Squadron Farman 5 Recognition and Bomber of the 3rd Aeronautical Group, and of the Nieuport Squadron of Group 2 Aeronautics, photographer lieutenant observer Grigore Gafencu, militaries 21th Infantry Regiment under the command of Colonel Maxim, representing the maneuvering squad, the 27th Infantry Regiment, headed by Major Vulcănescu, the 6th Infantry and Mihai Viteazul "Military Regiment" headed by Major Milicescu, belonging to the 2nd Battalion, the 64th and 50th Military Regiment, the two cavalry squadrons and the 50th Regiment under the command of Colonel Genureanu and, last but not least, the Fire Company of the City.

For the defense of Galați, heavy battles took place on 7-8 January 1918, and the Russians were finally defeated and pushed to the Barboși railway station and the bridge over Siret (Păltânea, 2008, 267). They fell into battle 26 Romanian soldiers and 70 were registered injured (Kiriteșcu, 1989, 207-210). Let us not forget that the city was the southernmost point on the front line in 1918, located on the border with Russia, through Bessarabia, occupied in 1821 by the Tsarist Empire.

## **6. FINDINGS**

Captain Mușățeanu, writes about the events of early 1918:

"... As of 1 January, the situation is changing: the Russians are starting to leave the front row and gather together in the villages on the left bank of the Siret to pass to Russia. Preventive measures are being taken, but without any result, as they gather about 8,000 people - a half and a half, with 2 artillery regiments and 80 machine guns.

They were allowed to come to the Ivești-Galați national slate - to Barboși-Movileni, and here they were surrounded by our regiment: a battalion from Galați, two companies from Filești, Lake Calica and the rest of six companies from Șendreni-Sardar to the west.

In the second line came the 6th Mihai Viteazul Regiment, 50 Putna Regiment, 5 Călărași Regiments and 1 Siret, and as artillery, we had 4 cannons (Russians over 100) 75 from the 2nd Artillery Regiment, some large cannons of the navy, located on the western edge of the city, plus the stars on the Danube.

The Russians had their Siret bridge on the back, and the Barboși hills with the second-line trenches in front - being very well sheltered. The struggle began on St. John on 4 pm. And he kept all night and all day 8 until the evening of 7, when it ended with the total defeat of the Russians who began to cross the Siret to the Germans.

However, on the 8th, at 10am, we were in great danger from Galați, for they had rejected our band up to 300m from Țiglina, threatening to enter the city, with the occasion of taking two companies prisoners with the commanders their. But by entering the battle and the stars on the Danube and ours starting again to attack, they flee and take them down to the railroad.

On the morning of 9, our victorious troops were at the Siret bridge, disarming the Russians who had not come to surrender to the Germans-and this only the infantry, for artillery had not returned. Our regiment had 12 wounded and one dead in this fight, although it was in the first line.

On January 12 we moved to Galați, our regiment occupying a sector in front of the town, in Dobrogea and over Siret, in front of Brăila, in Vădeni. "(Nicolescu, Dobrescu, Nicolescu, 2000, 149-150) After the victory of the Romanian army, not only the front was rescued, but also the bolshevization for the moment of other Russian army bodies (with a staff of about one million people) and even the attempt, through pressure from the other points, Pașcani and Spătărești - Fălticeni, to bolshevise the space of Moldova. Approximately 500 Romanian soldiers managed to defend the city of Galați despite numerical inferiority, the ratio being 1/10, and to honor their memory, Galați municipality ordered the construction of a monument, in 1925, known as "The defenders of Galați - 7 -9 January 1918 ", a work done by the Galați sculptor Ioannis N. Renieris.

For their heroism, Commander Nicolae Rizea was decorated by Russia with the Order "Stanislas" with commander swords, Colonel Bucur Bădescu will be decorated with the Order of "Mihai Vitezul" by the

Romanian state, and the city will receive "The War of the Cross of Italy "At the command of King Victor Emanuel III of Italy by General Pietro Badoglio, Chief of the General Staff of the Italian Army, who came personally to Galați (1921) and the " War Cross of France "by General Henri Mathias Berthelot, the former head of the French Mission in Romania, who also personally came to Galați (1922).

## **7. CONCLUSIONS**

Despite all the pressures made by the Entente to speed up Romania's entry into war, the latter did not receive the promised support during the campaigns of 1917, nor as regards the endowment of the army. The conditions in which Romania was forced to conclude the Focsani Armistice and then the peace in Bucharest were very difficult. As a result, France and the United Kingdom should have assumed at the Peace Conference some of their responsibility for taking decisions in May 1918 of Romania.

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**PHILOSOPHICAL PERSPECTIVES ON THEORIES OF  
DEVELOPMENT FOR AFRICAN ECONOMIES**

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***Abstract***

Nature is ontologically in motion. It neither admits of a state of inaction nor a vacuum. Therefore, all nature is perpetually in internal and external motion known as development. Progress is the manifestation of this motion in the positive direction. All theories of development among humans as social species presuppose some philosophy. Development in the social plane is values-oriented. It is always teleological to a certain philosophy or set of values. Therefore, philosophy is at the basis of theories of national development. But not all philosophies are suitable to all peoples. Some are actually harmful. Although development can be economical, social, cultural or political, it takes place within a certain conception of the world, and the place of man in that world. Western framed theories of development for African economies have not always taken this into consideration. This research critiques the application of these theories to African economies and their resultant tumultuous impacts. The work is based on library research subjected to critical philosophical analysis. Western framed theories of development intended to Western tackle situation or serve Western interests, cannot bring about the much needed development on the African continent. Africa must chart the way forward by coming up with home-grown theories of development. An African existentialist theory of development which is factored on local existential realities will bring the much needed turnaround.

**Keywords:** Development; African; Philosophical; Economies; Third World;

**1. INTRODUCTION**

What is development? To the human being who is out there dealing with the world' (Lawlead, 2002), what does development mean? The question is: phenomenologically, what constitutes 'development' for the human being who is immersed in the world? In a sort of Husserlian epoche this work brackets away the temptation to intellectualise for an imaginary people-less world of abstraction without any real existential connection to the real world of everyday persons who abide in concrete existential situations. The bracketing encompasses the conscious existential experiences of 'development' by human beings in the world.

Having adopted the methodology above, the cosmos accordingly becomes the point of departure of this treatise on development. Let it be stated boldly that development is an ontological characteristic of the cosmos. It is a necessary consequence of the inherent cosmic motion. Motion pervades all facets of the universe. Therefore, development is inexorably connected to the motion of the universe. Although all motions connote some ideas of development, not all motions qualify to be called development. Development must necessarily be progressive. When motion is linear, there is progress, and we say that development has taken place. When motion is circular, there is stagnation, and we say that developments have been halted; stalled. When motion is backward, there is regression – a negative development. Even in economic terms these social motions would translate to growth; that is a linear/upward motion in the economy of the nation in question. When the economic motion is circular, it would translate to stagnation in the economy of the nation in question. A backward socio-economic motion would invariably result in recession.

Thus, it is clear from the analyses above that development must necessarily be in constant motion. It must be moving forward to be progressive or backward to be retrogressive. If it neither moves forward nor backward, it must be in a circular motion. That would lead to stagnation but development would never be motionless or inert. It is necessarily active. There is no resting point. Every climax is always a starting point for another epoch. The cosmos is constantly changing. Matter itself is in perpetual motion (Nkrumah, 1959). Since all human developments aim at the control of matter, the understanding of matter and atonement to it become critical to the definition of development.

## **2. THE SIGNIFICANCE OF MATTER TO THE CONCEPT OF DEVELOPMENT**

The ultimate aim of development is the maximization and control of matter by man. It starts with matter and ends with matter. Save for a few thinkers in the Berkeleyan tradition of naïve idealism, (Stumpf, 1994) it is indubitable that matter is the primary reality that characterizes the cosmos. The cosmos is material. Even the human person who seeks to develop this material cosmos is also material (at least in part). A correct definition of development therefore, must be founded on a correct definition of matter. The way a nation interprets matter gives rise to its ideology or worldview. A nation's ideology defines its values, its goals and its overall attitude to life. A nation's ideology so to speak is its mission statement. The ideology of a nation charts its path to development. It defines the nations relationship with matter which is the ubiquitous reality; the world. Paradoxically, a nation's concept of matter defines its ideology. The ideology of a people informs their concept of, and approach to development.

The development of a nation depends on its understanding of the workings of matter, for development, ultimately is nothing but the optimal use and control of matter. There is always a higher degree of development among nations that have internalized the scientific culture. A civilization develops progressively only in proportion to the degree of its internalization of the scientific culture – the empirical and open-minded approach to matter. A civilization that is founded on a superstitious view of the world would spiritualize and worship matter rather than dominate it. A civilization that denigrates the significance of matter would idle over the world while focusing its energies on the mythical, matter-less 'world' of an 'afterlife'. An ideology that sees the world as transient would not be keen on developing it. It would rather build the institutions that encourage the 'afterlife'.

All theories of development therefore derive from the acceptance of or rejection of the primary reality of matter; and its optimal use. Levels of development among nations, as has been demonstrated above depend on their mastery or otherwise, of matter.

### **2.1. Theories of National Development**

History has shown that all cultures have their theories of development, whether formal or implied. There are no people that existed without any teleological idea of how their society ought to be. These conceptions were predicated on their conceptions of matter and the purpose of man on earth. Every society pursued a theory of development that suited its existential needs. However, following the Industrial Revolution and the transformation of the West from an agro feudal economy to an industrial economy, paradigm shifts occurred in the conceptualization of national development in most economies.



Modern life presented new challenges which have to be met with new theories of development. Western thinkers have come up with many theories of development, some which are of universal application, and some designed specifically for Africa and the Third World. While some of these theories have actually led to tremendous development, some of them were designed for outright exploitation of the intended economies. This paper will examine three common and four not so common of such theories of national development and their philosophical and existential implications on African economies. They include:

- The Modernization Theory
- Structuralism
- The Dependency Theory and Neo-classical Theory
- Post Development Theory
- Sustainable Development
- Human Development Theory

## **2.2. The Modernization Theory of National Development**

What is the implication of the modernization theory of national development to the man immersed in the world? Thinkers in this school of thought include but are not limited to: Emile Durkheim, Marquis de Condorcet, David Apter, Seymour Martin Lipset, David McClelland and Talcott Parsons. The modernization theory of development is predicated on the idealization and the idolization of the modern era history of Western Europe. It is aimed at the 'modernization' of the rest of the world. That is, bringing the whole world to the existential condition of modern era Western Europe. Even though most exponents of modernization theory of development may not have put it thus; that is the underlying value upon which their theory is built. Hence, the name: 'modernization'. Their reference point is neither modern era Africa nor modern era China or South America but modern era Western Europe. It is inexorably connected to the rise of the capitalist economy and its attendant industrialization in Western Europe. It is a generalization of a cultural experience of Western Europe at a particular point in history. There is no gainsaying that the Industrial Revolution was an eponymous event of global proportions. It altered global socio-economic and political formations irreversibly. Notwithstanding, it remains a globalization of the values of a historical era of Western Europe. The desirability or otherwise of these values among the various nationalities that people the globe remains a matter of heated debates.

The modernization theory of development advocates for the mechanization of the modes of production from the land based feudal mode to the capital and technology based industrial mode. While feudalism was a prominent mode of production in the West, there are cultures in which it was unknown. The idea of feudalism was foreign to most African societies. Protagonists of the modern theory of development believe that development would have taken place in the world if industrialization took place in the same sequence it took place in the West, that is, if the capitalist-scientific mode of production were adopted worldwide. It is incontrovertible that science has empowered man with more facility in the control of matter. It is equally incontrovertible that the capitalist culture that drove industrialization in the West also created peculiar dilemmas to the world. Notwithstanding, the benefits of industrialization cannot be ignored; its contribution to the improvement of the human condition can be overemphasized. In the same vein, the damage done to the human environment by the processes of industrialization, the dislocations they have created among societies, the chaos the processes have created, the attendant diseases and even the very endangerment of the mother earth by the processes of industrialization all stare us in the face. The problem was not industrialization per se but the values that fostered it. It sure gave man more control over matter but the ruthless profiteering that drives capitalism tainted it.

Be that as it may, the modernization theory of development stands out in its ability to control and modify matter. Since development is ultimately about the control and optimal maximization of matter, the modernization theory of development is unparalleled in the control and maximization of matter except the aspect of matter called man. Man as the ultimate end of the cosmic endeavour comes first. Modernization as historically experienced in Western Europe threw up some unenviable variables that might be too ugly to generalize. The industrialization itself took place in a value system known as brutal capitalism.

Who determines what constitutes the 'optimal' maximization of matter? According to whose values is matter to be optimally maximized? The issues and crises of values thrown up by this theory of

development sometimes cast a gloomy shade on the entire process and its outcome. The world of nuclear warfare, chemical warfare, weapons of mass destruction, small arms trotting deadly terrorists is a product of the industrialized modern era theory of development.

The proponents of the modernization theory of national development advocate that all societies must make a 'natural' transition from primitive agriculture to modernization in order to develop (Durkheim, 1893). On the face value, this proposition is so cool but it becomes not so cool when the question of ends comes up. What does man really care for: technology or happiness? As the debate rages, the facts to be noted are:

(a) Science and technology give more control of matter to man. Development is about the optimal maximization of matter including man. The optimal maximization of the matter called man cannot be discussed if his happiness and peace of mind are not factored in.

(b) Man is an animal that needs a reason to live. He has ends. These ends give meaning to his existence.

(c) Technology is not value neutral. There are always enormous cultural inputs in technology.

Having dissected the modernization theory of national development thus, it bears to be stated that although it proposes to deliver to the rest of the world, the facilities for the greater control of matter, these facilities are often wrapped with the historical values of a culture often not so compatible with the receiving culture. Again, does holding up a historical experience of a particular civilization as the universal model not amount to globalizing a parochial or regional value?

Be that as it may, the modernization theory of development remains the dominant model of development in today's world. It is so to speak, an accomplished fact. Every other model has to deal with its ubiquitous operation among the nations of the globe.

### **2.3. The Structuralist Theory of National Development**

Unlike the modernization theory of development, structuralism recognizes the importance of industrialization but not in the rigid sequence proposed by the modernization theory. Instead, the structuralist model of national development seeks direct government intervention in the manufacturing sector to achieve imports substitution industrialization (Chang, 2002). In this model, the government proposes to reduce the nation's dependence on imported manufactured goods by developing home grown industries to manufacture goods. In so doing, the government makes direct interventions in specific sectors to stimulate industrial growth to meet local needs.

Underlying this economic philosophy is the realization of the implications of the Prebisch-Singer hypothesis which states that over time, the terms of trade of primary commodities deteriorate over those of manufactured goods because the income elasticity of demand for manufactured goods is always greater than that of primary commodities (Harvey, Kellard, Madsen, & Wohar, 2010). It means that local products which are predominantly primary commodities will continue to depreciate in value while imported manufactured products will appreciate in value thereby leading to trade imbalance and capital flight. To arrest the situation, a nation that is serious about its development and independence will always seek to manufacture those products which its citizens have propensity to import. It would mean import restrictions and protection of local industries – a policy that is anathematic to Breton Wood institutions (Van Dormael, 1978).

The structuralist model of development was prevalent in South America between 1950s and 1980s. It led to the growth of small industries in the region. The policy succeeded so well in Brazil, that today, Brazil is one of the global economic giants. The same however, cannot be said of Africa where the economies of most of the nation states are 'container economies' – import based economies. In most African countries especially Nigeria, the foremost and the most populous Black nation on the planet, the chief exports are extracted natural resources. The socio-political implications of this lazy economics are simply telling. Structuralism however proved to be a transition economics as it was decimated in the 1990s by the structural adjustment programme promoted by Breton Wood institutions. The obnoxious economic programme forced 'open' market on developing countries, removed trade barriers and forced currency devaluations on the developing countries. The free trade occasioned dealt mortal blows on the nascent industries of these nation states rendering them vulnerable to the ever increasing inflows finished goods from the West.

#### **2.4 Dependency Theory of National Development**

The dependency theory of national development is one of the fallouts of imperialism. It is the favoured economic theory of a world system in which the nations of the world are divided into core states and peripheral states (Wallerstein, 2004). The core states and the peripheral states sandwich the semi-peripheral states who struggle between leaving the peripheral global economic region and being absorbed into the league of core states. The operant milieu that make this global system possible are world trade and globalization. In this economic system which incidentally is the prevalent model today, the core states specialize in the manufacture of finished goods using advanced technology while the peripheral states are made to produce raw materials for the industries in the core countries. The peripheral states are usually encouraged to concentrate on the production of a single commodity which is usually an agricultural produce or a mineral resource.

Since their economy is not diversified, the revenue which the mono-economy brings in hardly foots the costs of the government. The result is low standard of living, widespread poverty and phenomenal unemployment which in turn induce emigration from the peripheral states into the core states. The core countries depend on the raw materials and cheap labour from the peripheral states in order to power their industries and sustain their higher standards of living. The peripheral countries in turn become lucrative markets for the core states to sell their manufactured goods at astronomical profits. This in turn leads to further impoverishment of the peripheral states through the complex operations of the Prebisch-Singer hypothesis. In the elasticity of costs, primary commodities are no match for finished products.

The philosophical question imperative is, why do nation states opt for the dependency economic model instead of embracing liberating economic models? The simple answer is bad politics. The world is ontologically globalized. No nation state is ever left alone. In the global community, powerful nation states are ever looking for ways to exploit weak nation states. This primordial tendency has led to countless wars and countless global crises. Resources are forever scarce. Possession of resources often attracts invasion and struggle for the control of the resources. These played out in the era of colonialism. Europe not having sufficient natural resources to power her industries plundered Africa of her vast deposits of minerals and raw materials. Availability of cheap raw materials accelerated industrial productions and created vast surplus of finished goods in Europe. The industries had to explore new markets for their surplus finished goods. Africa turned out to be such a lucrative market. Subsequently, the West had to protect this market.

Enter Breton Wood Institutions: World Bank, IMF and World Trade Organization. They have many aims and objectives; many of them laudable. But among those aims and objectives unarguably is an open secret mission to make Africa the supplier of raw materials and the chief purchaser of finished goods in the global balance of trade. These institutions employ every trick in the books to enforce this world order. They bring down progressive governments and install puppet governments. They bring nations to their knees by crippling their economy through a regime of harsh loans, harsh trade agreements, economic boycotts and sanctions. These imperial institutions achieve this global economic mischief through mostly what Joe Stiglitz calls "briberization" – heavy bribing of the political leadership of the target nation state (Stiglitz, 2002).

IMF and World Bank loans to Third World nation states normally come with some catch 22 conditions. The target country would be required to sell off her national assets through a phoney process of 'privatization' which is actually 'briberization'. That is, the national assets would be sold at greatly undervalued prices to fronts of IMF/World Bank. Ten percent cuts would be secretly wired to Swiss bank accounts of top members of the government of the target nation state. The second condition is the acceptance of open market. That would mean tearing down all vestiges of protectionism in the economy of the target nation state. All manner of goods would flood the markets of the target nation state and compete ferociously with the fledging local industries. The capital market would be forced open, thereby paving the way for hostile takeover of the financial institutions. Foreign money would pour into the economy but of course would flee at the first sign of trouble. Finally, the target nation state would be asked to remove subsidies and open all goods and services to market pricing. The end result would be

high cost of living, low standards of living for the vast populace, high cost of education, and of course, incredible wealth for the ruling elite.

But that is not all. There is an ideological perspective to it. The logical consequence of the above painted scenario ought to be riots or a revolution of a sort. That was the case in Indonesia. But that is not always the case in most Third World countries. Most Third World countries have an otherworldly interpretation of matter. They have the tendency to spiritualize matter and material situations. First, because they have a religionised view of matter, the preponderant attitude is to revere matter rather than control it. As has been established earlier on in this work, development is nothing but the optimal control and utilization of matter. A people who would rather revere than control matter would definitely end up with more temples than industries. They would ipso facto be vulnerable to the dialectics of imperial economics a priori. The psychic energies of the populace would be predominantly channelled to religion rather than industry. To sum it, such a civilization would have failed to adopt the scientific culture. In the face of the mess painted above; they would likely adopt a fatalistic perspective to life and wallow in penury. Otherwise, there ought to have been massive revolution against the ruling elite or a strong local industry that would withstand the assaults of Breton Wood induced free market. The Asian Tigers largely adopted the later approach. But in the absence of either response, the elites and the masses of most Third World nation states scramble for the foreign exchange that comes from the sales of their mineral resources and raw materials to predominantly Western industries. In the end the dependency on the West and other foreign nations for their manufactured goods is reinforced over and over again; and of course, by the dialectics of Prebisch-Singer hypothesis, the income elasticity of demands of imported manufactured goods would keep going higher over that of the exported primary commodity. As the values of the manufactured goods appreciate the values of the primary commodities would definitely keep plummeting.

Another important reason for that is spiritual advancement. In Africa, people are far more atoned to the cosmos than in Europe. In traditional Africa, impulsive primitive accumulation was almost non-existent. The people produced what they needed and moved on with their lives. They did not produce for the sake of production but to satisfy their needs. There was absolutely no need to market anything abroad since all productions were meant for the community. People took what they needed from nature and left nature alone. There was no despoliation of nature. The billionaire craze was nonexistent. Wealth was never accumulated for its sake but for the sufficiency of the community. Most African societies had internal potlatch-like mechanisms that prevented people from becoming unreasonably wealthy in relation to the rest of the community. Most high titles in traditional African societies involved potlatch-like ceremonies. However, all that changed with the advent of colonialism. People were forced not just to produce for the community, but to produce for the West also. The West determined what the people were to produce for them – raw materials for their industries abroad. It was such a negative existential transformation. That was the beginning of the conditioning of industrial productions in Africa to the extractive mode.

The question is why wouldn't the West just like Africa produce just what they needed and chill? Why does the West have to overproduce and look for people abroad to foist their products upon? The answers are primitive accumulation and spiritual shallowness - the billionaire craze! Capitalism drives its adherents to acquire capital for the sake of acquiring it – the capitalist curse. Every staunch adherent of capitalism potentially wants to become a billionaire or at least, a millionaire. It is a craze; an irrational impulse. Otherwise, after one has produced what one really needed, the commonsensical response would have been to rest. But it is not so with Western industrialists. They must keep acquiring. There is a conspiracy theory which alleges that NM Rothschild and about forty other entities that own the World Bank and IMF want to rule the world through financial control (Walking Times Media, 2016).

Why would an institution render the lives of millions of people wretched just to make profit? World Bank and IMF wrought untold havocs in Indonesia and Argentina. These institutions have precipitated political instability, starvation and deaths in Africa, all for the sake of profit? There is something wrong in the heads of a people who drive this culture of economic cruelty. It is a product of flawed worldview: the worship of capital as the maximum value. In the compulsive quest, not even the earth has been spared. Despoliation and pollution of unimaginable proportions have been visited upon the

earth. The ozone layer is waning and species are disappearing for good. Dangerous gasses are emitted into the atmosphere, making the earth less conducive, even to humans. Yet, the West continues in its irrational quest and the worship of capital.

### **2.5. Neo-classical Theory of National Development**

The neo-classical theorists of national development are later day disciples of the classical theory of development. Essentially, they argued for free market, deregulation, privatization and non-interference of the government in the marketplace. For them, the 'invisible hand' of free market will eventually benefit all facets of the society. The advocates of the theory called for structural adjustment programme in the Third World.

The problem with the neo-classical theory is that it did not in any way factor in the fact that nascent industries of most developing nations are in no way capable of competing favourably with the highly advanced and comfortably established industries of developed countries which will compete with the nascent industries of these Third World countries without any checks and balances. The result would invariably be the closure of local industries and a container economy that would import everything from pencils to toothpicks.

There is no gainsaying that excessive regulation of the market by the government is counterproductive. At the same time, not regulating at all is tantamount to laying a nation's economy bare to economic predators. There must be a middle ground between opening up the market to attract foreign investments and protecting local industries to stimulate the local economy. The emphasis of foreign investment should be more on the establishment of industries than the importation of finished goods for consumer consumption.

No country can be truly independent without localizing its industries; a nation that depends on foreign nations for the production of its finished goods cannot pretend to be independent. Production of a sizeable percentage of its finished goods must be done in the country. Naïve application of the neo-classical theory of national development is not good for any nation.

### **2.6. Sustainable Development**

Sustainable development theory of national development advocates a development system that meets the needs of the present world without destroying the earth. It could be called Green development theory. This theory is predicated on the menace of industrial pollutions, the depletion of the ozone layer and fast depletion of non-renewable energy resources of the earth. It seeks to develop the earth without exceeding its carrying capacity.

The realization that the earth's resources are not infinite; the realization that certain industrial activities do more harm than good to the earth got people thinking of regulating industrial activities to check the emission of greenhouse gasses.

Pollution is the hallmark most industrial cities. Dangers of pollutions have got some thinkers wondering if it were not better to dwell on the earth in rural simplicity than to contend with diseases associated with certain industrial pollutions. Generally, the atmosphere in rural areas is always better than that of heavily industrialized areas.

### **2.7. Human Development Theory of National Development**

This is a theory of national development that focuses on the development of the human capital of a nation. It strives to enhance the capabilities of the populace in order to channel their social and infrastructural capitals to the achievement of national economic goals. Unlike other theories, this theory of national development focuses rather on the individual citizenry. It views the individual as a valuable asset to be developed. It also brings an important ethical perspective to national development by making the development of the individual, the end point of national development.

The advocacy for human development theory has led to the construction of the Human Development Index, a human focused development programme championed by the UNDP in its Human Development Reports. Foremost among the advocates of this school of thought is Amartya Sen, the 1998 Nobel Prize winner for economics (Sen, 1999).

This theory of national development appropriately sees development as freedom. There is no gainsaying that it runs counter to the mainstream theories of national development favoured by Breton Wood institutions which are largely amoral in character.

### **2.8. Post Development Theory of National Development**

The post development theory questions the idea of a theory of national development altogether. Post development theorists argue that theories of national development are constructed along Western cultural biases. That they are mental constructs imposed on non-Western minds to project the Western way of life as the ideal. They question the values upon which these development constructs are made. The values on which development theories are based are Western biased. It is like holding up the Western way of life as the ideal and urging the whole world to emulate it. It is not the scientific culture that is the matter but the values that drive the scientific culture according to the West.

It cannot be refuted that there are certain ways of doing things that yield more control over nature. Since development is about the optimal control and maximization of matter. It must also be respected that man is a choice making animal. It is an inalienable prerogative of a people to make their choices. Those choices ought to be respected by all peoples. The imposition of the Western paradigm of development negates such a choice.

### **3. TOWARDS THE FORMULATION OF HOME-GROWN AFRICAN DEVELOPMENT CONSTRUCT**

A careful analysis of the theories of national development examined above, shows clearly that none of the constructs is ideally suited to the African peculiar existential situation. They are all more or less, cross cultural adaptations which are not ideally suited to local situations. It is a fact however, that there are aspects of the theories that resonate with the local situation. There are salutary practices that can be obtained from each of the theories. The modernization theory brings with it, a focus on industries and a de-spiritualization of matter. The scientific production it promotes is salutary but it must be stated that the scientific culture is not original to the West. Three thousand years before the Greeks learned their first theorems of science; the scientific culture and scientific production had flourished in Egypt. They were not channelled to fuel the billionaire craze but to the service of the community in the building of silos and pyramids; in medicine and military defence. It was seamlessly woven into the holistic worldview that took care of man in his complete being as a conscious matter that seeks for meaning other than him. Africans will embrace the scientific culture with a renewed vigour while jettisoning the value system that promotes the modernization theory. The principal motive driving the forces of modernization is the maximization of profit. Africa will return to its indigenous approach to scientific production: the service of the community. We are a different people, with a different value system and a different society. Industrialization in Africa ought not to necessarily go with the billionaire craze that is the undoing of unbridled capitalism. The excesses of that theory are rooted in that craze.

Life is considered to be the maximum value in most African societies. A development theory that focuses on the development and fulfilment of the human person cannot necessarily be considered foreign or new to the African society. Life is sacred in African ontology. Therefore human development theory is not new to the continent. Harmony with man and nature is the goal of most African societies. Harmony among men entails social and economic justice. It entails a fair distribution of the goods of the community. It entails fairly equal opportunities. Nature is not seen as an exploitable raw material but an integral part of the sacred order of reality. Sustainable development therefore is not a foreign idea. In the Igbo African society, Earth, *ala* remains the most sacred entity. Man relates to it in a symbiotic organic dynamic. It is not seen as man's property but nature's mother which ought to be handled with delicate care. The idea of the overuse of the earth or the destruction of the environment out of cornucopian greed is foreign to most African societies. Africans generally deified earth rather than expendably reify it.

However, the use of economic power for the oppression of a people is totally foreign to African societies. Most African societies marvel at the idea that a nation would set out to impose an economically disastrous theory on another nation. Ours traditionally was always an economy with a human face. As an enormously endowed continent, Africa does not really need the economics of Breton Wood institutions as such but the technical knowhow to harness her enormous natural resources. The interventions of these institutions in African economies have often resulted in ruins rather than growth of African economies.

### **3.1 African Existential Theory of National Development as the Way Forward**

Existentialism is a philosophy of existence that became popular after the World War II. It essentially calls for authentic existence. It is a philosophy that affirms the authenticity of the positively human response to peculiar conditions in the environment. It rejects the interpretation of local realities with values foreign to such realities. It affirms existence before essence. It is a philosophy of mode of being in the world. African existential theory of national development is a development theory that positively affirms the African societies' mode of being in the world in authentic African values system. African existential development reaffirms the traditional symbiotic partnership between earth and man, the primacy of human life and the welfare of the community. It recognizes wealth as a tool for the service of the community rather than a value to be amassed for its sake. It affirms scientific production as service to the community rather than as a tool for unbridled wealth. The welfare of the community comes before individual wealth. Wealth is held in trust for the community.

The existential theory of development advocates the deployment of the instruments of production to the service of the existential needs of the nation state. It is home-grown and tailored to the existential situation of the nation state. The existential theory of development does not impose on the nation state, any development ideology that is a product of the existential situation of a different people at a particular era. It seeks to apply authentic responses to existential situations in the nation state. Existential development deploys science and technology to dominate, utilize and humanize the environment. It industrialises the nation state for improvement of the populace, not for amoral accumulation of capital. Improvement of life not amassment of capital is the cardinal drive of existential development philosophy.

Therefore, existentialist development policies will regulate trade because it is aimed at self-sufficiency rather than the expansion of markets for globalist industries. It will reject unequivocally, the allotment of the extractive industrial sector to the continent in the global balance of trade. It will produce for the populace according to their needs within the indigenous value system; not according to the desserts of Breton Wood institutions. While, nation states which have adopted the existential development ideology shall not necessarily adopt an isolationist trade policy, they must resolutely reject trade organizations which encourage dependency. The West will never develop Africa. It will always exploit Africa for the improvement of the West. That is the testament of history. Therefore, Africa can only be developed by Africans for Africans. Africa is richly endowed with natural and human resources. What Africa needs is the technical knowhow to subdue and optimally utilize her natural resources; the optimal utilization of matter. That is what development is all about.

The African world has been opened up to new challenges by contact with the West. The Western mode of being poses critical challenges to Africa's traditional way of relating to matter. The West's heightened industrial control over matter gave it undue advantages which enabled it to militarily subjugate and dominate Africa. Africa must heighten its industrial production to achieve equilibrium in her relationship with the West. African economies must be made to be existentially Afro centric.

## **4. CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS**

Development is not only about the control and maximization of matter, it is also about the values for which this control and maximization is done. The control of matter by who; for who? What constitutes the matter to be controlled and maximized? Is the human matter also subject to this control and maximization? Has matter no intrinsic worth? Could matter be defined only in relation to the ends of man? Who are the beneficiaries of the optimal maximization of matter? What is the end of all this? To what end is matter to be controlled; to achieve what and for whom?

These are the turbulent perennial philosophical questions that most Western defined theories of development either addressed alarmingly or have curiously failed to address. Therein lay the major weaknesses of most mainstream theories of national development the West has projected for African nation states. Some of these theories are unabashedly anti Africa. Every theory of development is inspired by one value system or another. Though more often than not they are not overtly stated but are always inherent in the theories. In today's globalized capitalist world, mainstream theories of development often

are expressions of the values and wishes of the leaders of industry in leading industrial nations. They have great influence over global institutions like the World Trade Organization, the IMF and the World Bank. Through these institutions, they perpetuate the advancement of brutal capitalism, and ruthlessly despoil developing nations of their natural resources. In so doing, they neither care about morals nor do they care about human life. All they care for is profit; the advancement of capital.

It is true that the more control a people have over matter, the better equipped they are to develop it. But the bad news is that man's quest to control matter has often led to the despoliation of the environment, rendering the earth less safe to dwell upon. Man, unfortunately is a choice making animal. Sometimes, man has wilfully used his ability to control matter to work against development. Consider the various sophisticated weapons of war used in Syria in the current Syrian Civil War. The country has been brought down to rubble due to man's sophisticated control of matter to advance warfare. Over-production has also led to consumerism. It has not been sufficiently proven that control of matter via sophisticated technology has made man happier. The value input is critical. A sizeable number of people do indeed advocate a return to pristine state of nature when the environment was so pure and life so simple. John Locke's political economy is predicated on this supposedly blissful state of nature (Blackstone, 1971).

In sum, man has always dabbled with the control of nature right from the birth of self-consciousness in Homo sapiens. The early man did not lay supine to be fed by nature. He invented agriculture, he manufactured stone implements, and he invented fire; and later invented iron tools. That was a clear inborn desire to control matter and to develop the earth. Therefore, it would be antithetical to man's development to jettison the scientific culture. Africa must confront the present day world by embracing scientific production and applying it existentially to the African environment. Scientific production in Africa must be driven by African value system. It must be peculiar to the African milieu; not Western focused.

The existential theory of national development is the desideratum African nation states need for meaningful development. To achieve it, patriotism among the political class is a sine qua non. In today's highly technological world, it would be suicidal for African nation states to opt out of the scientific culture. It would also be suicidal for African nation states to embrace technology without values input from the indigenous value system. Values are critical to the efficacy of development theories. African existentialist theory of economic development will free African nation states from undue dependence on Bretton Wood institutions for blueprints on national development. The political class in Africa must rise to the mental and cultural responsibilities needed to inspire home-grown economics of national development. They must embrace economic existentialism.

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## PAISIAN MONASTICISM IN NICHIFOR CRAINIC'S WORK

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### *Abstract*

This paper represents an analysis of Nichifor Crainic's work in terms of influence of paisian monasticism. As it is reflected in his work, St. Paisie Velichkovsky sits a top the pyramid or, rather, among those people who contributed through their works and their personality to influence intellectual and religious formation of this author. About St. Paisie, Crainic speaks not only with admiration, but also with reverence, giving to understand that the abbot is more than a man - a saint, so a man deified.

Abbot holiness places it in Nichifor Crainic's conscience above other valuable personalities, because holiness is evidence of a destiny fulfilled, as he himself is entitled courses mystical holiness - human fulfillment. Based on the experience of the Church, he knew that prayer, that the connection with God or His grace uninterrupted stay, should come from it. Moreover, he also knew that the congregation numerous St. Paisie worked perfectly if within them have been listening, prayer and struggle against human passions, but fell apart when passions and not the spirit of holiness took over monks, divided only because quarrels due abbots. In Crainic's view, Orthodoxy respects the variety of nature because it is the work of God.

**Keywords:** Nichifor Crainic's work; paisian monasticism;

### 1. INTRODUCTION

Nichifor Crainic (baptised Ion Dobre, was born December 22, 1889 at Bulbucata County Vlaşca or Giurgiu today, died on August 20, 1972 in Mogosoia, near Bucharest) was a writer, poet, journalist, politician, director of magazine, philosophy (the creator of the current of thinkers), educator and theologian. Primary school followed in his village, but his father insisted very much like the young boy to "get big man" and out of poverty from Bărăgan. Thus, between 1904-1912 was a student at Theological Seminary in Bucharest, where he had merit scholarship throughout their studies. As he says, there has remained a pleasant memory on religious education here due to dry and little educational lessons in terms of piety and faith generally (Nichifor Crainic, 2015, pp. 90-91).

He had, however, a good education with great teachers like Iuliu Scriban. His classmate was Dumitru Cornilescu (1891-1975), the translator of Britain Bible and converted to Protestantism (Ioan I. Ică jr., 2010, p. 8). If not satisfied in terms of religious education, Nichifor Crainic leans on literary creation. He is passionate about literature and publishing under Nicolae Iorga magazines coordination.

Nicolae Iorga was the mentor under whose auspices he made in 1907 as a student literary debut in a magazine from Iasi, publishing in the coming years as a seminarian in various pseudonyms. (I.D. Nichifor, D.I. Crainic) and in famous publications as *Ramuri* from Craiova, *Lucafaurul* from Sibiu, *Viața Românească* from Iași, but *Semănătorul* and *Neamul Românesc* coordinated by Nicolae Iorga. Continues to publish in the years 1912-1916, during which follows the Faculty of Theology of București. For his own tangle, engages as a singer at Zlătari Church. He noted the young professor of dogmatic Ioan Mihălcescu that it directs to apologetic, but "lack of spirituality makes his theological studies appear abstract, overly rationalist and historicist. In turn, the universities of Bucharest dominated by scientific positivism" (Ioan I. Ică jr., 2010, p. 8).

He gets bachelor degree in theology and publishes his first volum of poetry, *Zâmbete în lacrimi* (Angels in tears). He is very eager to priests and would not grab another road. "I taught seminary and studied tehology, testifies Nichifor Crainic. It was for me a desertion and a betrayal to break the line, which I traced a destiny. I was used to this line so deeply that I could not conceive different life and I always had a restraint against seminarians and theologians who deserted ". His dream was to become a priest anywhere else than Zlătari but the Bishop Conon refused to name him, despite the insistence and pressure brought upo by various personalities of the time, friends of Nichifor Crainic, Gala Galaction, Nicolae Iorga, I.G. Duca.

The events that followed them wasted not only the dream of being Zlătari priest, but a priest forever, because divorces first wife. Then The Second World War started, Romania defeat and death of his father throws him away from Bucharest. He is a sergeant deployed to the hospital in Iasi, working assiduously with articles and poems in *Neamul Românesc* of N. Iorga. Back in Bucharest, becomes editor of *Dacia*, led by Al. Vlahuță and thereafter *Lucafaurul*, moved by Goga from Sibiu to Bucharest. In 1919 the volume *Icoanele vremii* containing articles and poems of the years during the Second World War.

In 1926 Crainic his literary pseudonym legalizes this and take effective management of *Thought*, aborted, Cezar Petrescu went to Paris, providing material its appearance almost uninterrupted 10 issues a year from January 1926 until August 1944.

Also, in 1926 Nichifor Crainic becomes professor at New College of Theology from Chisinau for six years where he teaches in the department of modern religious literature. The famous course on "Dostoevsky and Russian Christianity" mean the introduction of literary course the elements mystical Orthodox under clothes literature Crainic, "requiring first course of mystical Orthodox faculties of Theology, a priority Romanian in higher schools of theology in space panorthodox" (Ioan I. Ică jr., 2010, p. 9). On May 22, 1941, Crainic supported the Romanian Academy, the place remained open following the death of Octavian Goga.

Politically it on the far right and was adept religious traditionalist tendencies, claiming that Romania must remain faithful Christian Orthodox spiritual heritage.

According to its practical spirit, and he sought to do something to personal taste divine realities or rather, for the expert living God. Mystique, according to Nichifor Crainic's believe helped in this regard, because "mysticism teaches you to pray, religion in its essence is nothing but ecstatic prayer" (Nichifor Crainic, 2010, p. 215) or one that leads you to union with God. Instead of speculative or philosophical mysticism, he prefers the experimental because it "is the culminating experience of religion, or personal experience of union with God in prayer, in contemplation or ecstasy" (Nichifor Crainic, 2017, p. 69).

Sentenced to life imprisonment in 1945, he was arrested in 1947, through several prisons, including Văcărești and Aiud. During detention remained the same man distinguished and highly regarded by others. Here is some valuable testimony about this man: "At night, when he thought that the other cellmates sleep, get out of bed, kneel and pray, crying with sobs," (Viorel Gheorghiuță, 1994, pp. 260-261), says a former cellmate; "Sunday, especially, remembers D. Andronescu, after a short service officiated by the high priest, lectures Nichifor Crainic. One such conference, he kept his narrow audience a lesson in Orthodox mystic. He spoke so beautifully and convincingly that impressed him deeply even Professor John Petrovich, who is considered rather "free thinker" (Demostene Adronescu, 2009, p. 78).

Father Grebenea knew Nichifor Crainic in the prison: "To pass the time nicely, I asked to take a few mystical lessons. He made a lot of great exposure. He spoke about Dostoyevsky, Meister Eckart, and others from the East, Simeon the New Theologian etc." (Nicolae Grebenea, 2005, p. 124).

Ioan Ianolide about Nichifor Crainic:

"He is the famous Christian Romanian poet and one of the greatest poets of the world of Christians. He is a former university professor, historian and journalist. His poetic work is complemented by essays and mystical. His university lectures ascended into heaven the auditors. Crainic is the traditionalism and he focus on Byzantium. His Byzantine parentage spiritual trait of the Romanian people is structural, and nobody can deny this."

For his ideas, Nichifor Crainic had a long detention, during which he composed many poems that arrived outside where circulated illegally. But we hope that one day they will see the light of day. Poet in prison prayed deeply on his knees for hours. Yet this man of remarkable sensitivity was matched by an irrepressible sense. Due respect for his work and suffering endured will not talk about his human weaknesses. He regrettable compromises of conscience but his work remains pure and authentic Orthodox. He died as a loner, because he was still ostracized. Forgetting human mistakes, we appreciate the Christian poet and thinker image that will impress, so he will be read anytime, anywhere. Today there was silence over his work but one day will be placed in the place of honor culture" (Ioan Ianolide, 2012, pp. 305-306).

## **2. PAISIANISM IN NICHIFOR CRAINIC'S WORK**

### **2.1. Paisianism– „golden age of Romanian Orthodoxy”**

For Nichifor Crainic, paisianism was a thread or a benchmark against which the sample elite real spirit of a work of a current or a person. But where's the attraction to this phenomenon? The answer is simple: attracted Orthodox mystique, because it was only to satisfy his deep spiritual aspirations, one that was complete, seamless and fully justified. So, the mystical come to appreciate and acquire principles.

In 1927, Nichifor Crainic became professor at the newly established Faculty of Theology in Chisinau, the department of "modern religious literature". The first course was devoted to Dostoevsky and Russian Christianity, and he was to be followed by others dedicated to religious German and Spanish literature. Reading Dostoevsky's work convinced the young theologian and poet of the need to deepen Orthodox mysticism. The fascination of Dostoevsky's work genius was because its substrate notified Orthodox monastic spirit and felt in assonance with the Russian novelist especially by paisianism that has bridged and smooth between the two Orthodox traditions. Nichifor Crainic, loving paisianismul recognized it in Dostoevsky's work about he started to love more. Therefore, he prefers him most, as he himself says: "The emergence of the most important novelist of the world, which is Dostoevsky genius orthodoxy modern proved that you do not need any mythology to raise art to heights untouched. Russian writer not modeled after the block works as Racine and Cornelle ancient tragedy, but after hagiography church discipline. The novel "Idiot" is in fact a modern hagiography and literary "Brothers Karamazov" is an apology of paisianism. Source of inspiration is Christian conscience tragic split between inner hell of sin and divine love paradise" (Nichifor Crainic, 2010, p. 42).

Nichifor Crainic speaks always about paisianism with joy just because this "phenomenon" happened in our country, seek values not far, but in the bosom of our people." Movement of Hesychasm are important for Romanian Orthodox Church, too, because of the paisianism. This current is a vivid reflection of Hesychasm from Athonite Hesychasm, because the paisianism is not a culture movement, but a movement of mystical content itself. Paisie [Velickovski, 1722-1794] is a practitioner of mystical Hesychasm and author from whom we have left precious treatise on the prayer to Jesus The Survivor, who is hesychasm mental prayer "(Nichifor Crainic, 2010, p. 48).

Nichifor Crainic believes that due to the Saint Paisie from Neamt, "on the threshold of the XIX-th century, Neamt Monastery playing field the ecumenical role of Sinai and Atos"(Nichifor Crainic, 2010, p. 125). Moreover, he thinks that paisian era from Neamt Monastery is the most flourishing period in the history of our Church: "At the end of the eighteenth century, The Neamt Monastery becomes the supreme spiritual irradiation center for the entire Orthodoxy. He is now what was in centuries XI and XIV Athos and Sinai in VI century. Perhaps our church forefathers never did acylated most prolific creative flame of the Holy Spirit currently. From bishops to monks the same impetus of divine transfiguration. I am certain that if Jesus does not punish us for moral unworthiness slumps that followed and if he still covered in

glory nation, erecting all historical humiliations, the rich mercy was conquered by the age of paisianism transfigured. It's golden century of Romanian Orthodoxy" (Nichifor Crainic, 1993, p. 150).

## **2.2. Paisianism, cultural movement or mystic" phenomena"**

In Nichifor Crainic's view, St. Paisie Velichkovsky hasn't created a cultural phenomenon, but a theological and mystical. Indeed, cultural work undertaken by Saint Paisie and his communal facilitate access to sources of wisdom of the Fathers, and thus they are perfect through prayer, ascetic and others. These ideas are shared by The Father Ioan I. Ică jr: "An authentic interpretation of "paisianism" must take exactly and inevitably the historical and spiritual horizon immanent reality that is meant to be understood. In the case of Paisie is clear that the abbot did not want to go so, the cultural pantheon of humanity "as the kingdom of God, that he was not interested so its national affiliation as the mystery of its adoption and its community God and for Filocalia he was not "a fundamental book of European culture" or national but simply practical breviary showing "every person how to purify, light and save his/her soul". (This does not mean at all that experience ascetic-spiritual sense not deep spiritual dynamics of the era. On the contrary) (Ioan I. Ică jr., 2010, p. 76).

Nichifor Crainic, theologian and cultural personality, has the merit of recourse paisian's substance work and not aligned with the general trend of study St. Paisie operates only in terms of its bookish. "It is deeply regrettable, he says, that our historians who have dealt with this age, whether secular or theological, I have closely observed the very essence of paisianism. This substance is eminently mystique. It consists of raising the spirit of the usual monastic psalmody height sublime contemplation. Paisian new spirit can be summed up in two words: study and contemplation. Meaning not simple satisfaction theological curiosity, be it as legitimate, but deep intellectual preparation for contemplation. If we ignore this stone light of paisianism movement there is only a theological and cultural value, it was counted so far in a way to understand all peripheral" (Nichifor Crainic, 2010, p. 308).

Moreover, even the Saint Paisie testifies in his autobiographia to that purpose in coming paisian's congregation from Moldova was not a revolution of monastic life, but salvation: "Seeing me the approaching end of my life and thinking that everything writing can be forgotten, I thought that at least a part can be known in writing about this holy synod of holy fathers, brothers and beloved sons of my spiritual activity, which, in the name of Christ, gathered to me for salvation of their souls" (underlined. b.) (Cuv. Paisie de la Neamț Velicikovski, 2015, 102).

If we take an insight into Optina's monastic specificity, as the place of the most perfect perpetuation of the paisian spirit, one can see without much effort that spiritual paternity is the essence of paisianism, which has been conveyed alongside the practice of the Prayer of Jesus in the stasis of at Optina. The Father Ioan I. Ică jr. even claims that the paisianism still throws a last wave of light in Romanian Orthodoxy through Father Ioan Kulîghin, as a symbol of this paisian fatherhood:" Not as a system of monastic organization, but as a spiritual tradition of spiritual fatherhood and Jesus' prayer, "paisianism" returns to Romania in the years 1944-1946 through the enigmatic figure of Father Ioan Kulîghin ("the stranger"). The refugee from Valaamo, one of the last bearers of the spirit of Optina, ignites at Antim the flame of the "Rugul Aprins" and the "Romanian Filocalia hatching" of the 1950s, whose protagonists will be martyred between 1958-1965 in the communist prisons (from Dej). One of the Providence privileged witnesses of this unique "time" of contemporary Romanian Orthodox spirituality, Archimandrite Andre Scrima, owes us the most lucid evaluations of "paisianism" ever emanating. Paisie "embodies the type of spiritual father for his time," because "at the center of the Paisian" is nothing more than "spiritual paternity", "grace in the Holy Spirit" (as the letter of Father Ioan Kulîghin în Andre Scrima, Timpul Rugului Aprins, 1996, pp. 23-27).

## **2. 3. The double essence of Paisianism: Jesus' Prayer and Being Abbot as a model for monks**

Nichifor Crainic believes that "the essence of paisianism lies in the Jesus's prayer," and rightly says this, given that St. Paisie taught and strongly urged the monks to this hesychast work. Regarding this prayer and the entire teaching of the Filocalia Fathers related to it, Nichifor Crainic firmly states that this is specific to the Eastern tradition and expresses most faithfully the spirit of Orthodox piety. Therefore, he says, "in the spiritual life of the West, we can not find a similar form. It's the exclusive property of the East. Through both the doctrinal essence and the method, and not less by its overwhelming historical practice, ranging from ancient times to the prominent Russian abbesses of our time, it is the most

widespread Orthodox contemplation. Transmitted from a spiritual parent, such as from a master, to an apprentice, from generation to generation, and shrouded in jealous discretion of holy things, the Prayer has kept its originality untouched. When in 1782 the treatises of "practical and theoretical philosophy" worshiped in this way of contemplation and gathered under the title of Filocalia, were printed by Nicodim Haghioritul for the first time in Venice, all the copies up to one were brought to the East. This retail, which is nothing more than the echo of a traditional discipline, indicates precisely the confessional consciousness of exclusive belonging. The Jesus's prayer almost confuses with the spiritual life of Orthodoxy" (Nichifor Crainic, 1938, p. 217).

The work of Saint Paisie is monumental both for its value and for its broad influence in the space of Orthodoxy. However, before applying his new Rule in Moldavian monasteries, the abbot Paisie asked for the blessing of the church leadership at that time, as Crainic states: "The great monastic reform he has made of a universal value for modern orthodoxy consists of the regulation of public life from the monasteries of the prayer of Jesus. He suddenly raises the level of this public life from mechanical psalmody to the inner discourse of meditation and contemplation. This is definitely clear from the monastic rule made by him in Athos and approved by the Metropolitan and the Council of Moldavia when Paisie placed an abbot in Dragomirna in 1764" (Nichifor Crainic, 2010, p. 311).

This tells a lot, that the Abbot and the community do not come as rebels of the Athos, but even as persecuted and with a sincere desire for salvation and not to do the teachers in the Romanian lands. St. Paisie came with a non-personal, but philosophical vision, in that it was proved that it was not a pure or exclusively anahoretic work, but equally well could be appropriated in the cenobitic life. To this end, the Jesus's prayer is ordained as an essential rule for every monk, as Crainic says: "We do not want to say that before this prayer was not known in the Romanian Countries and Russia, which were in constant connection with the Great Church of the East. In its system of organization of monastic life, Paisie introduces it, however, as a superior rule of daily prayer for every monk" (Nichifor Crainic, 2010, p. 308).

In other words, the whole Saint Paisie Rule for the life of monks in the community was aimed at favoring the creation of an outer climate, especially interior for the spirit for the constant work of the Jesus's Prayer called the Heart's Prayer.

Here is a part of the requirements of St. Paisie: "He commanded that none of the brethren should call anything" mine "or" yours "in any way, but to have everything what God would give them, for that there will be between them a single thought and love. The necessities of necessity were given to all in common, so that obedience to the abbot and the whole might be guarded, and the breaking of his own will and judgment, and the submission of all in the fear of God. In the monastery, the obedience of the kitchen, the bakery, and the other, were to be made by the brethren themselves, without being used to commit ministers or minions. The kind of craftsmanship of life should have been done by brothers serving each other in the fear of God as the Lord Himself. The disobedience, the opposition in the word and the self-ordination (idiorrhymia) in the service of the people, through which the divine commandments are broken, should have been thrown out, and godliness, humility, unanimity, and love should have reigned: murmuring and keeping the mind of evil could not take place. At commun obediences, silence should be guarded by the prayer on the lips (subl. n.)" (Cuv. Paisie de la Neamț Velicikovski, 2015, 247).

Because the work of the prayer of the mind also involved many temptations, the abbot Paisie decided that each day in the evening, each monk would make the discovery of the spiritualist's thoughts so that the labors might be increased and the monks would not fall into various deceit or inability. He also decided on a daily study of the Fathers for guidance and encouragement. He himself studied the Philocalian Fathers, bending himself especially on their words of prayer, such as that of St. Anthony the Great, the Holy Philotheus, St. Isidiah, the Holy Diadochus, the Holy Talas, Saint Simeon the New Theologian, of St. Nicholas the Monk, of St. Isaiah and others. For this reason, Nichifor Crainic once again argues that the work of the ascetic literature has nothing to do but the spiritual use or the rule of the monks:" The books they are looking for are the hesychast ones. And he does not direct them and will not translate them from purely cultural interest, but to the needs of his spiritual life and his brothers and sisters. The new rule of this community was now formed and will remain in Athos even after its departure" (Nichifor Crainic, 2010, p. 310).

Nichifor Crainic draws attention to an important aspect of the mystical of the heart's prayer as St. Paisie sees it, namely, that for those who advance in the practice of this work prayer becomes a constant heaven within them. Therefore, "The Abbot Paisie calls the Jesus's prayer as a paradise prayer. The mystic who practices Jesus's prayer aspires to the restoration of lost paradise. This restoration means the contemplation of the eschatological paradise, the vision of the new heaven and the new earth beyond time. The eschatological paradise becomes, for the mystic absorbed in permanent prayer, an inner reality, even during earthly existence. This sublime happiness of contemplation is shared by man with the whole being. The life that follows mystical perfection is a real paradise.

As we have said before, the paradise is a state of infinite solidarity with the creative world. " So, the more prayer descends from the mind to the heart, the more the spiritual state of the kingdom is to taste. Obviously, this belongs to the last stage in the prayer work, as Crainic states: "Paisie clearly distinguishes the two phases of Jesus' s prayer: meditation or the active phase, which he calls" work or action "and contemplation or passive phase, on who calls it a "vision" (...) The active phase is for beginners, the passive phase is for saints" (Nichifor Crainic, 2010, p. 315).

Besides the prayer of Jesus practiced intensely and with the order of the monastic community, Nichifor Crainic sees spiritual fatherhood or being abbot as the second and equally important characteristic of Paisianism. In the monastery, the image of the abbot appears not as an administrative but as a leader not only for the public, but also for the laity. The elder does not become an abbot except in the way of obedience and the practician for the Heart's paryer. This link is also remarked by Crainic: "The monastery has a religious personality besides the abbot, but not imposed by the exceptional power of the spirit. The abbot is a director of spiritual consciousness for the monks, for the common people and for the intellectual seekers of God alike. The model is Abbot Paisie. And these abbots have the greater influence on souls as they prove to be more intimidated by the mysterious Jesus's prayer" (Nichifor Crainic, 2010, p. 313). Indeed, in postpasian monasticism, the spiritual authority of the abbot became impressive because St. Paisie emphasized not only the practice of the prayer of the heart, but also the necessity of full obedience to the abbot and discovery of his thoughts. The venerable Varsanufie of Optina also confesses: "Do you see what kind of respect they all have to the abbot's will, that even the highest authority of the Eucharist and church did not dare to change the commandments and prohibitions of the abbot" (Nichifor Crainic, 2010, p. 313).

### **3. CONCLUSION**

Being a deep spirit, Nichifor Crainic chose in his career as models only chosen spirits. He was very selective and was not content with superficiality. Seek the authentic, the true value and judge them all through the prism of the eternal Truth -Jesus Christ. If a person, work, cultural, socio-political, or religious current was in perfect rhyme with the Person of Christ and His Gospel, then he also invested his trust and devotion with some of those. Dostoevsky has tremendously appreciated his introspection capacity not only in the phenomenological complex of psychology but deeper in the states of the human spirit that struggle between the Spirit of God and the spirits of darkness. Crainic approached the Dodoievskian opera even more so since he recognized in this the authentic scent of Orthodoxy, which he had also learned in the Filocalia writings and especially in the knowledge of paisianism.

Why do we say that Paisianism was the culminating light for Crainic's cultural, religious, political and economic optics? Even though the entire Filocalia literature served to outline his orthodox pure thought, Paisianism was his preference primarily for being an exceptional phenomenon that developed so harmoniously and thriving in our humble country, and he never hesitated to highlight the values of our nation. Although a nationalist convinced, Nichifor Crainic never stumbled upon the fact that St. Paisie's community was a multinational one, which could bring, as many, suspicions of a glorious monopolization of the Romanian monastic life. He, above all, recognized in the Paisian phenomenon the genius of Orthodoxy, which can be both national and ecumenical. Secondly, St. Paisie, along with his entire work, was close to Nichifor Crainic. For him, this was of great importance because he did not want to speak only of a distant past of the life of the spirituality of the Romanian people, who, even though famously, was considered by most as an inert, defeated by history, the adept of a living Orthodoxy, permanently

animated by the same faith. It is through this living faith that the Church has the power to enliven the whole life of the nation in all its spheres, and Crainic also supported it in its work and actions.

In Crainic's view, Orthodoxy respects the variety of nature because it is the work of God. The Orthodox Church is "ecumenical in spirit ... [and] private or national in the form of organization. It is self-taught in administration and universal in dogma and aspiration." (Nichifor Crainic, 1997, p. 121). The community of Saint Paisie, made up of monks of different nationalities, but spending in one faith and consciousness, is an enlightening example for this Orthodox genius.

As far as Crainic's optics about political and economic systems are concerned, it must be said that he affirmed and supported only that system that is based on the principles of our Christian life. Based on the experience of the Church, he knew that everything must come out of prayer, that is, from the constant bond with God or from the unbroken stay in His Grace.

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## MCDSARE: 2018

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## AXIOLOGICAL ANALYSIS OF THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN RELIGIOUS EDUCATION AND SCIENTIFIC RESEARCH

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### *Abstract*

The problem of the nexus between the authentic Christian values and the day-by-day more desacralized contemporary world is one very delicate, almost unfathomable. In the realm of science we can hardly talk about a general theory of values (axiology), because since the nineteenth century that seemed to elude (to say the least) the relationship between facts (scientific ones) and values (social, cultural etc.), as had pulled an alarm, at the beginning of the twentieth century, German phenomenologist Edmund Husserl. On the other hand, European education not only the contemporary one seems to ignore (directly or indirectly) Christian values, from the moment religion has turned from a discipline of objective interest to one of particular or subjective interest. Science and, consequently, scientific research are losing sight of what has traditionally been the ultimate human goal: the authentic values that define man, constitute him in the space of his very existence, as a being created “in the image of God”. Viewed at the level of the finality and content, religious education reveals a set of values that are in congeniality with the teaching of Christian faith. The Church, theandric institution that guarantees the condition of homo axiologicus freely proposes values and does not impose them. Therefore we consider that it is imperative to reaffirm the great importance both to the Church, as basic institution of society and to religious education in axiological-imbued formation of today young people equally from Romanian and European society.

**Keywords:** axiology; phenomenology; religious education; scientific research; facts; values;

### 1. INTRODUCTION

In a world increasingly alienated from authentic Christian values, the problem of connecting them both to education in general, and scientific research, in particular, is one unfortunately entered into evanescence. A whole range of types or education systems, some of the most allogeneic kind, which have begun to be prized even in Romania (e.g. Waldorf Alternative Education) are proposed, systems that retain little of the specificity of thought and morality that shaped the civilization and culture of the old continent: *Christian education*.

But no further than that, education in Romania, and not only, despite the presence of the *religious education class*, shows blatant ignorance of the Christian values system, as, for example, was



seen and theorized by Jan Comenius, François Fénelon or Pestalozzi (Dorin Opreș, 2012). Complementary to modern and especially contemporary European pedagogy, often theft by its authentic Christian mark, the *scientific research*, in its turn, feels the same lack; moreover, from the 18th to the 19th century onward, it seemed to elude the relation between (scientific) *facts* and *values* (social and not only), which threw it into a real “crisis”, as the great German philosopher Edmund Husserl called it, towards the end of life.

That is why in the present study we will attempt to detail these coordinates of the act of scientific research in relation to Christian religious education, the only one truly capable of configuring society in axiological perspective, because it proposes a divine inspirational pattern, residing in Him who is “the Way, the Truth and the Life” (cf. John 14: 6).

## **2. THE CRISIS OF MODERN SCIENTIFIC RESEARCH**

Axiology (Greek *axia* – value, *logos* - theory) represents the philosophical study of values, especially in the fields of ethics, religion and aesthetics. A *theory of value* aims at showing which things in the world are good, desirable and important. Such theories seek to answer a practical question, rather than a purely theoretical one, since concluding that a state of affairs is good is to have a basis for acting in such a way that it would be accomplished or – if there exists already – be maintained. In the context of moral philosophy, the central question is the relationship between the moral justice of certain actions, such as telling the truth and the non-moral value of certain states, such as happiness. For a *teleologist*, an action is fair or just if and only if it is a means for an accepted non-moral good, while for the *deontologist* there are actions that are valuable in themselves. (Anthony Flew, 1999, 353)

Reflections on value are numerous, especially in the modern period. Thus, Immanuel Kant may be considered the first thinker to lay the foundations of the philosophy of values and culture, developing the principle of autonomy and differentiation in culture. The concept of value – for the German philosopher – is closely related to the analysis of validity in the sphere of theoretical, of the normative and aesthetic creation.

One of the most prominent thinkers on the theory of values is Eduard Spranger (1882-1963), who will lay the foundations for the *pedagogy of culture*. According to Spranger, the «self», as a subjective spirit, relates to the objective spirit, and man becomes man by assimilating the objective culture. The “life” of culture comprises two aspects: the creation of superindividuals and the creation of values. It is done primarily by transforming objective values into subjective ones. Education has as its ultimate goal – in the author's opinion – the unleashing in the subject of the normative, autonomous spirit that acts as an internal imperative, urging the human being to stand in the service of the spiritual values. (Constantin Cuceș, 2002, 183)

German philosopher Max Scheler (†1928) states that to the values belongs through an *a priori* necessity “the fact of being given through a kind of «consciousness of something», namely through affective perception; but values are given by the sense of value, not simply by knowing the values [...]. Values form a proper domain of objects between which relations and particular correlations take place and which, by their nature of value qualities, can be inferior or superior. It is therefore possible to establish between these values an order and a hierarchy, totally independent of the presence of a world of goods through which they manifest themselves, as well as of the historical changes of this world. This order and this hierarchy must be given in an «a priori» experience. (Max Scheler, 1916; 272, 10)

In his turn, the renowned German metaphysician Nicolai Hartmann (†1950) asserts: “Values are independent of consciousness. Consciousness can sense or lose sight of value, but it cannot produce it, it cannot «put» it. Because of this character of value, we can support the thesis that values have an existence in themselves (Ansichsein). Knowing the value is a true knowledge of being. From this point of view, it stands in the same line with any theoretical knowledge. The object of value knowledge is an autonomous entity like space relations in geometrical knowledge.” (Nicolai Hartmann, 2004, 134-135)

On the other side, speaking of the origin of morality, Fr. Nietzsche (1844-1900) believes that: “price-setting, measuring values, inventing equivalences, changing – all of these has so much concerned man's oldest thinking that, in a sense, it has become the *thinking* itself. Here sprang the oldest form of

cleverness, the presupposed first branch of human pride, the sense of human' superiority against the other animals. Possibly that the German word itself *Mensch* expresses this very own love affair: man designates himself as a being that measures the values, utilizes and measures them; he had designated himself as «valorizing-in-itself animal»". (Friedrich Nietzsche, 1993, 65-66)

In the profile literature, the value was conceived under at least three theoretical aspects: transcendentalism, subjectivism and axiological objectivism. The transcendental movement places the value in a transcendent, over-individual and everlasting space, in a horizon of eternal validity, detached from any empirical contingency.

Thus, for Neokantian thinker Heinrich Rickert (†1936) the value means overcoming, transcendence; it is not in opposition with non-value, but with existence. For this philosopher the value does not exist, it is worth it. Denying an existing leads to nonexistent, and denying a value leads us to non-value, even though it exists. An individual can articulate eternal values with existence through cultural values. Max Scheler admits the existence of two worlds: that of things and the one of values. Things are value-bearing, but they do not identify with axiological qualities. The value is independent of the substantial bearer, of the good that incorporates it; before the beautiful objects, there is the beauty itself. Value does not depend on moral or aesthetic experience, but is a condition of this experience. Not values, but only our knowledge of them is relative. (Constantin Cucoş, 2002, 184)

The *subjectivist* position denies any transcendent dimension of the will, desire, and preference. The value applies wherever there is a rupture of indifference, of equality of things. The value is found "in the natural opposition that we establish between the fundamental and the accessory, principal and secondary, meaningful and insignificant, essential and accidental, justifiable and unjustifiable." (Constantin Cucoş, 2002, 184). Axiological objectivism states that value is a quality inherent in things. The quality, for pragmatists, is given by the utility and by the use of things. For Émile Durkheim, for example, values are objective because they are imperative and are imperative because they are social. (Émile Durkheim, 1980, 96)

On the other hand, along with the phenomenon of education, there is another expression of human culture, namely *scientific research*. As it is known, science has been concerned only with a causal scrutiny of the surrounding reality since its very beginnings, its interrogations gravitating around questions of the sort: "how?", "in what way?" But the understanding of the world and its mechanisms of existence is not limited only to a causal, empirical explanation of things, because explaining the universe does not mean exclusively to find some ultimate principles that we can regard as absolutely non-contradictory. These principles must be values which would impose upon the human spirit, values through which one is to legitimize all the constructions of the mind, in which we are to believe and which we consider to be something objective, independent of us. The need for knowledge makes us believe in the existence of postulated values that are necessary for the scientific explanation of reality. But man tends to know these values and determine them within the limits of possibilities.

The problem of world conceptualizing, however, is one dependent of the knowledge of absolute, theoretical and practical values; is a problem of explaining the world in its own way of being, as well as its meaning. But "science", which has as its purpose the explanation of the being and the meaning of the world, is *philosophy* and then *religion* (theology), the latter subsuming the former, making of it a good companion (if not a servant – "ancilla theologiae"). When asking about the meaning of life, we reach *willy-nilly* at the formulating of absolute values, which we want to know as thoroughly as possible. But if the field of *knowledge* extends down to there, beyond that *action* begins, which imposes a new problem: how do we move from the knowledge of value to its realization? As such, the concept of "value" is fundamental to both philosophy and theology. (Petre Andrei, 1945, 13-14)

*Edmund Husserl* (1859-1938) is the first lucid spirit to draw a serious alarm on the axiological deficiencies of modern science in his well-known work, "The Crisis of European Sciences and Transcendental Phenomenology" (1936). The main idea of phenomenological philosophy is to present the world through *consciousness*; without the presence of consciousness, the world has no openness to meaning. That is why he asks us to take care of the research of world consciousness, but for this we must forget or abandon the real, natural world as our attitude towards it. These abandonments do not mean denying the existence of nature, of the surrounding world, but "cleansing" the consciousness of foreign

elements in order to turn consciousness upon itself for the purpose of seeking and discovering the meaning of things. The phenomenological method accomplishes this through Husserlian famous *epoche*, i.e. through *suspension*. Very important to be noticed is the fact that in Greek philosophy *epochē* meant “suspension of judgment”, being a principle sustained initially by the skeptical philosophers of the ancient Greek Academy, who, considering the problem of knowledge as insoluble, proposed that whenever a controversy arises, an attitude of non-involvement must be adopted, in order to obtain the peace of mind in everyday life. The term was resumed in the twentieth century by Husserl, who saw it as a technique rather than the abstractization and examination of essences and which serves to highlight the consciousness itself. (Samuel Mickey, 2008, 57)

Husserl's Europe is the one which, turned on the path of dehumanization, will come to know the Nazi and communist barbarians. It replaced the field measurements with geometry and reshaped a mankind that was no longer a prisoner of empirical, but invested with “infinite tasks”, having as the ideal a world possessed by reason. If there is a crisis, it does exist through a reference to such a goal (*télos*) or project. Without ever doubting the rigor of the benefits of sciences, Husserl emphasizes their responsibility in this disorder. By removing questions about the meaning of existence, sciences perpetuate this defect of Galilean science: the physicalistic objectivism that forgets the world of our life (*Lebenswelt*) in favor of the abstractions of mathematics. Thus, thinking gets instrumentalized, and is emptying from meaning. (Denis Huisman, 2001, 84-85)

Speaking of a new construction in Logic, Husserl links it with the human resignification of science: “The current state of European sciences requires a radical reflection: in principle, they have lost their great trust in themselves, in their absolute significance. Today's modern man no longer sees in science and in the new culture shaped by it the self-objectification of universal reason, like the modern man of Enlightenment”; as we “live, in general, in a world that has become incomprehensible,” we must report “critically and skeptically” to “the scientific culture turned in historically”. (E. Husserl, 2009, 114)

For “only a new way of scientificity can” – according to Husserl – “eliminate the crisis of European humanity”; decisive for the German phenomenologist is that “this scientificity develops in a transcendental conception of the foundation of the meaning of the world's existence.” (P. Jansen, 1976, 29). “The crisis of European human existence has only two ways of escape: either Europe's decline in alienation to its own rational sense of life, the fall in hostility towards spirit and barbarism, or the rebirth of Europe from the spirit of philosophy through heroism of reason, which will eventually overcome rationalism.” (Edmund Husserl, 1997, 8)

Husserl criticizes the state of affairs in science, philosophy and culture, in which there is an unprecedented crisis. Thus, in science, the crisis unveils a naturalistic attitude that has spawned natural scientism and human scientism. The naturalist spirit prevails in the field of human science, whereby the human being is reduced to the state of object. And Husserl contrasts this naturalistic attitude with one of personalistic type, which he defines as “the attitude we always have when living with each other, talking to each other, shaking hands to each other, or getting in touch with each other in love and hate, in discourse and discussion.” (Edmund Husserl, 1997, 8)

Naturalist attitude is an abstract one. Man is assumed to have two autonomous spheres: subjectivity and objectivity, which led to a domination that divided the world into two. But the crisis is a subjective problem, which has begun with the much blamed *inductive method*, the one that refers to universal meanings. The founder of the inductive method is Francis Bacon († 1626). Bacon is convinced that the development of science based on the use of observation and experiment would turn it into an effective means of dominating nature. Knowledge is based on the collaboration of the intellect with the experience. In order to achieve these objectives, Fr. Bacon aims at establishing of a new method of scientific research: the inductive method. This method relies in the English philosopher's opinion on a set of norms that have not lost their methodological importance today either. He recommends that we should avoid hasty generalizations, because thereby we cannot avoid errors.

This position, however, decrees Husserl, represents a regression and not a progress of science, in which the values of judgment are not placed inside or internalized, and thus the responsibility is removed, considering that through this operation a sense of freedom is attained (Kanchana Mahadevan, 2001).

Husserl rightly believes that at the end of the nineteenth century there was a turning point in the general valorization of the sciences, which does not really concern their scientificity, but the significance they have, in general, for human existence. "From this moment on, modern man has allowed the entire world view (*Weltanschauung*) to be exclusively determined through the perspective of positive sciences, blinded by that *prosperity* he had owed them. Along with this, he turned back indifferently to all questions that in fact have a crucial role for a genuine humanity. The simple factual sciences create simple factual people." (Edmund Husserl, 2011, 23)

Therefore, in this work, a genuine Husserlian spiritual testament, he earnestly drew a signal of alarm about the axiological uncertainty of scientific research, in his famous words: "In the context of our existential crisis, science has nothing to convey to us. It basically excludes those questions that are most ardent for the man of these times of restraint [...]: questions about the meaning or meaninglessness of our entire human existence. [...] As philosophers of the present, we have woken up in the midst of a painful existential contradiction. For we cannot abandon the faith in the possibility of philosophy, understood as a task, thus in the possibility of a universal knowledge. Moreover, as philosophers who take seriously their own mission, we know that we have the vocation of this task." (Edmund Husserl, 2011, 23-24).

In accordance with this scrupulous and rigorous spirit, of what general theory of values (axiology) may be the case in the scientific field, one that even from the nineteenth century seemed to elude the relationship between (scientific) *facts* and (social, cultural, economic, religious, and not only) *values*, one which is not very focused on the ethical or moral aspect of applied scientific research (technology).

Even today science is the dominant knowledge. Contrary to a widespread opinion, the *scientism* that characterized the nineteenth century has not disappeared. The scientific ideology is maintained, but in a somewhat more subtle form. Very suggestive, The French philosopher Pierre Thuillier (†1998) summarized this ideology in three postulates or "articles of faith": 1) science is the only authentic (implicitly the best) knowledge; 2) science is capable of responding to all theoretical problems, provided they are formulated in rational terms; 3) it is legitimate and desirable to be entrusted to scientific experts the concern to solve all human problems, whether it is politics, economy, morality, etc. (Jean-Pierre Lonchamp, 2003, 149). Techno-science gives man extraordinary powers, which have allowed undeniable progress, but which simultaneously create a very dangerous self-destructive capacity. Therefore, more than ever, the need for an ethical refolding is necessary to prevent the transformation of man's discretionary power into a real curse for him. In a world in which all *values* have been relativized or even disputed, the very idea of establishing ethical or legal barriers is sometimes assessed as anachronistic, and more than that, even as an attempt to human freedom. Therefore, under the pressure of events that challenge almost daily the axiological interpretation of scientism and of humanist sciences, it is necessary a reconfiguration or a new approach of the essential problem of ethics bases. This despite the fact that the scientific idea of a science-based morality preserves its partisans: "An ethics that can be revised, founded on the progress of science" (Jean-Pierre Changeux, neuroscientist). In his turn, philosopher Hans Jonas, in his work: *The Imperative of Responsibility* (1979) tries to establish an ethics for the technological civilization. Starting from the threat to human and world, he built a philosophical anthropology, based on a new concept of responsibility extended to the survival of the human species. Beyond the major influences of his reflections on the intellectual fundamentals of ecology, the philosopher has inspired the formulation of rules of value that are generally valid, swiftly assumed by international, Euro-community and national laws such as "taking into account the interests of future generations" and "the precautionary principle" (Mircea Duțu, 2008).

### 3.RELIGIOUS EDUCATION. AXIOLOGICAL EVALUATION

Education, in general terms, consists of certain cultural and axiological fundamentals, such as: education, as an initiation in the world of values, the personal-educative and educational ideal, and the concrete forms of value education: moral-civic education and moral-religious education.

Following a series of definitions of education over time, we retain their essence: *education* remains a function of the spirit with roots embedded in the most intimate and purest life of mankind of all

ages. It thus contributes to the human being's existence into the spirit; it illuminates its nobility and goes in tune with its path of ascension to the moral fullness, towards true spirituality, and perfection.

Education is a value in itself, if and only if conveys or transmits values, forms man through values (the value content of education), moulds the values creator (stimulates and capitalizes the creative capacities). The very word “education” has a certain amount of value. It only refers to that aid given to the people in order to be able to rise to the authentic existential status of man and to acquire the authentic human nature.

The problem of the educational ideal can only be solved in an interdisciplinary or transdisciplinary fashion, appealing to axiology, philosophy and pedagogy of culture, sociology and, last but not least, to *religion*. Through religion, the child is not only linked to the areas of transcendental perfection, but also it is created a predisposition for the ego's insertion into a world of deep values, where life focuses, becomes more ardent, more personal, more authentic. In fact, there is a special relationship between *faith* and *education*, in the sense that education tends to spiritualize whatever divine grace has put into man and also to ennoble him with new values. (Olivia Andrei, 2010, 68)

Unfortunately, the Christian dimension of Europe is nowadays denied, minimized or ignored, especially in the West, where many believe that they are already living in a post-Christian society. But, on the other side, there are many other voices, such as writer Joseph Weiler (“A Christian Europe”, 2003), who defends the view that “in the European constitutional context, the reference to God and to Christianity should not be excluded only, but it is even indispensable” (Joseph Weiler, 2003, 53-54).

Unlike scientific research, which is more or less free of values, *religion*, through the education it transmits, proposes an extremely complex set of values, which have set up Europe for almost two millennia but which have a significance more current than ever, even if this seems paradoxical for those who cling today to alien or extraneous values for Christian culture and civilization. If other values – such as political, juridical, ethical, cultural-social, etc. – refers to an empirical reality, to a reality that we find in experience, religious values are a group of values with a specific character because they relate to a supersensitive reality, the domain of religion being a transcendental, supra-empirical one. (Petre Andrei, 1945, 223)

On the other hand, *social* values are of an intellectual, volitional nature, while *religious* values are more emotional and have a contemplative character. This character is revealed by the fact that religious value removes human impulsive desires, departs everything that deviates man from the supreme ideal. “Religious value”, said German historian and philosopher W. Dilthey (†1911), “tends to distract everything that is transient, everything that is desired, all that belongs to the senses in the individual human being.” (Wilhelm Dilthey, 1908, 44)

Basically, regardless of the values or sets of values we report or refer to, a common constant must be emphasized: their consistency is given by their ability to respond to individual or collective needs (Gheorghe Bunescu, 1998, 23). Determinant in the knowledge of values act prove to be both the set of questions about somebody's person that he formulates or comes in contact with throughout his life, and his ability to recognize them with the help of positive emotional acts, especially through love.

That is why, in the last few decades, pedagogy increasingly emphasizes the need for an *axiological education*, understood as an education through and for authentic values. „Education in axiological perspective means to guide the educational process on the most profitable trajectories in terms of efficiency, to identify or exploit privileged teaching moments, to respond to all searches through the best choices, [...] to act on behalf of an order of priorities.” (Constantin Cucuș, 1996, 181). From the point of view of Christian axiology, *religious values* have an *integrating role*, being a link between different elements and structures to which they imprint the seal of eternity. In this sense, the great philosopher of culture Tudor Vianu expresses: „Religious values are integrative. They integrate, unify, constitute in a solidarity and coherent unit all the values contained in man's consciousness. Through the religious values the bow of arch is raising, one that unites the most distant values, that gathers and shelters the most varied ones. An individual can contain different values, most of them, but their unifying link will be missing as long as religious value is not added to them” (Tudor Vianu, 1998, 117).

Supersensibly *par excellence*, religious values invite man to relate to a superior, eternal reality proven by Jesus Christ as the supreme Value. Based on the right assumed freedom, man can acquire the ability to hierarchize values according to his own aspirations.

Spiritual values derived from religious education are suited to decisively contribute to the formation of a correct view of life, which is a reference to the supreme value, and is required to be understood and appreciated as a unique opportunity for man to seek the way to Truth, Beauty, Holiness, attributes that are shared, eminently, by the Persons of the Holy Trinity. (Ioan Zăgrean, 1985)

Viewed at the level of the finality and content, religious education emphasizes or reveals a set of values that are in deep affinity with the teaching of Christian faith: the *faith* in God's existence and the constant help coming from Him; the *hope* in the victory of Light; the *love*, God's supreme value and definition, manifested in relation to Him and his neighbors; the *courage* to obey divine commandments; the *justice* understood as truth, in the personal and communitarian realm; temperance in terms of interest for material values; the *freedom* gained by the delimitation from non-values; sacred space, sacred time, sacred objects; the supreme model offered by Jesus Christ and the pattern offered by the saints. (Dorin Oprea, 2012, 123-124)

Reporting man to a higher, stable and consistent value plan, such as that of religious values, is necessary and particularly fertile nowadays. According to Louis Lavelle (†1951), life without religion equates to inauthentic life and axiologically decentered existence. There is no value that ultimately does not imply a religious character. „Religion – considers the eminent French philosopher – is the act that transcends anything relative, it finds instead of nothingness this absolute of the act that makes us participate and which absolutizes and valorizes anything relative.” (Louis Lavelle, 1954, 492)

Religious values, points out the same thinker, Lavelle, are the values *par excellence* because:

- all authentic values belong to the faith; the values of faith force us to pass beyond sensitivity, through a pure consent act, the sensitive being a way of accessing to the transcendent;
- Religious values presuppose subordination to a principle that goes beyond us but which has the dignity to regulate and validate our behavior and reasoning; religion is the only instance that man accepts when being judged. Religion is neither residing in sentiment only, nor in thinking alone. It makes the absolute value fall down in the concrete and relative domain. It ensures the permanent communication of the transcendent with the immanent. (Louis Lavelle, 1954, 499)

All this axiological fabric that helps man to reestablish himself in his original human status (“becoming within being” – the famous phrase of Romanian ontologist C. Noica) is explained by the fact that “man bears the world inwardly, spiritually, the way the Creator bears it in His thought and love. Man builds a spiritual universe, an inner life that determines him, defines him. And in his inner world, the spiritual vision grows with every question and answer on beings and things, with every new meaning acquired about the world of God, so immense, so inexhaustible and so it opens to him, and offers itself to him”. (Părintele Galeriu, 1992, 67)

Man is dedicated to the finality, to goals, and values. It is not him who does adapt to the external world, but this fits in accordance with a finality established in his spirit. But religious education builds, besides the knowledge base, due to secular education, something extra: it also takes into account «the why» of life, of the existence, the question of questions. Preparing for the encounter and reporting to the divinity has beneficial repercussions for both understanding and effective reporting to reality (Constantin Cucos, 2002, 168). For despite the detractors of religion and, implicitly, of religious education, listening to or reporting to a “superhuman court” is undoubtedly beneficial.

If there is a fear of God, it is not depressing, but beneficial; it acts as a power of restraint and control, being precursor or concomitant to moral consciousness. “Human laws are abstractions put into phrases, in words, and have no possibility, whatever their power would be, to pursue man in all his actions. They can only regulate the outside of the human being or very little the inside of him”. (George Bota, 1929, 33). For, as a well-known contemporary educator expresses, God's “eye” is an over-normativity that gives meaning and consistency to human rules.” (Constantin Cucos, 2002, 169)

#### 4. CONCLUSION

The contemporary world is surprised and sometimes even confused under the influence of the great transformations that take place. These transformations, sometimes occurring beyond the limits of reason, have certainly a cause. Scientific research and its technical outcome have created so many new problems to man that man himself cannot appreciate where things can be stopped, and especially how they can be ordered. Human intelligence gets puzzled with its own creations. New concepts, inventions, products of all kinds radically and unexpectedly changed the whole objective and subjective condition of man. (Ernest Bernea, 2011, 115). And the same great Romanian thinker continues: “The technique has conquered the space – at the human scale it seems almost dismantled – and has «broken» the time. The categories that the old world is based on are completely changed. Man has a space in which he sets up and moves, in which he establishes one of the dimensions of his existence. He cannot last without this basis of space, without a «figure» of him, as built on a mathematical and logical plane, as experienced on a psychological level.

And science and coextensively, scientific research are losing sight of what has traditionally been the ultimate human goal: the authentic values that define man, constitute him and help to reinvent himself in the space of his genuine existence, *qua* being created “in the image of God” (Gen 1:26).

European education not only the contemporary one, but beginning with the Enlightenment, seems to ignore – directly or indirectly – Christian values, from the moment religion turned out from a matter of *objective* interest, into one of private, *subjective* interest.

The Church, the divine-human (theandric) institution that guarantees for the last two millennia the condition of *homo axiologicus* freely proposes values and does not impose them. And freedom is not equated with spiritual unconcern, but with man's ability to choose the values that enrich the life of him and that of human community. “In this sense, the values offered by religious education are extremely necessary, especially in this period of secularization of Romanian society, since they represent an essential spiritual reference for young people and an existential binder among all knowledge acquired through the study of the other disciplines.” (†Daniel, 2010, 7)

Speaking about the fracture or cleavage rose in Europe between, on one hand, traditional values and Christian identity, and on the other hand the humanism and scientism of the last two centuries, St. Nicholas Velimirovich gives expression to this “schizophrenia” as follows: “Had Europe remained Christian, it would have praised Christ, not its culture; the great peoples of Asia and Africa – even if not baptized, but inclined towards spirituality – would have understood and cherished this, for these peoples also praise each one with their faith, with their gods, with the books their faith holds holy: one with the Quran, another with the Vedas, and so on. Therefore, they do not praise the things of their hands, their culture, but what they reckon for themselves, with what they believe as perfect in the world. Only the peoples of Europe praise neither with Christ nor the gospel of Christ, but praise with their dangerous machines and their cheap outcomes, that is, with their culture. The result of this European self-praise with the famous «culture» is the hate of all non-Christian peoples against Christ and Christianity”. (St. Justin Popovich, 2002, 122-123)

In this sense, the great educator Jan Comenius († 1670) expressed the view that the ends of education can only be achieved by reference to Christ's model: “Christians should be trained according to His example, illuminated in spirit, and saints in the diligence of consciousness and strong in deeds (each according to his vocation)” (Jan Amos Comenius, 1970, 43).

That is why we consider absolutely necessary to reaffirm the great importance of the Christian axiology professed by the Church visible, as a basic institution of society, as well as of the religious education in the formation of the personality of today's youth, of the Romanian and European society alike.

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#### **EDUCATIONAL LANDMARKS IN THE WRITINGS OF THE FATHERS FROM THE PHILOKALIA: SAINTS NEIL THE ASCETIC AND MARK THE ASCETIC**

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#### ***Abstract***

The young have always needed guidance, someone who knows life and has a profound view on life issues and on how a young person should be. These urgings are all the more so valuable as they come from immaculate people who look at the world from a pastoral perspective. We can say that the advice coming from such people is in fact the advice meant for the young. Surely, wise words come too many times against the indifference and the feeling of the youngsters who think that they know better what they should do and how they should behave. Passions put veils on the eyes and obstruct the ears and these pieces of advice may not find their way inside the unripe. However, words have a special power and, if spoken in the right way and at the right time, they may break open all barriers which we mentioned and may unfreeze hearts. These urgings may be divided into several categories, because man needs to be prepared for life from several points of view and this preparation is made in the name of and with the help of One only: Christ. By the Divine Pronoia, education becomes a general basic rule to man; it starts being nurtured in early childhood and raises awareness in parents.

**Keywords:** education; Holy Gospel; Saviour; fathers from the Philokalia;

#### **1. INTRODUCTION**

Children and youngsters represent an extremely important (yet delicate) age bracket for the society, bracket on which all educational forums focus. Aware of its mission to preach the Gospel to every creature (Mark 16, 15), the Church has always had at heart the best interests of the young Christians in whom the Church has seen the future adults.

The Holy Gospel shows us how attentive Christ is to children, especially when he says: "Let the children come to Me and do not hinder them! For the kingdom of heaven belongs to such as these

(Matthew 19, 14)”, and then he uses their purity and innocence to set an example for those who want to enter the kingdom of God: “Unless you change and become little children, you will never enter the kingdom of God” (Matthew 18, 3). The task to form new generations of true Christians, interested in spiritual life, goes to the Church, in a very special way, the Church which brings back to a new life all Adam’s descendants: a new life in Christ; however, achievement of this great goal also calls for the parents and all those who may help to form a fine character. This explains why the entire Christian community, led by the priest, pays the deserved attention to this age bracket and tries to find the best methods and means to get close to young people. A child sees in the secret universe of God a natural environment which he understands much better than an adult. Speaking about the Kingdom of heaven, the Saviour Himself shows that the spiritual structure of a child is a model to follow by all those who seek the beauty of the eternal Kingdom: “Truly I tell you whoever does not receive the Kingdom of God like a little child will never enter it” (Mark 10, 15). “Christian education” means the activity by which the Church teaches and spreads the Word of Life and leads the apprentices on the redemption road. Following the example of Teacher Jesus when he said “Go into the world and preach the Gospel to all creation, whoever believes will be saved, but whoever does not believe will be condemned” (Mark 16, 15 - 16), generations of teachers, starting with the Apostles, have sown the seeds of the Gospel into the hearts of all those seeking to escape the darkness of idolatry in order to become sons of Light and reach the stature of the mature man (Ephesians 4, 13), the genuine Christian.

## **2. EDUCATION AND HUMAN PERSONALITY**

If one takes into account the purpose pursued by the education process, namely: *shaping the human personality*, “education is one of the most noble and complex human activities” (Cucuș Constantin, 1999, 18), according to one of the most respected Romanian contemporary pedagogues. From this perspective arise both the responsibility and the appreciation of the persons who devote themselves to becoming teachers. Christ – the perfect Model of Teacher - esteems such people by saying: “But whoever practices and teaches will be called great in the kingdom of heaven” (Matthew 5, 19).

In terms of character shaping, education goes beyond conveying knowledge which the pupil or the person under training accepts for a while and forgets after a while; it resorts to self-consciousness in order to sensitivise and mobilize towards enrichment, both through acquisition of new information and endowment with special qualities typical of man. Education helps us become authentic people. This is why education, as shaping of human personality, takes an informative manifestation, i.e. of acquiring new knowledge, but, more importantly, a formative manifestation, which puts acquired knowledge to test, through actions.

In a secularized society, a society which focuses on strictly humanist values, education was limited only to its informative manifestation; shaping moral characters was placed only in the religious area. This is how the *term religious education* was invented. Therefore, one renounced the networking between education, as process of formation, and deification, as target of formation. In this context, religious education was assigned the care to provide Christians with conditions of clerical formation; statement was made that the main priority of the religious education is “shaping perfect characters’ personalities” (Bolocan Carmen-Maria, 2003, 403).

It is in the family where such a life starts, the place where the child finds, or fails to do so, the suitable environment to lay the bases of a fully virtuous character. “If children did not learn to love in the family, from their parents, where will they learn to do so? If children did not get used to seeking happiness in the very mutual happiness, in what dreadful and vicious impulses will they seek it when mature? Children take everything over and copy everything...” (Tănăsescu-Vlas Adrian, 2009, 15). This is why the family, the parents, have to provide the ground for a spiritual life and also bequeath both a genetic and moral heritage.

“It is in the children who are born in the clean living of marriage that good propensities emerge and it is these children that will not be defeated by the mean circumstances of an environment which they would potentially find and it is perhaps against such environment that they are ordered. They are more

lucid in seeing God and this is how we know that they have the calling to be His apprentices, and, if time decides so, they will end up being his martyrs” (Boca Arsenie, 2005, 187).

To invigorate the orthodox family and to morally heal the society it is necessary to drink our water from the springs of faith: the Holy Gospel and the writings of the Apostolic Fathers. For almost two millenniums the Church has been keeping the flame of faith alive both through those who sensed the missionary calling and through the Christian fathers who knew how to inspire the innocent hearts of their sons with the love of God and of everything that forges the good. Therefore, generation after generation, all people who have grown into good men have felt it is their duty to further convey their heritage. Some of them are the ones whose writings we find in the *Philokalia* collection.

### **3. BASES OF THE RELIGIOUS EDUCATION**

Education is understood as the action by which a human being transforms throughout his or her life, not only from a certain age on. Seen from this point of view, education finds its roots in the godly injunction given to the early people: “Grow...!” (Genesis 1, 26). The goal of the Christian education is not to orient man towards satisfaction of material needs which relate to career, family or cultural development, but to prepare him for eternal life, helping him to go up the spiritual path, according to God’s likeness. Religious education is important because it leads man to the ultimate goal of the existence: living in communion with his Creator. Upon finding faith in God (revealed in Jesus Christ), man is born to a new holiness-seal life (Şebu Sebastian, coord., 2000, 21).

The incarnation of the Son of God opened the path to the kingdom of perfection and made possible both the route and the access to the spiritual world; for He is the Way (John 14, 6) and the Gate (John 10, 9), and the One who walks along with us (Luke 24, 15 - 31). In the conception of John of Damascus, “The Son of God incarnated Himself to restore in man what was suitable for him from the beginning. As He was forged “In His likeness”, meaning He is as righteous as a human can be” (Sf. Ioan Damaschin, 1993, 149). The spiritual life is acquired on a personal level with a complete openness to God’s redeeming Word.

God Himself is the first Educator, Who uses the Law and the care to lead His people to the Land of Promise. This is what He tells the people of Israel in line with the Law: “Know then in your heart that as a man disciplines his son, so the Lord your God disciplines you. Observe the commands of God walking in obedience to Him and revering” (Deut. 8, 5 - 6). So, education represents to God not only a care but a duty, firstly a duty of the parent. And the outpouring of His godly love is meant to render the human being perfect and therefore reach the level of a spiritual maturity.

From this point of view, reading bible texts becomes more than a mere act of knowing or improving some theological knowledge, it is “a paideic endeavor” (Oprîş Monica, 2011, 17), an initiation step in the education plan, in the plan of growing towards true life, which is supported by spiritual food of the Word of God.

### **4. EDUCATION OF THE FATHERS FROM THE PHILOKALIA**

The educative value of the Holy Gospel was highlighted by the Church Fathers who explained that the bible text represents the basis and the best example to follow in the application of a sound pedagogy. To reach this purpose, first we have to know the gospel text, then to exploit it on a personal level. Saint John Golden Mouth considers the words of the Holy Gospel as authentic spiritual pearls: “Reading holy Gospels is like a treasure. You could take a small part of a treasure and you could still get rich; similarly, you can find a great power of thoughts and invaluable richness from very small words in the holy Gospels” (Sf. Ioan Gură de Aur, 2004, 22). Everything the Church Fathers wrote and taught relies on the accurate interpretation and the enlightening state of the Word of God.

Even though *Philokalia* includes teachings dedicated rather to monks, this collection of books overflowing the wisdom of the Church Fathers refers to the spiritual life; so, we can see how these writings find their applicability in the life of the lay Christians, especially since “in the Orthodox Church we do not consider there is a clear-cut separation line between the life of monks and Christian life in

general” (*Philokalia* I, 1999, 8). Christian life, that is both monks’ and laypeople’s life, is seen as a godly ascent for which we need a leader, a teacher, to reach the top.

The beauty of man, this creature made by God as an enthroning of His creation, does not lie in the fact that it belongs to this material world, but in the mystery carried in itself, the mystery of being “image” and “likeness” of his Creator. This truth is underlined in the patristic works. This is what Saint Gregory of Nazianzus writes: “In my quality as one belonging to the earth, I *am attached to life here*, but being also a divine particle, I bear within me a yearning for the life to come” (Lossky Vladimir, 2014, 101). According to Priest Professor Dumitru Popescu, “this dichotomy finds its unity in the face of God who embraces both soul and body” (Popescu Dumitru, 2005, 168).

As for the man’s appearance, the Holy Gospel makes the difference between the god-like image of man and man’s likeness to God. In line with the Holy Trinity which advises that man should be created by His image and His likeness (Genesis 1, 26), God actually creates man only in His own image (Genesis 1, 27) because “it takes spiritual and moral effort to acquire God’s likeness” (Popescu Dumitru, 2005, 168).

In relation to man’s deification, the orthodox spirituality shows the possibility of man’s unification to God in Jesus Christ, true God and true Man. This route is shown as a spiritual ascent which starts in the godly given of the human nature – *the image*, and ends to the *likeness* described as “the stature of the perfect man” (Ephesians 4, 13). To illustrate this relation, father professor Dumitru Stăniloae affirms: “The godly image consists in the ontological structure of man, made to wish for supreme union, the structure of the divine Persons who are spring of all communion, human beings as well, while likeness would mean activate this structure” (Stăniloae Dumitru, 1996, 280).

To reach this level of spirituality the one who dare start the route is considered and considers himself to be an apprentice, who fully observes the advice of his master; moreover, he is a spiritual son, brought back to spiritual life by the one whom he considers his spiritual father and to whom he has to show great respect, greater than to his bodily parents. The close relation between the spiritual teacher and his apprentice represents the core of the writings from the *Philokalia* and each author presents this relation in his own way, with deep roots in the teachings of the Holy Gospel and in the tradition of the needy from whom they learnt themselves. Every work may be considered a manual for needy beginners who want to learn how to fight against passions, in order to purify their soul and receive the gift of light and of deification.

It goes without saying that in conveying teachings one must take into account age-related particularities, as Saint Apostle Paul urges the Corinthians in his letter: “Brothers and sisters, I could not address you as people who live by the Spirit but as people who are still worldly—mere infants in Christ. I gave you milk, not solid food, for you were not yet ready for it” (I Corinthians 3, 1-2). This same aspect is also highlighted by the Apostle of people in the letters to Hebrews: “We have much to say about this, but it is hard to make it clear to you because you no longer try to understand. In fact, though by this time you ought to be teachers, you need someone to teach you the elementary truths of God’s word all over again. You need milk, not solid food! Anyone who lives on milk, being still an infant, is not acquainted with the teaching about righteousness. But solid food is for the mature, who by constant use have trained themselves to distinguish good from evil.” (Hebrews 5, 11 - 14) Therefore, in the spiritual ascent, just like in the psycho-somatic development, one must consider raising the apprentice in order to be really successful.

Using the same image, Saint Cassian shows that “in acquiring any art or teaching one must start from the basic knowledge and the simplest attempts, so that the mind, fed on their milk, may develop gradually and rise progressively from the lowest to the highest conquests of the mind. After he understood the elementary principles and he kept on going, the gates of the faith confession somehow open for him and the mind may easily reach the mysteries and the peaks of perfection” (Sf. Ioan Casian, 1990, 481).

Of the many writings by the authors from the *Philokalia* which we find in the 12 volumes of the *Philokalia* collection (the love of the beautiful) translated into Romanian language, we have chosen the ones written by Saint Neil the Ascetic and Saint Mark the Ascetic, to whom Saint Paisios of Mount Athos was very devoted and who he often cited.

### 5.1. EDUCATIONAL LANDMARKS IN SAINT NEIL THE ASCETIC'S WRITINGS

For Saint Neil the Ascetic, Jesus Christ is the Teacher and the Model par excellence. This is the reason why he sometimes urges that, to gain the ideal of an accomplished life, the person in need has to reach the stature of the accomplished man by gradually modelling his own self in the image of Jesus Christ, "of Whose we have to be apprentices and also imitators" (Stăniloae Dumitru, 1996, 157).

Analyzing the monastic life of his period, Saint Neil the Ascetic regretfully admits that there are many slippages and this explains why he insists on using examples from the Holy Gospel to raise the awareness of those who should strengthen people and not to lead them astray. He emphasizes on how rapidly some early fighters against passions end up being in their turn teachers, they want to become advisers despite their still being apprentices.

In relation to the steps a man has to take in learning a profession, the Church Father affirms that all crafts require time and much study before reaching the professional level; "only the craft of the crafts (the art of the arts)", which heals the soul, "requires teaching" (*Philokalia* I, 1999, 184). To argument his ideas, the author gives the example of a farmer who would not dare start working the land before he is strongly convinced that he is able to do this and would generate no losses to himself; or the doctor who would definitely embarrass himself before the people who expect him to take their pains away if he is unable to do so, and consequently, he could no longer practice this profession. All the more attentive and careful should be the one who starts this road of the spiritual needs.

Laying emphasis on longstanding study, Saint Neil the Ascetic shows that it is impossible for someone who "yesterday was carrying water to the village pub", that is someone who had an extremely insignificant occupation which lacked too much responsibility, to be "a teacher of the virtue" today, a person "who hardly this morning got away from the vile actions of the city and later on in the evening started walking around the market with a group of apprentices behind him". Such people make "those who know their life yesterday" laugh and entail the wrath of God upon them, "for their reckless audacity" (*Philokalia* I, 1999, 185).

Education is a rather difficult process, which requires a consistent effort both from the student and the educator. Throughout this endeavor, one must start from acquiring knowledge and go towards using them in everyday life. The examples used as landmarks in the pedagogical undertaking are extremely valuable. These are the examples to which Saint Neil the Ascetic relates. Therefore, he writes: "He who wants to learn, learn from Abimelech and Gideon that not the word but the action makes the beginners imitate. The former was carrying a bundle of brushwood and, upon completion of his job, he said: "What you have seen me do, do quickly, as I have done" (Judges 9, 48). And the other was teaching people to do a military job and, after he did this job himself, he said: "Watch me and follow my lead" (Judges 7, 17)".

An important element in the paideic ascent is the relation between the teacher and the learner, meaning that the teacher, the guide, has to be chosen carefully. Starting from the parable of the trees which appoint the briars as their leader (Judges 9, 8 - 15), Church Father states that "... the same amongst the men: once uses deals were made a danger is bound to happen both to those who listened to an inexperienced teacher and to those who became masters as a result of their apprentices' absent-mindedness". So, such relation becomes harmful to both participants, not only to one of them, which means both sides are responsible, as "the inability of the teacher loses the student and the student's negligence jeopardizes the teacher, especially when the latter's ignorance overlaps the former's idleness" (*Philokalia* I, 1999, 188).

In the educative process, especially when one takes into account Christian education, the life-long intellectual training of the teacher is very important. An authentic teacher knows his weaknesses; he is aware that he does not know everything, that he, in this turn, has to learn on a regular basis, and to pay attention to what happens around him or even learn from his students. This is why he has to prove that he is able to pursue efforts consistently in order to meet the requirements of his students and to be of help.

Some are not aware of how responsible and sublime they should be in their mission and these are the ones whom Saint Neil the Ascetic warns: "The teacher should not believe that his job is an occasion

for rest and enjoyment. For, of all things, leading souls is the most tiresome” (*Philokalia I*, 1999, 189). Therefore, a preacher’s mission is not easy and requires both intellectual knowledge and rich experience. It is difficult to find an educator who accomplishes them both flawlessly, however, he who has such a spiritual teacher will be truly happy.

### **5.2. Educational Landmarks in Saint Mark the Ascetic’s Writings**

Compared to the education-related themes tackled by Saint Neil the Ascetic, themes on the pedagogue’s qualities and the disciple’s consistent effort in choosing an experienced guide, Saint Mark the Ascetic considers that studying the Holy Gospel is the basis of all education. Paying attention to the word of the Gospel generates the authentic wisdom. Both bible text reading and focused listening of the holy words may lead to such wisdom. This is what the Church Father says in this respect: “All words of Christ discover mercy and justice, and God’s wisdom, and pour their power into the ears of all those who are pleased to listen” (*Philokalia I*, 1999, 276).

The usefulness of the Holy Gospel as a means of learning lies in its very content, which discloses for those who focus the beauty of the encounter with the Spring of the true wisdom. However, to reach the perfect knowledge, the seeker has to be fully concentrated; to show that he wants to receive it and to feel it as part of his soul. A person who starts the journey of learning is a founder of wisdom and an active seeker of the eternal richness which is the redemption brought by the Son of God Incarnated. In fact, when reading the text of the Bible we find Christ; observing His commands proves that we have found Him.

Saint Mark launches a warning: “So, let’s pay attention and listen to Him. For He is the one who said: « Whoever has my commands and keeps them is the one who loves me. The one who loves me will be loved by my Father, and I too will love them and show myself to them» (John 14, 21). Can you see how He has concealed the apparition in commands?”. “Being pleased to listen” suggests that this attitude is not something forced upon man, but a natural state of man as a creature meant to live in the Kingdom of heaven. Refusal or disobedience entails the unawareness of wisdom and love of God, on the one hand, and the whip of the divine wrath, on the other: “A whip is for the horse, a bridle for the donkey, and a rod for the back of fools” (Proverbs 26, 3). And should he resist them too his jaws will be fastened in bridle and rein (Ps. 31, 9)”.

In addition, he who fails to know God, that is to acquire a spiritual formation which should lay him on the road to righteousness, will be lost and in danger as, being away from God, he is abandoned to his wandering will which attracts him to what is evil. “He who does not know the judgments of God”, writes Saint Mark the Ascetic, “walks with his mind on a road surrounded by precipices and is easy to overturn by all winds”. Such character damages itself and the others around. “When praised, he is on an ego trip; when reprimanded, he gets angry; when on a run of luck, he loses decency; when suffering, he weeps; when wise, he tries to show it right away; when ignorant, he pretends to understand; when rich, he gets arrogant; when poor, he claims he is otherwise; when satiated, he is bold; when fasting, he takes all the vain glory; he starts disputing with the one who scolds him; and he thinks that forgivers are fools” (*Philokalia I*, 1999, 273).

Saint Mark approached the aspect regarding the personality and the qualities of the educator. In consideration of his soul-shaping mission, an educator has to possess sound religious knowledge, on the one hand, and a great capacity of self-control, on the other hand. Here is his teaching: “If you were meant to teach about Jesus and no one is listening, let your mind sadden, not the body. Because you will not be doomed along with the disobedient if you are sad. Yet if you are roily you will be tempted in the same way” (*Philokalia I*, 1999, 272). Therefore, besides moral and spiritual qualities, the teacher has to have psychological knowledge, in order to penetrate into the child’s soul and find in due time potential imbalances which jeopardize the fragile character of a beginner and also find the remedy for finding the right path.

In such situations, the educator makes sure that all opposition from his learner should not last too long. In addition, he has to use convincing arguments to persuade him to achieve his task. Under no circumstances must he give in, lest the learner should believe that he can have his way in everything. Of course, everything is achieved in the spirit of God, in the spirit of love. He who reprimands the wrong-

doer “reprimands in fear of God”, and he himself gets stronger in his love and also gets the other on his side. It is by loving our fellows, especially the young ones, that we bring them near.

The one who is wrong is to be reprimanded only in private and is not to be denigrated when the others are around. Nevertheless, one must not do this in relation to people with whom one does not interact, for example, a person who does not belong to the educator’s collectivity: “Do not make direct reproach to people who are not supposed to obey. For this is more about self-control than advising” (*Philokalia* I, 1999, 272).

Familiar with man’s soul, the Church Fathers placed landmarks in safe roads towards educative and spiritual training of the young generations. By means of the landmarks in their writings, we understand yet again how important it is to read or listen to bible texts of which special importance should be attached to the texts of the Holy Gospels, especially the parables enunciated by Jesus Christ the Saviour. Another element that the educator should consider is his own example. One cannot overlook the fact that these pure and honest souls – the children – have the capacity to imitate everything they see and hear around them. The child is easy to influence which means that he will believe as true everything he is told and he will relate to the value criteria which he sees in the people around him. This explains the huge responsibility of the persons who interact with children, especially the ones considered to be examples or prototypes to follow. The environment where children take the first steps in life has to soak in love and spiritual warmth.

## **6. CONCLUSION**

As progress in shaping up human personality, education lies in the command of God: “Be fruitful and increase in number; fill the earth and subdue it” (Genesis 1, 28). Translating this verse, Saint Basil the Great says: “There are two kinds of growth: growth of the body and growth of the soul. Growing the soul means increasing knowledge towards perfection; growth of the body means going from small to regular stature”. And explaining the difference between the command on “growth” given to animals and the one given to men, the Church Father goes on writing: “This is why He said to animals “grow”, in the physical meaning, namely accomplish themselves, whereas He told us “grow” in the spirit of the inner Man, namely the man who keeps on going until he finds God”.

Therefore, education is a judgment of which man has to take account in his ascent towards becoming. According to priest Constantin Necula, “the goal of the education is neither an idea molded by the human mind, nor a psychological image surfaced to greet the superstitious needs of the society, but eternal God and the message to His world”. To human nature in general, all the more to the Christian in particular, education represents the way to get close to God through one’s calling, having as model and supporter the One who became man, so that man may become god.

In this respect, children are the most entitled persons to get help throughout their improvement process. They are the model of the soul open to God; although they do not possess much knowledge and proper vocabulary, they believe everything, and in their childlike simplicity, they find it easy to receive the godly truths. As far as they are concerned, God exists and that is enough; they do not need further explanations. This is the exact reason why childhood is considered to be the most important period in man’s acquiring religious formation. Many pedagogues of the world have reiterated this truth as it applies to all type of education, not only to the religious one. Copernicus’s wording “a tree must be bent while it is young”, has been applying throughout history. Childhood years come with the advantage of complete, unselfish, honest openness in relation to religious formation.

As heirs of the kingdom of heaven (Matthew 19, 14), children are the beneficiaries of a special attention both from their parents and family and from the entire society. Only conjugated efforts of all these factors will contribute to building a morally sound character, which may fully accomplish the second commandment of the Decalogue: “Honor your father and your mother, so that you may live long in the land...” (Exodus 20,12). As inspired text, the Holy Gospel can show people the way to follow towards salvation. Saint Apostle Paul writes: “All Scripture is God-breathed and is useful for teaching, rebuking, correcting and training in righteousness, so that the servant of God may be thoroughly equipped for every good work.” (II Timothy 3, 16 - 17).

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## POSITIVE PSYCHOLOGY IN SCHOOL – A BRIEF OVERVIEW

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### *Abstract*

The present article aims to present the progress of the study and application of positive psychology in the school context. It is described how the interest of applied positive psychology in educational contexts has emerged and how develop the research related to the models of application of the positive education. Then there are presented the concept of positive school and the characteristics of positive school environment and is discussed the focus on school satisfaction and well-being in positive school. Positive schools support, enhance and promote positive mental health and well-being that are considered as more important as academic outcomes. Assessing students' emotions and attitudes and well-being provides useful information that can be used in positive health strategies of promotion and intervention in children and youth. School-based targeted programs and interventions are more often required in many schools for their benefits for positive mental health, social and emotional skills, and well-being.

**Keywords:** Positive psychology; positive education; positive school; well-being; positive mental health; school satisfaction.

## 1. INTRODUCTION

Considered one of the most recent approaches in psychology, positive psychology is science of positive aspects of human life, such as happiness, well-being and flourishing. Snyder & Lopez (2009) define positive psychology as "the scientific and applied approach to uncovering people's strengths and promoting their positive functioning" (p. 17).

From its emerging, positive psychology has extended the perspective toward an examination of the positive human functioning. While psychology traditionally focused on mental illness and human weaknesses, positive psychology has shifted in emphasis from preoccupation only with repairing the deficiencies to also building positive qualities, and from treating of disorders to the effort of highlighting individual and collective positive experiences, strengths and virtues (Noble & McGrath, 2008; Seligman, 2002; Snyder & Lopez, 2009). Evolution of the positive psychology from the disease model to the health model is the result of the necessity to balance the approaches about flourishing life and positive health rather than human deficiencies (Seligman, 2011). The main focus of the positive psychology progress is how to facilitate flourishing lives that promote individual and organisational well-being (Noble & McGrath, 2008, p. 119).

Positive psychology has developed in two major interdependent directions: focusing on positive health (Seligman, 2008) and achieving positive education in various social and institutional contexts of development: family, school, and community (Negovan, 2013, p. 35). Seligman and Csikszentmihalyi (2000) suggested there are three pillars of positive psychology: positive emotions, positive individual characteristics, and positive institutions.

Positive psychology has an explicit concern for building individual strengths and life skills and improving well-being in young people, direction where schools have an important role. Ensuring support for positive mental health prevention and promotion in children and youth has been achieving through designing and implementing of educational programs centered on positive feelings, qualities and skills so that children and youth become happy and responsible adults as members of healthy communities (Sin & Lyubomirsky, 2009). School can provide a supportive environment of applying the positive psychology core concepts and principles to develop students into healthier individuals who positively contribute to the society.

Positive psychology interventions in schools aim to implement undertakings of increase life quality and well-being and promote self-development in pupils, teachers, parents, educators. These interventions carry on through training programs of positive feelings, personality traits and characteristics, skills and competencies for successful adaptation (Baker et al., 2003). Sin and Lyubomirsky (2009) defined positive psychology interventions (PPI's) as programs, practises, treatment methods or activities "aimed at cultivating positive feelings, positive behaviors, or positive cognitions" (p. 467). Waters (2011) points out that the application of the positive psychology in school aims the following directions: 1. including positive psychology topics into traditional academic disciplines; 2. using a school-wide approach of positive education; 3. implementing a strategic framework of guiding positive psychology applications in schools; 4. interventions on the traditional educational systems (p. 84). The first direction supposes teaching-learning of the positive psychology concepts, models and skills. Including positive psychology topics into school curriculum helps students to identify their developmental assets and find ways to use their skills and strengths more effectively in their lives. The second direction implies an extensive approach by designing and implementing of the positive education programs in the whole school with all its educational actors (students, teachers, staff of the school). The third direction refers to the fact that just using scientific models can be developed efficient strategies of positive education to build positive school environment. Finally, the fourth direction implies the support of the entire educational community to needs to create a positive school culture. The four directions are necessary factors to implement positive education in schools.

## **2. POSITIVE EDUCATION: CONCEPT AND MODELS**

Positive psychology theory and research has been applied across many domains. Education is the domain where positive psychology has rapidly gained ground. During the last decades, scholars and practitioners have systematically made efforts to promote and apply core concepts and principles of the positive psychology in the general contexts of education and in the particular context of school.

Positive education is a recently developed paradigm that emerged as an applied positive psychology positive in educational contexts. Seligman (2011) defined positive education as traditional education focused on academic skill development, completed by approaches that increase well-being and promote positive mental health. Positive education can also be understood as education for both traditional skills and for happiness (Seligman, Ernst, Gillham, & Linkins, 2009), which merges core concepts and principles of positive psychology with best-practice teaching and with educational theories in the school settings. Positive education aims to enhance optimal functioning, well-being, and flourishing in children and youth.

Research indicated that, in the last years, took place an increase in the number of cases of depression and other mental or behavioral disorders in young people in many countries. These findings led to the necessity to apply the positive psychology principles in school contexts. Positive education supports schools and helps students to discover their resources and find ways to use their skills (cognitive, emotional, social) more effectively in all aspects of their lives. The increasing number of studies aim at

understanding the pathways of optimal development in children and adolescents indicates that the positive education has been continuously developing especially within education and school contexts (Gilman, Huebner & Furlong, 2014).

There are many models for research and practical applications of positive psychology, but the well-known is PERMA, a theoretical model proposed by M. Seligman (2011), one of the founders of positive psychology. The framework model consists of five components: positive emotions, engagement, relationships, meaning and accomplishment. Positive emotion is the component strongly connected with happiness and well-being. with regards to the past, present and future. A person who is able to focus on positive emotions with regards to the past, present, and future has a positive view of life and the ability to be optimistic with many health benefits. It is important to discriminate between pleasure and positive emotion which is connected to satisfying needs of survival and enjoyment that comes from intellectual stimulation, work satisfaction and creativity. Engagement is the second component associated with learning, work and other activities, stimulates self-development, personal strengths and skills and generates produces enjoyment and happiness. An optimal type of engagement is flow or total engagement when person is completely involved and absorbed into the activity. The third building block is represented by the relationships. Building positive and strong relationships with other people generates feelings of social connection, love, joy, empathy and intimacy, support person in difficult times and increases emotional and physical interaction and well-being. Meaning refers to the perception of a purposeful life and achieving goals that transcend the self. This component gives people a reason for their life and produces feelings of happiness, life satisfaction and fulfilment. An important distinction is between purpose concerning to reach objectives and meaning in life, with regard to the greater purpose of life. The last component – accomplishment/achievement - refers to setting goals and putting necessary efforts to achieve them. Having accomplishments in life motivates us and generates feelings of satisfaction and self-fulfillment, a sense of competence, mastery and success and stimulates personality flourishing. Each of five components contributes to well-being and happiness. Seligman (2011) believes that his theoretical model can help people to increase not just happiness but reach a life of fulfillment, meaning and flourishing that is the new goal of positive psychology.

The PERMA model of human flourishing has taken over and adapted especially in practical applications of the positive psychology in schools. The model has also been applied in many schools from different countries in the developing of educational programs centred on helping students to increase their cognitive and emotional skills, strengths and well-being and to develop children and youth into healthier individuals who contribute positively to the society.

An example of practical model based on positive education principles is GSS (Geelong Grammar School) model. The successful program is a long-term whole-school approach that was implemented in an Australian school and managed by M. Seligman and his coworkers (2009). Interventions within the GGS model focused on six domains of well-being (positive emotions, positive engagement, positive accomplishment, positive purpose, positive relationships, and positive health). Interventions were implemented on three levels: explicit teaching of positive psychology concepts and principles into academic curriculum (*Teach it*), implicit teaching through embed positive psychology knowledge and skills into curriculum and extra-curriculum activities (*Embed it*), and school-wide practices consist in training programs aim to support staff well-being, help them to develop their Positive Education knowledge and live the skills taught and act as authentic role models for students (*Live it*) (Norrish, Williams, O'Connor & Robinson, 2013). These interventions were completed with intervention focused on character strengths. GSS model is appreciated as a worthwhile approach of positive education in school which includes the students and the institution to promote flourishing.

### **3. NEED OF POSITIVE SCHOOLS**

School is one of the most relevant context with an important role in youth education and socialization where undertakings of wide scope related to increase the quality of life and optimal development can be implemented (Snyder & Lopez, 2009). In the field of positive psychology in education, the paradigm of *positive school* is becoming more widely accepted. Positive schools have been

defined as ones in which students experience predominantly high levels of subjective well-being in the form of positive emotions and positive attitudes towards school (Huebner, Suldo, Smith, & McKnight, 2004). In many studies the concept of *positive schooling* is used to emphasize the importance of the entire community in teaching children (Snyder, Lopez & Pedrotti, 2010) and with reference to the positive school experiences (Gilman, Huebner & Buckman, 2007).

An interesting and useful approach of the positive schooling has been provided by Snyder, Lopez & Pedrotti (2010). Positive schooling is visually represented as a schoolhouse with six components build upon one another. The foundation consists of care, trust and respect for diversity that are important values in building positive school environments. In positive schools, teachers provide supportive role-models for students, build caring and trusting relationships with students, understand and respect their diversity emphasizing similarities and also valuing differences between students. The first level contains students' plans and motivation and the second floor is formed of learning goals. The plans, motivation and goals are interrelated components necessary for teaching-learning activity. Teachers from positive schools apply various techniques of motivation and set concrete goals to stimulate student learning engagement and increase the probability of achieving success. The third floor is represented by hope as an attitude which students can experience in their continuous process of learning. Thus positive psychology stimulates a sense of hope in the students who endeavor to learn and develop themselves all life along. The roof consists of the contributions produced by school graduates who give back to the society what they have learnt. In positive schooling students who gained knowledge become teachers who continue to pass on to other what they learned. Through this way they have the potential to change and improve society.

Positive or "good" schools are instructional environments that are experienced as positive by students and where students report especially positive emotions (Gilman, Huebner & Buckman, 2008, p. 87). Baker and co-workers (2003) proposed a theoretical developmental-ecological perspective related to the fact that schools function as psychologically healthy environments for children's development. Within these perspectives, children actively contribute to their own development by constructing meaning about themselves, others, and school as result of interaction with school settings. Schools that offer opportunities for students to satisfy their developmental needs and capacities are likely to be perceived as positive psychological environments and exert a positive influence on children's engagement and participation in school. The good fit between the students' developmental needs and the characteristics of the school environment generates the positive school adjustment (Baker et al., 2003).

Positive or "good" school has a positive climate configured by the interaction of all factors from educational environment (psychosocial, organizational, academic, cultural) that offers a safe and caring environment for all participants, opportunities of active engagement in school activities and positive feedback in interpersonal relationships (O'Brien, 2008, p. 134-135). A secure and supportive school climate is characterized by maintaining positive relationships with teachers and peers, and by the involvement and participating of the community in school life. Research identified the characteristics of positive school environments concerning the differences in students' personal strengths and interactions among participants. Positive schools sustain and develop students' skills, interests and needs, which are more likely to attend and achieve at school activities if they feel accepted, valued, and respected. Also, positive climate schools facilitate and promote positive relationships between and among students, teachers, and parents, structure successful opportunities for all students and offer curricular and extra-curricular activities that give students supplementary motivation to engage. Key attributes of positive school environments are represented by the positive relationships between school satisfaction and academic outcomes, supportive relationships with parents, teachers, and peers, and various type of individualized instructional method and tasks. All these factors facilitate positive school perceptions (Huebner, Gilman, Reschly & Hall, 2009, p. 565).

#### **4. WELL-BEING IN POSITIVE SCHOOLS**

Research evidences major health issues facing children and adolescents include emotional health, stress, anxiety and depression. Recent studies suggest the rate of the negative problems has significantly

increased in the last years. In addition, academic demands can produce higher levels of stress for certain students that can negatively influence their mental health.

Thus, researchers debated whether, taking in consideration all these aspects, well-being should be taught in schools. Schools are favorable environments for enhance well-being of the young people the more so as increase in well-being are more likely to produce advance in learning performances, life satisfaction and more creative thinking (Seligman, Ernst, Gillham, Reivich & Linkins, 2009). According to Suldo, Thalji & Ferron (2011), school must have the specific goal to monitor the whole psychological functioning of their students, both their positive and negative traits and well-being (p. 28). As an important indicator of positive education and school adaptation, school satisfaction refers to student's global evaluations of his or her school experiences as a whole (Gilman, Huebner & Buckman, 2008, p. 88). Research clearly demonstrated the relationship between increasing school satisfaction and academic performances: higher level of school satisfaction is associated with higher level of school engagement and academic outcomes (Huebner, Gilman, Reschly & Hall, 2009) and with fewer problem behaviors in adolescents. Also, school liking is an important determinant of children's classroom participation and achievement (Ladd, Buhs & Seid, 2000). Research suggested an excessive focus on academic achievement has rather negative effects for student mental health. Therefore, is important to recognize not just the role of the school in assisting youth cognitive development but its increasing role in training social and emotional abilities in students. Optimal development and effective learning are underpinned both cognitive abilities and academic skills and emotional well-being and social capacities (Waters, 2011). School satisfaction and other affective and experiential factors are necessary for the formation of positive school environments (Gilman, Huebner & Buckman, 2008). Building appropriate learning experiences and supportive relationships, monitoring student active engagement as well as with enhancement of school satisfaction and subjective well-being were reported as the key attributes of positive schools (Huebner, Gilman, Reschly & Hall, 2009). Research has shown that programs and interventions focused on promoting positive mental health in schools have had a number of positive impacts such as enhanced academic learning, improved staff and student well-being, developed social and emotional skills, improved school adjustment, fewer mental health problems and risky behaviors (Weare, 2015). In many countries, positive education about mental health and well-being is an integral part of the school curriculum.

## **5. CONCLUSION**

The positive schools enhance school satisfaction and well-being that are as important as academic outcomes. The positive emotions and experiences (i.e., satisfaction with school experiences) are non-cognitive variables which indicate students' mental health in positive schools. In this regard, the need of building positive schools which promote and optimize the attributes of positive health of students but also of teachers gains more and more attention. Assessing students' positive emotions and attitudes, namely, school satisfaction, well-being and positive attitudes toward learning and school provides useful information that can be used in positive health promotion and intervention strategies in students.

Moreover, the school can promote emotional and social well-being not only for students, but also for of all those who learn and work in school. This direction of positive psychology intervention in school is addressed to adults who are responsible of children and adolescents' education. Teachers, staff, educators and parents need to be familiar with the positive psychology concepts and skills they teach so they can offer to their children and students positive models of behaviors (Snyder & Lopez, 2009; Seligman, 2011). Thus, positive psychology principles and models have been also included in training programs for teachers who learn to use systematically positive psychology concepts in their teaching activity.

School-based targeted programs and interventions (including curriculum) are more often required in many educational institutions for their benefits for positive mental health, social and emotional skills, character strengths, well-being and learning achievements.

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## **MCDSARE: 2018**

### **International Multidisciplinary Scientific Conference on the Dialogue between Sciences & Arts, Religion & Education**

#### **CONSIDERATIONS ON THE HISTORICAL DEVELOPMENT OF THE LOISIR CONCEPT IN THE EUROPEAN SPACE**

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#### ***Abstract***

The accelerated modernization of contemporary society has also impelled a growing dynamism to daily life, which, according to experts such as Yan Z., et alii (2007, 107). The United Nations, in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, has declared since 1948 that "all persons have the right to rest and loirs". Modernization has caused a new kind of human being: the sedentary being... the emergence of a "new human being ... sedentary being". In West Germany, in the 1950s, characterized by the "consumer society", the concept of "leisure society" emerged, since in a highly industrialized society the program of five working days a week was imposed. As regards negative factors that influence health status (the well of each), Colin Boreham, foot specialists T., Liam, M. et alii (1997), W,-D, Brettschneider and Roland Naul, (2004) vie for attention since several decades now over: lack of movement-physical inactivity; stress-strain increased pace of the nervous system; unequal segments, request body; incorrect positions of the body during daily activities; antiphysiological static positions on extended periods of time, with consequences for cardiovascular disease, metabolic syndrome and even cancer (Jennen and Uhlenbuck, 2004, 157). Regarding the factors that negatively affect the state of health (the well-being of everyone), specialists Colin Boreham, et alii (1997), Wolf-Dietrich Brettschneider and Roland Naul ) have attracted attention for several decades, on: lack of movement - sedentary; stress - increased rhythm of nervous system demand; unequal application of body segments; incorrect body positions during day-to-day activities; static antiphysiological positions over prolonged periods of time, resulting in cardiovascular disease, metabolic syndrome and even cancer (Jennen and Uhlenbuck, 2004, 157). In order to counteract the negative effects of life at an increasingly rapid pace, with a very high stress level, in the absence of physical movement, organized in an organized manner, often accompanied by an unreasonable diet (Bull et alii 2004), specialists such as Ch. Jennen and G.Uhlenbuck (2004, 157) propose loisir activities that could have a beneficial effect on quality of life and on personal satisfaction. In this study we intend to follow the evolution of the meanings of the concept of free time in the European space with a case study on the perception of young people in Romania.

**Keywords:** quality of life; free time; loisir; physical condition; fitness.;



## 1. INTRODUCTION

Today, the concept of free time - *loisir* can be easily defined as "the state of well-being" or the "optimal physical condition". The French, German, or English use the term *loisir* as "leisure" - time for physical activity (Vuillemin et al., 2005), "freizeit" that can be translated by "respite", "pleasant occupation", "leisurely, quiet", the meaning being largely the same.

The United Nations, in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, has declared since 1948 that "all persons have the right to rest and loirs".

If we historically reconsider the evolution of the idea of free time, we find that Antiquity also had a kind of free time reserved for the aristocracy, the "*otium cum dignitate*" (Cicero), for which there was no clear boundary between activity and recreation. Marie-Françoise Lanfant (1974, 22) makes the following statement: "*The word loisir-free time-has profound roots. Its etymological origin is not clear. Appeared in French in the 12th century (Le Robert - Dictionnaire pratique de la langue française, 2002), the term loisir is originally the infinitive of the verb 'loisir', which derives as a Latin-like root. It is currently only used as 'loisible', meaning close to Latin 'licet = 'is allowed'. Thus, concludes the French sociologist, starting from this link of sense with being allowed, has come to equate the loisir "with freedom, autonomy, liberation, only our time"* (M.F. Lanfant, 1974).

The complexity of contemporary society determines a different approach to the concept of free time, so for Romanian specialists, such as sociologist Francis Albert (1970), defines leisure time as "*something beyond human duty, a kind of space of complete individual freedom*", the lack of a forced, defined obligation and delimitation of time for the career. In turn, social analyst Dan Oprescu (1981) is of the opinion that free time is expressed as a series of preoccupations, which are the necessary ingredients of human existence, which go beyond the actual work and the exercises related to the rendering of force for work. According to the authors of Coralia Angelescu, and Dorin Jula (1997), the *loisir* represents activities carried out by the individual in order to relish, recreate, relax, rest, enjoy entertainment, information and personality development.

## 2. PROBLEM STATEMENT

In West Germany, in the 1950s, characterized by the "*consumer society*", the concept of "*leisure society*" emerged, since in a highly industrialized society the program of five working days a week was imposed. Under these circumstances, there are several trends, some workers take what is called *Zweitjob* (a second job), while much of the population takes advantage of the spare time to watch more on television or to participate in various fun activities, including mass tourism in the summer months (Moeller ed., 1997). In this context, German pedagogue and anthropologist Erich Weber (1963) concludes that leisure time represents "a certain period of human life, which he lives" free of "and" free to "; in other words, free time is the time when the individual is free from any obligations and is free to choose certain activities or concerns (or is free to have no concern).

In his turn, Georges Friedmann (1960, 509 et seq.) notes the conditioning of the free time of the economy and the social mechanisms, for there is a great difference between the use of leisure time by the British and the French, in the Yugoslavia, Poland and Brazil example. Thus, if the former were able to participate in leisure-specific activities, the latter had to take a second job, imposing what specialists call "work after work." Reconstructing the history of free time, the author finds the same economic conditioning in the past, highlighting the great difference between how the nobles in aristocratic societies (religious holidays, theater performances, sports games) and the modern age in which free time is interleaved with working time so that *loisir* has the role of balancing personal life and quality of community life in democratic societies. (Friedmann, 1964).

At the same time, from a cultural perspective, Fernand Dumont (1969), places leisure in a dimension of freedom and the reluctance of the world to experience new experiences, beyond the everyday obligations, so that *loisir* becomes an essential condition of cultural development of people, groups and communities. Free from the constraints of professional and familiar obligations, people can invest in their own becoming, they can choose, and this discovery is in fact the manifestation of their assumed, responsible freedom. Time is an essential reality of man's and society's life, and its way of

using, according to publicist Giampaolo Redigolo (1986, 3), defines the quality of life of a society, especially the relation between social time (in which society organizes the activity of individuals and therefore manages the change) and the individual time (which each individual manages on his own), which determines the level of satisfaction of the people for the life they are leading.

Since the 1970s, the Italian specialist in pedagogy, Giovanni Gozzer (1975), distinguished in the field of human activity five sectors, the latter being the one of the *loisir*, representing not only the time but also the activities that can be carried out according to the options personalities who have experienced a great deal of diversification due to technological development and welfare or mass consumerism, so some specialists even speak of a civilization of the *loisir* (J. Dumazedier, 1962, 1988).

Changing perspective, Aurelia Felicia Stăncioiu (1999), believes that "*loisir is a pleasant way of spending the time left after work, sleep and household tasks*", while Monica Roman, (2006) is of the opinion that "free also includes explicit activities, but also time used for example for religious and civic activities." According to Aura Bota (2006), "*loisir activities are driving activities, ways of manifesting the individual, and are specific genres that seek to develop human personality from a social perspective.*"

Returning to French space, sociologist Joffre M. Dumazedier (1962) develops, in the 60's of the last century, *Loisir* theory based on the 3 D "*Dissemination, Entertainment and Development*" defines *loisir* as "an ensemble of activities to which the individual can dedicate himself in full to rest, entertain, enrich his information and voluntary social participation after he is released from his professional, social and family obligations." There are also authors such as Jean Baudrillard (2008), who also talk about a third dimension: "*Free time means perhaps the whole playful activity we fill it up with, but before that, it means the freedom to waste your time, to kill it if necessary, to spend it in a loss.*"

For J.M. Dumazedier (1978, 99), the *loisir* is reserved only to: "*the content of time used for personal accomplishment as the ultimate goal. This time is concession to the individual of society when the latter understood, based on the social norms in force, his own professional, familial, socio-spiritual and socio-political obligations. It is the time that has become available as a result of reducing working time and family obligations, regressing socio-spiritual obligations, and releasing from socio-political commitments. The individual releases himself in his fatigue mode, relaxing, enjoying boredom, professional specialization, developing seriously the capacity of the body and the spirit. This leisure is not the consequence of a decision by a single individual, but rather of a socio-economic development.*" That is, the author completes, "*a new social value of the person, which translates into a new social right, namely: the right to dispose of himself for a time whose main purpose is self-satisfaction*".

However, the vision of industrial society as an era in which work time is reduced by automation and is the extension of such free time is criticized by specialists, such as John Kenneth Galbraith (1970), who believe that the idea of a new era of free time is wrong; it does not express the nature of the industrial system. Before him, sociology professor Alain Touraine (1969) in the post-industrial society study considered fanciful the idea of a totally consuming society in which the secondary sector has a very limited place, while employees are no longer concerned about labor problems, the essence of their free time. For many decades, however, Jonathan Gershuny (2002) speaks of the specific nature of time in the post-industrial society and Philippe Coulangeon Pierre-Michel Menger, Ionela Roharik (2002, 40) finds that *loisir* activities as a reflection of social stratification and speaking of two temporal orders: the *loisir* of the daily newspaper and occasional *loisirs*.

Returning to the concept of *loisir*, the *French Academy Dictionary* defines it as a sufficient amount of time to do something. In the opinion of The General Commissariat of the Plan (France) Planning Agency, *loisir* is a quality of individual and social existence "or" the possibility of living and acting leisurely, that is, according to its rhythm and its own style (Toma, 2013). In this context, Geanina Toma (2013) considers that "*free time, interposed between work and rest, establishes a person's balance by dividing the time of one day into the three*"<sup>8</sup>: "*work, rest, sleep, activity, leisure*". The Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development - OECD (2009) mentions that free time can be defined in terms of time, activities (ex. watching TV, practicing or watching sports activities, reading, watching movies, etc.) spirit (ex. engaging in pleasant or fun activities).

In the 90's of the last century, the problem of lack of free time related to the American specialists John P. Robinson and Geoffrey Godbey (1999) was clearly highlighted by the quality of contemporary life, people feeling overwhelmed by the 40-hour working norm in a week of five days.

Studies on the value system, youth preoccupations and their attitudes in the public space, carried out in the 1980s and 90s of the last century, have shown a progressive focus on personal life. Thus, for example, in Italy, the IARD Institute Reports (The IARD Institute was founded in 1961 in Milan by Franco Brambilla) of that period showed that "*the family, work, friendship, love, career, personal self-reliance, comfortable life and well-being*" become the ideals of young people who contravene the attributes of collective life until then: "*solidarity, social equality, freedom and democracy, homeland*". (Mancarella and Manieri, 2016, 16). This state of affairs is also found in other Western European regions, and after 1990, in the countries of Eastern and South-Eastern Europe. This change in the young people's stock system also has repercussions on how to manage leisure time, especially since it now only means the time left after the professional and family obligations are met, as many of the young people are in inability to find a job for years after graduation. Poverty is also considered a major cause for the deterioration of the health of the population.

In this context, the authors insist not only on the definition of free time, but are also concerned about its functions, so starting from the *loisir* theory based on JM Dumazedier's three "D", the Romanian specialists Ion Aluș and Ion Dragan (1971) thinks that three main functions can be attributed to leisure time: relaxation - which frees from fatigue, entertainment (after Francis Albert (1970), beauty and recreation) - which frees from boredom and personality development - free from the automatism of day-to-day thinking and action, especially used in work. Hence, analyzes of the consequences of an overloaded program, which involves stress, "sedentary syndrome", poor nutrition, etc., resulting in cardio-respiratory diseases, obesity, depression, and so on (Colquhoun, Kirk, 1987, Bull et alii 2004). As a result, a relatively new concept has been imposed on both the terminology and the major themes of several disciplines, the Quality of Life, which deals with the "arrangement of existence, the agreeable, attractive character of the conditions of existence, "as political politician, journalist, economist and French sociologist Bertrand de Jouvenel (1983) says.

Christiane Jennen and Gerhard Uhlenbuck (2004, 157) propose *loisir* activities that could have a beneficial effect on quality of life and on personal satisfaction. More recently, Quality of Life is defined as "individuals' perceptions of their social situations in the context of the systems of cultural values in which they live, and in accordance with their own needs, standards and aspirations" (WHO, 1998). In connection with these, the Romanian specialists have established seven hierarchical classes of perceived quality of life, delimited according to the threshold values: the quality of the very high life - the privileges; quality of life - human support; quality of high-quality living - professional success; quality of average life - leisure time; poor quality of living conditions - social pathology; low quality of life - survival; quality of life very low (very unfavorable, very bad) - fiscal pressure (Mărginean I., Bălășa A., coordinate 2002, 68)

Taking on the concept of "healthism" Derek Colquhoun (1991, 6) shows that physical activity health promotes in the background the idea that our health is under our control. In other words, the "healthist" ideology emphasizes the theory of individual responsibility in their own health and simultaneously distracts attention from hidden social processes (ex. poverty, unemployment, industrial pollution or the problem of limited access or poor quality of health services - factors that can lead to an increased rate of illness) or genetic causes. The negative factors that influence health status (the well of each), Colin Boreham, foot specialists Twisk, Liam Murray, Mauricesavage, J.J. Strain, Gordon Cran (1997), Wolf-Dietrich Brettschneider and Roland Naul, (2004) vie for attention since several decades now over: lack of movement-physical inactivity; stress-strain increased pace of the nervous system; unequal segments, request body; incorrect positions of the body during daily activities; antiphysiologic static positions on extended periods of time, with consequences for cardiovascular disease, metabolic syndrome and even cancer (Jennen and Uhlenbuck, 2004, 157).

Regarding the physical well-being, according to Iustin Lupu and Ioan Zanc (1999), this "*resulted in health, physical mobility, adequate nutrition, availability of free time, good quality medical care,*

*health insurance, interesting activities in their free time (hobbies and satisfaction), physical fitness or fitness", represented by the four " S":*

1. Strength - Physical force,
2. Stamina - force or physical strength,
3. Suppleness - physical,
4. Skills - Skill or Physical Skill.

Aura Bota (2006) is of the opinion that *"the use of leisure time poses delicate problems, especially for the younger generation, which should focus on those profitable activities in the long run, to the detriment of easy or often dangerous fun."* Clemens Ulrich (2000) defines physical fitness as *"the capacity of the human body to function with force and liveliness without exaggerated fatigue with enough energy to engage in leisure activities and to prevent physical stress; muscle strength, endurance, cardiovascular completeness and liveliness are visible signs of physical condition."* The sport-recreational activity broadened its participation framework from young to elderly, from men to women, from school to leisure, from hobby to profession, and through physical exercise succeeded in shaping human physiognomy and behavior, - is a mass phenomenon that is capable of producing fundamental changes in the global social landscape. In the same context, sociologists point out that the "physical" function of sport, ie its benefits to the health of the human body, leads to an indirect function, namely social wellbeing, since physical activity and sport produce a high physical and psychological tone, the feeling of relaxation and good mood, being a kind of compensation for the constraints, anxiety and alienation generated by the work itself.

In 1995, a document titled "Development of Loisir, Sport and Physical Education: Towards a Renewed Partnership" was drafted in Canada, in the context of the desire to adopt a new attitude at the government level to address the issues with which the Quebec society is facing, and after more than 700 response letters, a forum was organized next year. The result was the clarification of the meaning of the term loisir, with three dimensions: leisure time, activities and freedom of choice (Gouvernement du Québec, Régions, 1997.).

Returning to the relationship between loisir and physical activity in France, a 1995 study (published in "Sport et Santé", March 1995) shows that 48% of French do physical activity, 44% carry out physical activity in nature outdoors, 34% practice individual sport and 32% collective sport. At the same time, 82% of the people who participated in the sociological survey said they were sporting pleasure. Concerning the understanding of loisir's relationship with sport, this is explained by the character of most sports activities that have a recreational character.

Today, the loisir also represents a lifestyle where entertainment and relaxation have a secondary character, the demands and dynamism of society (Zhao et alii 2007, 107), demands professional performance, practical conditions of manifestation and exceptional physical condition. Unfortunately, according to experts, cardiovascular disease is the main cause of cardiovascular morbidity and mortality in Europe and worldwide, with a 32% mortality rate for women and 27% for men in 2004, according to data provided by the WHO. The European Cardiovascular Health Charter signed by Romania in 2007 in Sinaia also mentions that about ½ of deaths in Europe are due to cardiovascular disease, with more than 4.35 million deaths annually.

In fact, the World Health Organization (2010) makes recommendations on the health status of the population and, implicitly, on the level of physical activity that each adult person must provide in order to maintain an optimal health status. Thus, each adult should do at least 50 minutes of physical activity, a moderate intensity exercise involving a high number of muscles.

The concept of "loisir" was theorized, for the first time in the Romanian space, by Mihai Epuran (1992), under the impulse of the unprecedented development of physical education and sport, as well as body movement in general *"as an incentive to the body and as an antidote and compensating for the harmful influences of a society characterized by sedentary and overburdening"*, attributing loisir activities to recreational, fun, uncomplicated and formal elements of institutionalized activities. At the same time, he considers that fitness is synonymous with physical condition (Epuran, 2005), including leisure activities, playful, agonistic, gymnastics, loisir and recovery activities. In turn, Gloria Rață, (2007) is of the opinion that in our time, free time has become a social, pedagogical and cultural problem, which also

concerns society and the individual, because "*the wise use of free time is a product of culture and education. The man who has worked all his life from morning till night will not know what to do when he suddenly has free time. For without a certain amount of free time, man feels isolated from many of the best things.*" Leadership expert Stephen R. Covey (1932-2012) points to the directions we should focus on to give value to our time, suggesting that we lead our lives after the compass, looking for "*authentic northern,*" not after the clock. The first is "*our vision, values, principles, belief, consciousness - what we feel is really important and the way we are oriented in life.*"

Awareness of the fact that lifestyle (having the component of physical activities and recreation through sport) has a major - if not overwhelming impact - on health and life expectancy, is one of the factors leading to this situation in advanced states. But things are different for poorer countries. On the one hand, poor people, especially those from rural areas or inferior socio-professional categories, practice unwittingly the "sport" of survival (which takes them a lot from daytime), and they generally do physical exercise.

On the other hand, even if they want to do sports for pleasure, time and material conditions allow them to a small extent choose a sport that also involves costs.

For the latter, it is a low level of information and education in and for sports, and the preponderance of other values of personal life, especially those centered on obtaining livelihoods, raising children, respecting traditional values. Thus, *loisir* (where sports hobbies also fall) may not occupy an essential place in the scale of these people's values, being overlapped in their life choices with all concerns in the sphere of family, community, profession, etc.

### **3. RESEARCH QUESTIONS**

This study aims to analyze the concept of leisure in time in the European space with a case study on the perception of young people in Romania. So, the conclusion is that in his current sense, the concept of free time - is a product of industrial society and occurs when the rhythm of daily life no longer ends with labor, but he designates time that is not allocated to personal, familial, social and civic obligations. Thus, specialists are of the opinion that the term "leisure" includes the notion of time, which implies a division of time in function of the type of activity performed, and that of the free expression of the qualitative aspect of this division with socio-historical references, by the opposite of the notion of free.

At the same time, we have to distinguish between the free time of those who have manual activities and those who represent the elite, the educated, the worship, the other expectation, the other options and the opportunities. The activities are the participation of a person in the many forms of *loisir*: cultural, physical and sports, scientific, socio-cultural, tourist and outdoor.

Our view is that the notion of free time today must be associated with other situations, such as unemployment (redundancy in a company's bankruptcy), increased impoverishment, especially among young people, forced to financially support training courses and retraining, in the need to adapt to the demands of a market economy that is rather incoherent in terms of forward-looking developments and the difficulty of finding a job. It is also important to educate young people because freedom of choice refers to the ability of the person to choose those activities that attract and respond to personal needs according to their own taste, mentality, habits, aspirations and ambitions: rest, entertainment, relaxation.

Socially, the *loisir* is perceived as a means of attaining or maintaining the well-being, but also of personal well-being, especially in the societies where it exists, because of the regimes that have relied heavily on the collectivist ideologies, a great reticence in to accept national policies of a collective nature. I have presented above, the tendency to focus on my own person of young people in Europe.

In France, a 1995 study (published in "*Sport et Santé*", March 1995) shows that 48% of French people practice physical activity, 44% carry out physical activity in nature - outdoors, 34% , and 32% a collective sport. At the same time, 82% of the people who participated in the sociological survey said they were sporting pleasure. In 2007-2008 the percentage was not different (*France Physical Activity Factsheet*, 2008). Because of this reference, we consider that the evolution of the number of those who constitute the importance of free time and rational management does not change radical.

#### 4. PURPOSE OF THE STUDY

We wanted to verify, through a questionnaire sociological survey, whether the perception of the free time concept of young people in Romania corresponds or not to that of young people of the same age in the European space.

#### 5. RESEARCH METHODS

In order to have a more accurate picture of the degree to which the concept of *loisir* is a reality in Romanian society, we conducted a sociological survey based on a questionnaire, attended by 100 persons, selected from professors aged between 25 and 35 years old. The goal was specified at the beginning of the questionnaire and then the personal data were asked to be questioned. In the structure of the questionnaire a total of 10 questions have been entered, of which we have selected for the present study the most representative - in 4 questions. Regarding how to ask questions and types of answers, we used closed questions. Closed questions have assumed only one possibility of responding, the subject having to choose from several variants the response that he considers representative of his opinion or feature, while the open questions left the subject the freedom to formulate the answer according to the thoughts and its views.

Next we present the results of the sociological survey based on the questionnaire:

The first question in the questionnaire was: Did you think that it is important the concept of leisure for your life? The 86% of subjects responded YES, while 7 14% responded I DO NOT KNOW (figure 1). There was no answer by NO.

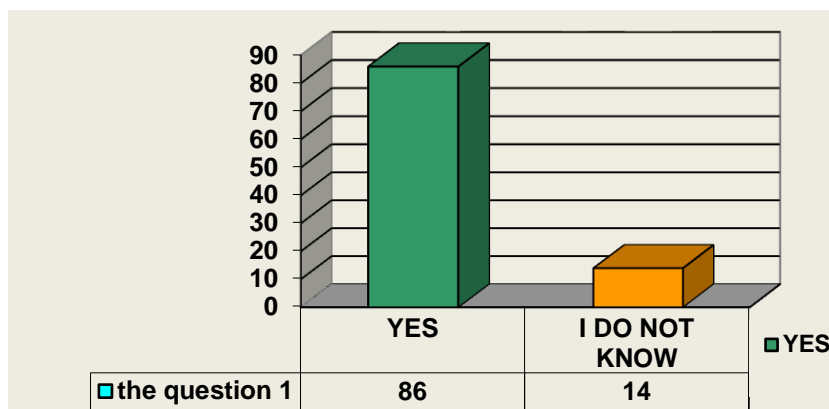


Figure 1

On the second question (figure 2), What do you think is the place of the leisure within the values adopted by the Romanian contemporary society as means of success in life?, the subjects responded suddenly: 62% of those questioned, responded that a very large proportion of the population cherishes leisure and its management is an important means of success in life through the impact of its practice on the physical body as well as the mental state of the general disposition; 24% responded that only a small part of the population, especially the young one, cherished the leisure and regarded it as one of the means of success in life; 10% are convinced that a large proportion of the population is aware of the importance of leisure in its own living regime, as a source of health and energy, absolutely necessary for life's success; 4% believe that leisure does not fit into the first three values adopted by Romanians as essential for the success in life (e.g. professional training, chance for a well-paid job, family support during studies and sometimes after- teachers, doctors).

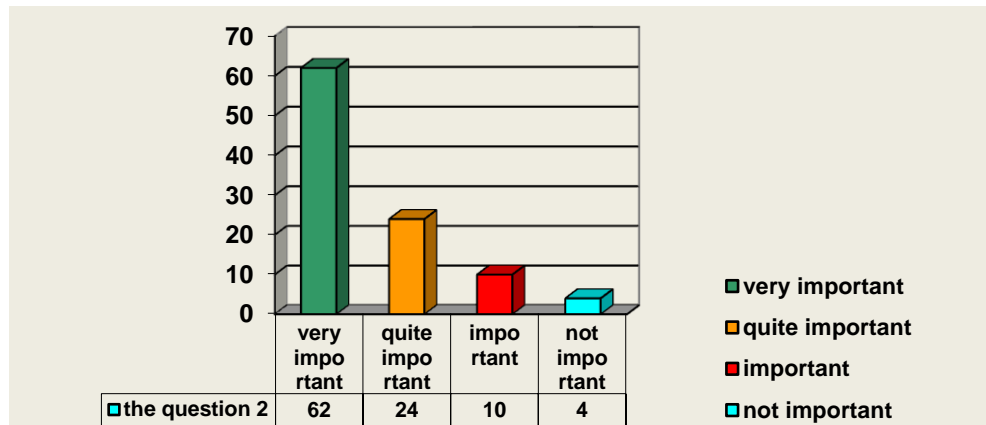


Figure 2

To the third question: What kind of activities do you prefer during leisure?, the subjects indicated the functions: 54% of those questioned practice physical activity; 34% of them prefer cultural activities and 12% other activities (figure 3).

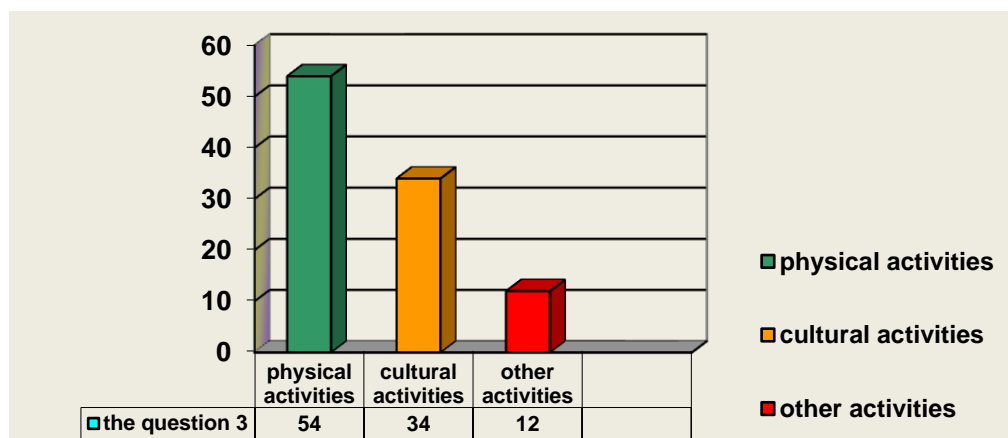


Figure 3

Fourth question: What do you think the advantages of promoting leisure in society are?, the subjects have indicated the benefits of practicing sport as follows: 30% said that the benefits are obtaining and maintaining an optimal health status of the population; another 30%, indicated that the advantages of facilitating entry into the labor market (e.g. physical appearance and attitude to the interview, high work capacity); 20%, believe that it optimizes the quality of life (health, harmonious physical development, volitional moral qualities, socialization), and 20% believe that determines the rise of living standards (figure 4).

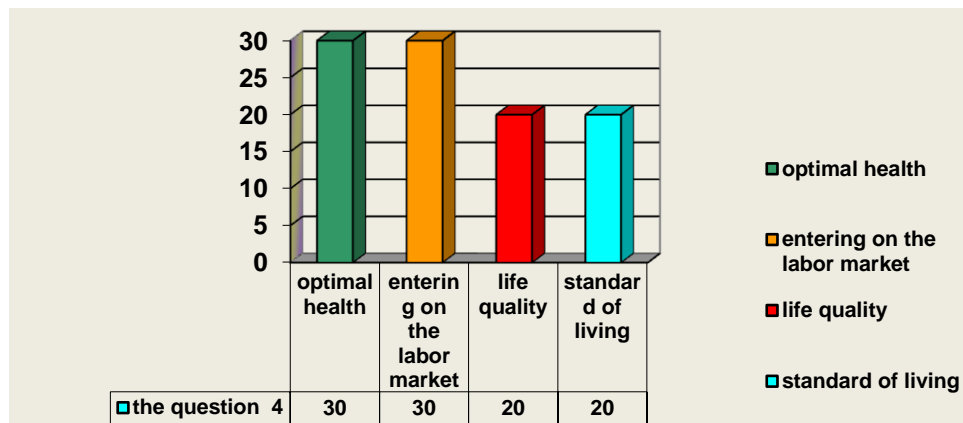


Figure 4

## 6. FINDINGS

The sociological survey has shown that the loisir activity is an important component of the values promoted in Romanian society, and the importance of driving activities to achieve a proper living standard and to succeed in life is demonstrated by the increasing number of people who choose to practice a certain form of movement on sports grounds, fitness-body, swimming pools, etc. In civilized countries where the standard of living is considered high, the school curriculum provides more hours of physical education, and the number of spaces dedicated to practicing motoring activities is very high.

The relationship between people's overall quality of life and leisure / loisir (through exercise and maintenance sports), or even practice sports performance, is obvious: the high percentages of sports practitioners among the population total is in itself an indicator of a developed society.

Awareness of the fact that healthy lifestyle (having also the physical and recreational activities of sport) has a major impact on health and life expectancy, is also apparent from being one of the agents of physical, social and psychological well-being in advanced states. From the questioning of individuals, there is awareness of the importance of the health and the value of physical activities in improving the quality of life and lifestyle. Practicing exercise and sport is a component of higher human needs, especially in modern societies.

## 7. CONCLUSION

Following the analysis of the evolution of the concept of free time, starting with the 50s of the last century especially, one can find a predilection for the sociological perspective of approach, the explanation being the environment in which the number of targeted persons evolved, hence the social functions on who got them. Appearing as an initial defence of the elites (Coulangeon, Menger and Roharik 2002), it was gradually taken over and applied in practice by the other social categories, in the capitalist society and then in the consumption society, which transformed the concept into the source of profit by managing the mass tourism activities (in Germany, the UK and France).

Faced with the problems of the economic crisis and rising unemployment among young people with known consequences (drug abuse, alcohol, violence, etc.), specialists have seen in the concept of free time a possible solution to provide young people with alternatives for a healthy life, with lower financial costs, so as to overcome economic dependency. In addition, managing leisure can also be a solution to other types of problems that characterize developed societies (sedentary, stress, non-rational nutrition, etc.), so the World Health Organization recommends physical activities as part of leisure time in a way active. The objective climate conditions (financial resources, time, lack of facilities for the regular exercise of physical activities) can limit these aspirations.

In Romania there is a growing awareness of the health and the progress of society, accompanied by new values (self-discipline and moral responsibility).



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## MCDSARE: 2018

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## SOCIAL PERSPECTIVES OF YOUNG STUDENTS ON THE CHURCH AND RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

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### *Abstract*

In today's European social context, freedom of opinion and expression, the social problem of religious education in Romania is widely debated, not only in social and political environments, but also in academic ones. The many pro and against attitudes highlight the importance of this issue, both for the Romanian society in general, and for the Church and the School in particular. The two institutions, the Church and the School, are active in the social, cultural and educational space of Romania. On one hand, through the multitude of joint programs, which are carried out at the level of the two institutions, and in which young people are involved; and on the other hand, through the presence of a qualified and active teaching staff in the field of religious education. Being aware that educational institutions have a conservative side, attached to the past, but also an innovative side, anchored in the present, we present this exploratory study that highlights the different social perspectives young students have on religious education, the presence of the Church in their lives, and the ways in which these perspectives can improve the religious educational approach, the relationship between the youth, the School and the Church, and the ways in which they can all benefit in their social life.

**Keywords:** social perspectives; religious education; church; school;

### 1. INTRODUCTION

The social space of young people is invaded by educational perspectives coming from not only from the institutions in charge, but also from the formal and informal leaders in the field of education. Among these educational perspectives, we also find the religious ones.

Every generation is in an identity crisis, and this includes the younger generation. To find themselves in their own affirmations, the younger people are seeking landmarks, reference points, to use in building their identity.

These reference points can be found by young people within the school or the Church.

School is an educational institution with which young people have been interacting since childhood, but this interaction is an obligatory one. The compulsory nature of attending school, and implicitly of acquiring knowledge, attitudes and skills, can lead to reactions of acceptance, refusal or

indifference. The free spirit of the human being is modeled according to certain norms and educational criteria, established at national level, which are in line with those at the European level, adapted to each particular context. Reactions of acceptance, refusal, or indifference are found in every social actor involved in the educational process, with varying degrees and intensities, both among pupils and teachers.

The school being an educational institution is strongly anchored in the Romanian society; the school has strong organizational characteristics regarding the hierarchy, on the professional level of those involved in the teaching process (student, teacher, director, school inspector, general school inspector, secretary of state, minister). On top of that, there is also the organizational structure of institutions involved in education (school unit, school inspectorate, ministry of education).

This organizational structure creates, on the one hand, an educational pathway with very firm boundaries that are very difficult to overcome, and on the other hand, a certain inertia in the decision-making that can improve the educational process, provoking, quite often, negative reactions on the part of those involved, students and teachers, who are at the heart of the organizational pyramid of education.

As a result, students' views or perspectives are only accepted if they are within these boundaries. Everything that is beyond educational boundaries can be categorized as riot or dissatisfaction.

Throughout the educational process, young people undergo a whole process of adaptation. In other words, the school, as an educational institution in the Romanian socio-cultural space, produces pro and con reactions among young people.

In the Romanian society, along with the school, the Church is also as an institution with a deep religious and educational character, and it has almost the same organizational characteristics.

Throughout the religious education present in the schools, the Church is part of the educational institutions that benefit the young people from the present Romanian society.

This exploratory study seeks to highlight the different social perspectives young people have towards religious education in the Romanian schools, perspectives that bring positive, negative or indifferent reactions to the involvement of the Church in the educational process in our country, as well as the ways in which these perspectives can improve the religious educational approach, the relationship between the youth, the School and the Church, as well as the ways in which all these can bring benefits in their social life.

Reactions of acceptance, refusal or indifference regarding the educational role of the institutions are perfectly normal in an open society, such as the Romanian society, and overcoming of all barriers that block this educational approach should be conducted only through regular dialogue and consultations.

## **2. PROBLEM STATEMENT**

We present the legislative framework at European level on religious education. The European Convention on Human Rights in the Protocol to the Convention for the Protection of Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms in Article 2 of the Convention specifies the following: No person shall be denied the right to education. In the exercise of any functions which it assumes in relation to education and to teaching, the State shall respect the right of parents to ensure such education and teaching in conformity with their own religious and philosophical convictions (Protocol to the Convention for the Protection of Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms, Paris, 1952).

On the other hand, sociological research analyses the social changes taking place when it comes to religiosity, how it changes the social system of a group or organizations, which can also be found within the educational space present in the school.

It is particularly important to define the direction of change, for example, in the case of religious people, their attitudes, their degree of conformity according to the accepted model as the reference system (Korzeniowski, 2017).

The article Continuity and change of religiosity. Selected results of sociological research on religious attitudes, written by Korzeniowski M., discusses the issues of continuity and change of religiosity, which can be also observed in our study.

Thus, perspectives on religious education and the involvement of the Church in this educational act can be viewed, as Marek Korzeniowski points out, also from the point of view of modern processes of secularization and pluralism (Korzeniowski, 2017).

In this context, the younger generation believes that alongside religion, religious beliefs are part of a multitude of life-giving sources to solve everyday problems. Thus, non-religious sources, family, work, interpersonal relationships may be alternative or compatible with religion (Korzeniowski, 2017). Religious education is analyzed by Radomir Marincovic from the perspective of tradition and secularization. In the article *Religious Education in Serbia: Between Traditionalism and Secularism*, the author states that the return to religious education has prompted a heated debate in the public sphere, where many contradictory opinions have been heard, from the view that religious education in school is unconstitutional, to the one that religious education should be compulsory.

However, Religion teachers are among the preferred teachers of the students. The Christian religion promoted in the school and wishing to be an alternative to life in secular society must be authentic, motivating and stimulating (Marincovic, 2017).

The crisis of educational models in the Eastern European region has often produced failures or disappointments. After the fall of Communist regimes in the Eastern European countries, there was a tendency to replace educational paradigms from those periods with new ones in Western European spaces or old educational paradigms from the interwar period. The Church is also not exempt from such experiences.

If we implement today a certain model, no matter how good it has been in the past, without taking into account the specifications of the new environment, we are likely to be disappointed. Forced models may create the opposite effect to the intended one. The language of the Church must be a call and not a constraint. The transmission and understanding of Christian values must be dynamic, attractive to the modern man so that they can be applied. Today, Christianity has not affirmed its usefulness sufficiently, because it does not explain to modern man the connection between the Gospel and everyday life. The language must be contemporary, and the main purpose of religious education is to attract the student to the Church (Marincovic, 2017).

In Bulgaria, the issue of the presence of religious education in public schools is similar to that of Serbia and Romania. And here are pro and counter voices. The arguments of religious education advocates are strong, but there are also opponents who claim that religious education is a waste of time in the age of technological development (Gheorghieva, 2017).

The socialist struggle against religion has led to the inability to understand the importance of religious education in society and the emergence of religious illiteracy. The state is called upon to ensure the religious literacy of adolescents, which is independent of the religious institutions, without being in conflict with them, but in agreement with them (Gheorghieva, 2017).

Religious education in Bulgaria has focused on two directions. The first is that religious education has a non-confessional character, where students are familiar with the moral messages of Christianity, Islam and Judaism. The second conception proposed by the Holy Synod of the Bulgarian Church claims that the study of Religion should follow the confessional principle (Gheorghieva, 2017). These two issues were also debated in the Romanian educational space.

The family has an important role in shaping the religious-moral position of the child. The religious development of students must not remain an illusory goal, but should become a necessity and a mission of the whole society. This requires a lot of love, understanding and dedication (Gheorghieva, 2017).

In Poland, during the post-war period, Religion was present in schools. Until 1956, Religion was a compulsory discipline in Primary and Secondary Schools; between 1957 and 1961, Religion was taught as an extra-curricular subject, and after 1961 it was taught in authorized religious education centers. After 1990 Religion was reintroduced into primary and secondary school (Doroszkievicz, 2017).

Of particular importance in education of young generations, in Poland, are Fraternities and Church Organizations. Thus, the Orthodox Fraternity of Saints Cyril and Methodius aims at familiarizing the society with the teachings and tradition of the Orthodox Church, as well as their promotion through cultural and educational activities (Doroszkievicz, 2017).

Religious education in Romanian schools is presented from a positive perspective by Mihăilescu J. The author states that one of the victories of Christianity over atheist communism in Romania was the introduction of Religious classes in schools in 1990 (Mihăilescu, 2017). The author's speech is brave and unequivocal.

Religious education benefits the culture of the soul that is so necessary in the present society, and Religion must be known by the students. Religious education invites you to know yourself. Religious values bring people together, create lasting ties and manifest through love, dedication and understanding (Mihăilescu, 2017).

Our study is addressed to teenagers from the Romanian school. The teenagers become critical observers and find that in some situations they experience anxiety or exaggerated euphoria. The young adults struggle to reinvent themselves and tend to leave behind the investment made by parents in their cultural and spiritual preparation. On the other hand, denigration and wandering, the limitation of freedom, the imposition of old rules will cause the adolescents to struggle with the new challenges of their life and even to depart from God. It is good to withdraw discreetly and let God protect them and give them the wisdom they need to mature (Benga, 2017).

The study proposed by us brings new information about the social perspectives that young students have on religious education and the Church. If most studies addressing the presence of Religious education and the Church in School in Eastern Europe reveal the minimization of Religion or even its absence from the School, this study highlights the students' desire to study Religion in the School; but this study of Religion should be done with a new method and language, not to miss the true involvement of the Church in the social life of young people. Such discrepancies arise because they do not take into account the specific environment in which young people work; educational models are forced, and language is not a contemporary one (Marincovic, 2017).

Proof that the Church is interested in young people and how they interact with School, Church, and Family is the large number of programs and activities with young people taking place in the Lower Danube Archdiocese. In this respect, in 2016, a compendium entitled: "Young People in the Church. Testimonies. Challenges Answers" was published, containing testimonies offered by students, young people and Religion teachers over the years in the Lower Danube Diocese either on the occasion of spiritual-cultural events or in the dialogue on the theme of Religion or the themes contemporary challenges in the Christian education work, in the Family, in the School, in the Church (Crăciun, 2016).

### **3. RESEARCH QUESTIONS**

This exploratory study aims to identify the social perspectives that students have on religious education in school, as well as the presence of the Church in their lives.

The main questions that lead this research are:

- What are the problems and actions present in the social perspectives proposed by young people?
- What is the impact of these perspectives on the social behavior of young people?

Answers to these questions will help improve the religious educational approach and the relationship between the youth, the School and the Church, and the ways in which all these answers can bring benefits to the social life of young students.

### **4. PURPOSE OF THE STUDY**

The perspectives of this study can be of use to government commissions designated to analyze and review the school curricula of Religion classes.

This study can be used in pedagogical circles to improve the teaching methods of Religion, using new, flexible and modern approaches, approaches coming from the beneficiaries of the education.

The results of the study can be implemented by associations and religious foundations that have partnerships with state schools to carry out inter-institutional programs: School-Church-Family.

Study approaches are useful to inspectorates and school units in order to harness the impact of Religion at the level of youth training and education.

## **5. RESEARCH METHODS**

This exploratory study took place in the school year 2016-2017, on a number of 36 pupils, from two terminal classes (12th grade), within a high school in Braila. The students were asked to write an essay on the theme: What do young people expect from the Church? What does the Church expect from young people? The essay analysis of young students does not want to impose recipes, prescriptions nor action plans. It is not about imposing opinions, but about discussing an issues. There will be no rushed conclusions that could give rise to certain convictions.. The analysis of these essays is a confrontation with new points of view, which may have some chances to evoke new ways of looking at education and training (Monteil, 1989).

We begin our study with the opinion of a young woman about the place and role of the Church in the life of young people:

"Young people expect from the Church something completely different than what it is offering now, and that is support. Today we rarely see young people interested in what the Church and its Sacraments are.

The support that the Church should give to young people is first and foremost a spiritual one, because in everything they do, a better future is expected for both them and the society they live in.

Secondly, there should be material support, especially for students who want to study and have no possibilities to do so.

But nowadays what is promoted and sustained in the Church's environment are the elders because they are present every Sunday in the church, and unfortunately, the young people live with the impression that they do not have a place among the crowd elderly people who apparently take on the term of the Church.

The Church expects, however, to attract as many Christians as possible to guide the faith. It expects young people to listen to parents, grandparents and teachings, these being the only guidelines suggested by the people of the Church. Although the Church waits for them and receives them with open arms, they are not satisfied with the beautiful words. They need guidance both towards the holy and towards their path in life.

In conclusion, the Church and the young people do not have a close relationship due to the indifference that comes from both sides, but this has not always been so and can be changed when someone does something in this regard, not just superficially " (M.V.).

The opinion of this 18-year-old from a high school in the city of Braila highlights the relationship between the Church, School and Society in Eastern Europe. In this statement, the social, educational and moral role of the Church is not denied, but rather the lack of real and active involvement of those who manage the programs and projects common to the two institutions.

In other words, this characterization of the Church's involvement in the social life can extend to any other institution with a social and educational role in our country.

There are many steps to be taken for the institutional reconstruction and social involvement to be real and credible. They did not go beyond, albeit to a small extent, the "beautiful words" stage, as the young woman mentioned above.

On the other hand, there is also a negative trend regarding the activity of the fundamental institutions of a society, as they would no longer do their duty or would be outdated morally and socially.

We are presenting this time the perspective of another young student, who highlights the inability of young people to get involved in the life of the Church:

"Today, young people have no expectations from the Church, especially because they do not realize what role the Church really has. For most young people, the Church is not important, so they do not pay attention to it ... they are not interested in anything concerned with Church or Faith, often trying to avoid everything connected with the Church. There is no communication between the young and the grown-ups present in the Church. There are value judgments on both sides. Young people judge the Church too harshly and do not see the good deeds it does. The Church has great expectations from young people "(A.L.).

This time, we see the intergenerational conflict, which is felt between young people and the Church. There is no doubt that this intergenerational conflict arises due to the lack of real communication as well as the rigid language used by the mature generation, a generation that is found among the clergy in the Church as well as the teachers in the School.

Young people expect from the church a sincere and real communication. From the essay of another young woman, we learn the following:

"First of all, the young people expect to be understood, to be listened to by the people in the Church. They, whenever they have a problem, even of a spiritual nature, feel the need to talk with somebody, with the priest. Thus, they expect the Church, the people who are part of it, to understand and not judge them for their deeds. Young people also expect moral advice, words that will spiritually reassure them and help them overcome the problems they have. By confessing, the young people will feel free, and in hearing the good words spoken by the priest, they will find spiritual peace "(P.A.).

From the teen's words, her desire to communicate with the grown-ups, to receive advice that can help her overcome the problems of everyday life, is noticed. Sincere communication and beyond the strictly educational barrier leads to an improvement in the overall education. A Religion teacher who approaches pupils, understanding their wishes and sufferings, communicating with them honestly and directly, will increase the chances of having an hour of Religion in which the educational goals are met.

Continuing with the presentation of P.A. she states that: "The Church also has great expectations from young people. She wants them to be wise, to live their lives in harmony, setting a goal for them to fight for. It wants the young people to be respected by those around them ... Every time they feel the need to get away, they should not hesitate to come to the Church to confess their problems of everyday life. To do this if they feel like it, not out of obligation "(P.A.).

This is, for this young woman, the non-formal educational perspective. In relation to the Family, School, or Church, young people want to approach it without being forced to do so, but by their sincere desire to receive the help they need.

The essay of a young man, O.C., points out that "the Church is part of the country's cultural patrimony," and "the Church expects the young men to be humble, beautiful, intelligent, and full of the Holy Spirit." It is a spiritual-cultural perspective that is not lacking in the School. Along with the Church, School also has a sacred character in the students' souls. The knowledge of sacredness can make pupils better.

The young student D.E. sees in the space of the Church holiness and warmth: "When I think of the Church, I think of a sacred, holy and warm place. I do not think all young people go to the Church, but there are still plenty of people going and expecting to be welcomed with open arms and good advice".

The young people want the same thing from the School - to be a warm place and be welcomed with open arms. The lack of youth in the church space can be compared to school absenteeism, which, unfortunately, has been at odds with normality lately.

This young woman continues: "In the world of the Internet, when all the problems are solved with the help of the electronics, it is hard to bring the young people to the Church, especially because this custom also needs to be encouraged by the family." Family involvement in the spiritual-cultural educational act is fundamental to the success of the young person in life.

Student C.C.A. sees the Church as a space of that defines one's personality: "In the vision of young people, the church should shape itself as a source of knowledge that would shape their personality. A young man is eager to learn the guidance that the Church offers, in order to stand out from others, building a positive mentality. "

Young people's expectations for the Church could be positively, negatively and indifferently. Most expectations of young people are positive. This perspective, by analyzing the essays of young people, can be easily transferred to both school and family. There are few essays that support the involvement of School and Family, so that the relationship between the young and the Church is a positive one.

Even if some young people are not declarative in supporting faith or membership in a particular Church, "Church and Faith are part of our lives, even if we do not show it" (P.A.G.).

Young people expect the Church to "understand, educate and forgive" (B.A.), and the Church expects young people to "not forget to be human" (G.S.D).



An honest response that comes in comparison with social networks is given by the young H.V. "I believe that young people wait for the Church to come to them and be able to give them a mathematical answer to all their problems and questions. They do not know that God is not like the Internet, which is helping them for the moment".

"The Church is the second pillar in the formation of young people. It is relieving and hopeful for students to see that in the church where they go with their parents there are other young people of similar ages who live by the same principles as them "(C.R.). In this statement of a young woman, one can see the unity that she desires to exist between the Church, the School, and the Family. "Through young people, the Church is always renewed, as they are the ones starting to know God ... That is how the foundations of a family are formed ... Just like Home, the Church and those inside it become a family, confessing and praying together. For the majority of young people, the Church can also be called the dictionary of life, where they can get important information about their lives, especially during adolescence."

Quiet, peace and harmony are the expectations of young people not from the Church only, but also from the Family and School.

## **6. FINDINGS**

Analyzing the relationship of the youth with the Church, from the social and educational perspective, we find that young people see the Church a holy and living institution, which also has an important role in educating and training young people for life.

In the Family, Church, and School, young people want to find holiness, harmony, quiet, peace, understanding, education, and last but not least, forgiveness.

Young students are aware of the fact that they need the education, moral, and understanding, which they wish want to find in the three institutions mentioned above.

## **7. CONCLUSION**

Following the essay analysis of young students, answers to the research questions were found. The problems and actions present in the social perspectives proposed by young people, as well as their impact on social behavior, can be summarized as follows: young people have questions, they have problems that they find hard to answer, and these problems are daily. Social networks do not make young people happy completely. Young people need sincere communication. They want to talk face to face, daily, to find solutions, to improve, to become better and more understanding with others. Unfortunately, the mature generation does not find the time and necessary mood to talk to young people. Young people need spiritual warmth, parents, teachers and clergy.

After all, the teacher, cleric and the parent are one and the same person, one that pupil sees as helping him to overcome daily challenges and to shape his personality.

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## MCDSARE: 2018

# International Multidisciplinary Scientific Conference on the Dialogue between Sciences & Arts, Religion & Education

## RELIGION LESSON- VECTOR FOR STUDYING ARTS. TRANSDISCIPLINARITY VIEW

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### *Abstract*

The astral time for Romania represented the time of celebrating the Great Union, on 1<sup>st</sup> December 1918, that attracts the attention of various media, but especially the subject of new projects at all levels of education, promoters out of a sense of duty towards the ancestors who sacrificed themselves and the responsibility they have in future perspective. The study would like, in this context, to value the vision of teachers to link religious education to arts education in working with students at primary and secondary schools, believing that the religion class is a true catalyst of knowledge in areas which meet naturally therein. As a corollary, students are offered deciphering Romanian history as surprised by the Great Fresco from the Romanian Athenaeum, which values the entire journey from the perspective of worship, the Orthodox religion, in which the soul of the nation developed, from the first Christian century. The aim of the research is to demonstrate valences time religion, its value to facilitate the transfer of knowledge and to provide students with a near fields of knowledge and the arts, particularly fine arts, in an experiential manner, offering valuable knowledge and insight for training and personal development of children aged 6 to 14. As research methods, we used the observation and teaching experiment in role play and analyse three-dimensional works, which were found constantly in exhibitions which were selected and collected in an album that constitute the fruits of a study that lasted for almost ten years.

**Keywords:** transdisciplinarity; Religious education; arts; multidisciplinary; nonformal education;

## 1. INTRODUCTION

A 100-year balance sheet carried out in various fields, as the Romanian society is now trying, requires a careful and objective look that can detect matters worthy of being retained and promoted for the next centenary. "What have we learned?", "What have we done wrong?", "Who supported us?", "What are we owed?" - are these the questions from which it would be right to start the analysis? In terms of education, including religious education, it can be considered as having three stages, over the course of these 100 years: 1918 – 1945 (1947), 1945 (1947)<sup>1</sup> – 1989, 1989 – 2018 (the two-year difference explains the distance between the moment of the first government's introduction of the communist regime and the dissolution of the political parties, the king's abdication and the beginning of the implementation of the

program that led to reforms in the field of religious affairs and education) (Tudor Vișan-Miu, 2016, pp. 123-133). The importance of religious education in the interwar period is recognized, (Tudor Vișan-Miu, 2016, p. 80) and the syncope met with the establishment of the communist regime as well. The resumption of religious education after 1990 was a gesture of repair and, at the same time, the way to show that the school is also back to the traditional values of the Romanian people.

## **2. THE BEGINNING OF RELIGION LESSONS. CASE STUDY: THE KINDERGARDENS *ARC-EN-CIEL* AND THE ORTHODOX PEDAGOGICAL HIGH SCHOOL „*ANASTASIA POPESCU*”**

After the foundation *Preasfânta Fecioară Maria* and the first Kindergarten *Arc-en-Ciel* were set up, teacher Anastasia Popescu (Mama Sica - as all called her) started to teach Religion lessons in 1994 within these. This is the beginning of the first attempts to give children an education of beauty, by resorting to the beauty that the Church assumes and which is a gift to the Godhead as Anastasia Popescu said. The very way the child held hands before making the Holy Cross was explained by Mama Sica: the right hand we worship with rests in the palm of our left hand as a treasure in a sip (discussions with Mother Sica written by the fellow teachers).

We believe that, starting from this point, Religion lessons were different. The way of addressing Religion lessons was as a crowning of education, not just as a moment of transmission of information (Mama Sica, 1995, p. 23), so „education becomes a modelling personality for each individual” (Anghel, AG, 2017, p.10) We can establish exactly the directions within religion lesson: did we do aesthetic education during the time of Religion lesson? In these conditions, to what extent is it able to help the child to correctly receive both the theological message, the bearer of cultural information, but also the spiritually and the aesthetic formative, determining the taste for beauty and discernment, the guide of the reception of works of art under the God’s providence?

We plan to look at the way parables are offered to little children between the ages of 3 and 6 and a half, in the same way as Mama Sica used to do, at a time when there is still no structured Religion lessons, much less pre-school, proximity to the plastic image, either with the icons brought in the classroom or in the Church. The prayer, the icon of the Mother of God and the Child in particular, but also the angels, or the saints whose names the children bear, are as many steps toward achieving a double goal: the child understands the love with which God protects them and their family, but it also retains the essential aspects related to iconography - the colors of the vestments, the aura of the saints, the name of the saint represented in the icon. After Mama Sica left for the Lord, the plastic art teacher, along with the new teacher of Religion, proposed to the children works where the mother's face would appear. Then they took the step to the icon because they explained to the children, the Mother of God is our Mother, loves us and protects us not only children but also our parents. It was an essential moment when the children managed their first icons, whose naive and pure beauty made. Mr. Sorin Dumitrescu says "The characteristic of this atypical icon production is the way, impossible to define by words or concepts, in which combines three distinct steps as a spiritual attitude: genuine perception, cultivated faith, and the canons for painting the holy icon. Consequently, their icons are sudden and genuine, and cult, and correct, so that they can easily be paradigms for the adult painters of icons. Most of this is annoying to any painter of icons that positive and blessed envy that makes her/his more talented and more faithful” (Sorin Dumitrescu, 2000).

In the following years, children in each kindergarten and classroom studied the icon in the same time with plastic arts themes such as flowers, clothing, various buildings, human expressions, color studies and line games and dots, following the schedule of the plastic education classes, in parallel with the Religion ones. They were also joined by the project "Easy, Easy, Walking in the Arts World" where the children had a section dedicated to the icon - "A child - an icon" and where they could work with their parents. These activities were represented by two albums with works of plastic art and icons, in which both children's paintings and works of the parents are found. In order to gather inspirational material, the children participated in many visits to the country and even abroad, where they met museums and works of secular and religious art. They worked in museums, participated with their own works at numerous exhibitions, competitions and were even selected as winners. The Religion lesson opened this opportunity

over time and, thanks to it, the children were encouraged not only to acquire certain knowledge related to Orthodox cult, national and universal heritage, Romanian traditions, but had the opportunity to expressing themselves, defining their own vision of a particular spiritual theme, practicing the line, color, finishing a work. But since the technique chosen was that of the glass icon, it involves certain stages, ranging from drawing, framing, or even embellishing the pattern and color frame. This set of skills succeed in adding new, particularly important valences, because the workshop itself addresses the child on multiple plans, often reveals a potential that other disciplines do not train and places the class of religion among those with a high dynamism that requires unceasing valorization

Our study is based on an extremely large number of works, taking into account that, annually, the children participate with their own works at least two large exhibitions devoted to Christmas, and to the mother, the Annunciation (on 25<sup>th</sup> of March). The last exhibition, on March 2018, contained 450 icons, mostly dedicated to the Annunciation, as well as to some saints and angels. The themes are diverse and the children are allowed to let the creativity work after explaining the "canon" which was specific to the theme of the chosen icon. Working on the icon implies praying, but also viewing works - albums, icons, religious paintings, frescoes - with the subject. At the base of each completed work are several pencil sketches, as well as conversations related to the theme, teamwork, or individual, alternating each time. At the end of a chapter in the religion curriculum, the children also make simple drawings, such as those with the Protector Angel, the saint whose name they wear, or, in competitions organized by the Inspectorate, the Church or the Deanery, even serious studies about themes which children are able to handle with their application, proving to be the very good results at the competitions and olympics they attend every year. Even the prizes are not only the fulfilment of children's goals, they make a serious work, they develop their talent, perseverance, and they enjoy and feel encouraged in this way. From this point of view, the contest "Saints, the children's friends" which involves teamwork and harmoniously combines the theoretical knowledge from Religion, with the ability to paint the icon of a saint among those studied in the classroom, is relevant. It is a clear proof that Religion lesson can - and is particularly good - support the skills development to work an icon, but more than that, the grinding of children's talent, the formation of taste, the development of aesthetic sense, all pleading for perceiving the time of Religion as a joint of several fields, of which the artistic is especially privileged. Along with the icon, the drawing, the collage, the children may be interested in molding in clay, or in other less difficult materials to buy, which they find easily in the specialist stores. Along with the first icons, the children of our school have often made surprising themes with the help of clay. The work thus obtained could be burned in the furnace, another point of interest for the students who are keen to know. Again, the Religion lesson highlights its potential for transdisciplinarity. One of the most loved themes was the "Noah's Ark", which allows every child to put into practice his skill, but also the imagination, and brings satisfaction, from this point of view almost without exception, to all who start working. As an extension of these Religion classes, groups of preschoolers or students can participate in ceramic workshops organized by the Piscu School, not far from the Monastery Țigănești. Frequently carried out in the open air or within the Church, the Religion lesson becomes the best opportunity to know the richness of the traditions and crafts of the place, thus being a bridge between generations and a chance to take in the history of places and society. The "Piscu's Pots Museum", whose foundation stone was set up last year, was designed to bring together children from all over the country to familiarize them with the arts, but not by any means, but by incursion into everything that means faith and tradition. This is also within the Religion lesson, atypical, but with the same objectives: the formation of the child's character (Vladimir Ghidionescu, 1911).

As basis of the study, along with conversations with students, their parents, religion teachers and art teachers, specialists, priests, monks, and monks with whom we have built up our learning spaces and practical applications, we also propose the albums edited by "Anastasia Popescu" School ("Anastasia Popescu" Pedagogical High School integrated the preschool, primary and gymnasium levels of "Anastasia Popescu" school). This is the album "A child - an icon" that appeared in 2011, with the Blessing of His Grace Patriarch Daniel, as well as by the "Art Gallery (Art) Gallery of Children", accomplished in a project funded by the Cultural Fund Administration National in 2013.

The album "A child - an icon" has 80 works made by children between 7 and 14 years. In the beginning part, the process by which the child approaches the icon and becomes "iconar" is surprising:

"Children open windows ... windows to heaven. Sometimes they see angels. Sometimes they recreate a biblical scene and bring it to the level of what is familiar to them, eluding even the Holy Tradition. But they are pure and so deep in the beauty of their innocent prayer. Children recreate the way of the popular artist who feeds on the very essence of ancient wisdom. They have vision, they have color, they have open minds. We just have to bring around a few tools, stories and stories by Pateric, a church wall. [...] And so the icons of the children are born: an icon, a child - a window to heaven." (Sorin Dumitrescu).

The icon that opens the album is "Increasing the mind (Sporirea minții)," suggesting the prayer that children are saying before an important activity: "Always your work / starts with God!" From the 80 works, 62 are dedicated, or contain the Mother of God, the others representing Jesus Christ or Saints Nicholas, Elias, George. The album manages to highlight two essential dimensions for the present research: on the one hand, children are proving their understanding of mysterious icons and prayer by inserting such small compositions belonging to them and ownership information material - theoretical and transfiguration in a sublimed form, personalized by the child's sensitivity (the prayers "My little angel", "The Angel" as well as "A mystery, a miracle") and, on the other hand, the highlighting of some plastic elements whose accomplishment also belongs to the transfiguration to which the child subjects the iconographic material, and remains, however, as Sorin Dumitrescu emphasized in the "canon". This presents extracted and highlighted: a gentle dove depicting the Holy Spirit, the flower that was given to Virgin Mary by the angel Gabriel and the child's vision may be lily white, but becomes red rose. Also, detail of column turns the Jesus's Christ birth cave into a palace, Moon and Sun guarded the Savior's crucified body, purple flowers that caress Icon of the Mother grieving, Archangel Gabriel's face, bringing the Good news, the horse of St. George, the Holy of Holies, like a fairytale house, the Virgin Mary's hands, clasped in prayer, an angel wing and a hand that blesses. It is, therefore, an illustration of what we might call the power of Religion lesson to infuse the classes and activities of the fine arts, as well as those devoted to other subjects, such as Romanian language and literature, or even foreign languages, because the album includes translations into French and English in class, by the children, under the supervision of specialists.

The children's album "Album of the Gallery" has as motto an apparently simple statement, taken from an edition of the Romanian Television's "Professionals": "When I go out of an exhibition, I feel better." Because usually the phrase chosen by most is "I feel (better)". Here, however, art has the power to make us better, as a prayer, and the children chose to say so. This project was the result of a partnership between three schools - Gostinu - Giurgiu, Botoșani and Bucharest, integrating children with hearing deficiencies from the Holy Mary School, and the aim was to familiarize students with traditional crafts such as carving of wood, knotweights with knots, objects made of corn cobs and clay technique. To this was added the use of recyclable materials. The Bucharest team chose these latter themes, which they treated, in part within, or starting with Religion classes. The chosen subject was Noah's Ark, which, as we have already shown, fascinates the children through its epic side, through the teaching, but also through the possibility of molding a multitude of animals and birds. But for children, the challenge theme was to fail to implement in practice what they know from Genesis (Genesis 1:24-31 the 6<sup>th</sup> day): "Then God said, " Let earth bring forth the living creature after his kind their animals, creeping things, and wild beasts by their kind." That's why it was chosen to add to this project a Noah's Ark of recycled materials. Here the children's benefit was special because they were organized in teams, collected old newspapers, various remains for the invisible part of the works, and first built the ark, then the large animals that would be really impressive and attract attention to environmental issues. Another valence of the time of religion is so valued, because the Bible speaks of Creation and man's responsibility to animals (Genesis). An arc of impressive size, about 4 m / 2.5 m, was produced, and the animals, in their turn, were larger than a childhood state. The message that the project was able to convey this way become the stronger, since virtually all secondary school were involved, and thus Religion classes, Arts and Technology / practical skills and they've lost boundaries separating them usually discipline demonstrating that religion has nothing to remain isolated in the pages of a textbook expert, however well made as this, it is necessary and manages to bring the children in a position to perceives connections between domains, to understand the miracle of Creation and the responsibility that Man has for himself and for the rest of the creatures.

### **3. CONCLUSIONS**

Therefore, we consider that our working hypothesis, that the religion class is a vector for the study of the plastic arts, is proved by the listed projects and, in addition, by the current activity of the children in the class, given that any of the studied themes can be reinforced by a plastic work done at the end of the hour, or the time itself can move into a cult, church or monastery, where art meets children and expects (only) "tamed" by the Religion teacher's explanations, either alone or together with the fine arts. As many times His Grace, Patriarch Daniel shows that the icon is not merely an ornament in the Church, but the confession of the belief that the unseen Christ has been seen. The confession is made by word and icon, Father Patriarch says. "The sight of angels and glory in the kingdom of heaven is seen mostly in the icons. True Orthodox icons have the golden background because gold symbolizes the unapproved, unspoiled and non-invisible light in the Kingdom of Heaven. Around the head of the saints we have the aura or the nimbus, also in golden color, which means the light of the Holy Spirit within the human being that is perceived by the mind and heart and is an arvone of the glory of the Kingdom of Heaven in which the saints are. So, Orthodoxy is not only a confession with the word, it is not a confession only using the words of the Creed, but Orthodoxy is also a confession of images through the image of holy icons, because God's Word has not only been heard with ears, as in the Old Testament, but taking the form of man, taking our human nature, He was seen". (Gheorghe Cristian Popa, article „Mărturisirea se face prin cuvânt și prin icoană”, Ziarul Lumina, 21 February 2010)

As a corollary, the students were asked to decipher the history of the Romanians, as it is surprised by the Great Fresco from the Romanian Athenaeum which valorizes the whole path from the cultic perspective of the Orthodox religion, in which the soul of the nation was born, starting with the first Christian century. In a working visit to the Athenaeum, after a prior documentation and viewing of the material made by Trinitas TV about the Great Fresco from the Athenaeum, at Religion lesson, children are offered the opportunity to revisit the work in all its grandeur, in a lesson that combines the history of the Romanians with elements that are specific to the plastic arts and points out the importance given by the great rulers of their emblematic foundations: the scenes in which Emperor Trajan appears, having Apolodor from Damascus, Mircea the Ancient, Stephen the Great, Neagoe Basarab and Mrs. Despina, Al. I. Cuza, Carol I, King Ferdinand and Queen Mary, and the children are invited to try to imagine themselves instead of the painter Costin Petrescu, who has thought this project for frescoes for thirty years - since the fresco was inaugurated in 1938, after five years of work. The overwhelming history of this stunning story that becomes another lesson that children add to the knowledge of the rulers and their foundations.

So, it was demonstrated that through a fresco, children can be taught in a cross-curricula way, adapting to social life. So "the internalization of norms and values that orient the individual's behaviour is the result of a transfer process involving collective consciousness elements in the individual consciousness, as a source of social role". (Anghel, AG, 2017, p. 99)

The purpose of our research was to demonstrate the valences of Religion lesson, its ability to facilitate the transfer of knowledge, and to give pupils a close proximity to fields of knowledge and arts, especially to the plastic arts, in an experimental manner, providing valuable insight into the personal formation and development of children aged 6 to 14. This approach is much closer to the real life and real society. We consider that the material collected is an eloquent basis to assert that the Religion lesson should be regarded as a potential vector for the study of the plastic arts, but also in other areas that harmoniously intertwine and give the child a fair view of the world, giving him the essential milestones to be able to position himself with a degree of discernment, as well as related skills useful in the years following the school. Moreover, this way of looking at things in their spiritual core will stir them up and feed the desire of the child, and to the adult of tomorrow, to study and learn from books, from nature, from people with moral principles and views.

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## MCDSARE: 2018

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#### THE PARTICULARITIES OF TEACHER-CHILD RELATIONSHIP THAT SUPPORTS SOCIO-EMOTIONAL DEVELOPMENT OF PRESCHOOL CHILDREN

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##### *Abstract*

The development of preschooler's socio-emotional skills depends, on the one hand, on the personal factors of the child (as temperamental, motivational and even cognitive factors) and on the other hand on the quality of the two primary social backgrounds of the child (family and kindergarten). Socio-emotional learning begins in the first year of life, under the influence of parental educational practices. The impact that family emotion socialization has on the emotional and social development of the child can be observed and modeled in the context of formal educational actions in the kindergarten. Here, the most important factor for the socio-emotional development is the relationship between the educator and the child. Recent studies highlight the fact that socio-emotional development is favored by a complex of characteristics of child-teacher interaction, known under the heading "emotional support to students". This study presents ways to investigate the quality of the educator-child relationship, carried out in the context of a broader research aimed at exploring the role of certain intrapersonal factors of the educator on the socio-emotional development of the child. The presented tool was built based on the Classroom Assessment Scoring System developed by Pianta, La Paro, & Hamre in 2008, and aimed at measuring those characteristics of the relationship between educator and children that could especially influence the children's socio-emotional intelligence. These characteristics are organized on several variables: the teacher's responsiveness to the child's needs (if he/she identifies and responds to these needs), an open attitude towards the child's own perspective, the absence of negativity, the assurance of the sense of security and the state of mood. The constructed instrument has a broader implication in assessing early education quality and also, in supporting a reflexive professional development.

**Keywords:** socio-emotional development; preschool education; teacher-child relationship; emotional support;

#### 1. INTRODUCTION

Early education is nowadays recognized as an essential time for personality development and for ensuring optimal adaptation and integration of the child to the school environment and of the future adult

in the socio-professional environment. In spite of the evidence found in many research conducted in other countries (Gilley T., 2015), there are few national research concerns in Romania to highlight the benefits of early education and especially to optimize the educational system and process in early childhood. The UNICEF study on the state of implementation of the National Early Childhood Education Strategy (2015) highlights the pecuniary nature of early childhood educational investigations as well as the "lack of longitudinal studies reflecting the long-term effects of the interventions under consideration" (Nedelcu, Ulrich, 2015, 26). In this context of the lack of pedagogical practice supported by theoretical perspectives based on evidences in early education, the present study aims to bring more knowledge in this field by presenting a way to investigate the quality of the child-educator relationship, realized in the context of a broader research aimed at exploring the role of certain educator's intra-personal factors on the socio-emotional development of the child. The development of pre-school socio-emotional skills depends, on the one hand, on the personal factors of the child (as temperamental, motivational and even cognitive factors) and on the other hand on the quality of the child's two primary social backgrounds (family and kindergarten). The impact of emotional socialization within the family environment on emotional and social development of the child can be observed and modeled in the context of formal educational actions in the kindergarten. Here, the most important factor for socio-emotional development is the relationship between the educator and the child.

## **2. PROBLEM STATEMENT**

Kindergarten is, after the family, the second important social environment for the child, where children develop their social and emotional skills. The quality of this social environment is even more important (especially in contemporary society) for the socio-emotional development of the child, as the time spent by the child in the kindergarten is higher the time they spent in the family. By creating much more opportunities to interact with others than the family, the nursery environment provides the child with a multitude of situations where he can learn about emotions and their proper manifestation, relationships with others and social adaptation. The child's entry into the kindergarten involves an expansion of his social field and new demands for adaptation, primarily socially, and consecutively, emotionally. In order to adapt to kindergarten, pre-school children will develop their set of behavioral and emotional abilities specific to socio-emotional intelligence (Ionescu, 2010) Ever since the first years of preschool education, first steps have been taken to develop or strengthen these skills, but their learning process (called socio-emotional education) is continuous throughout life.

Socio-emotional education for preschool children involves designing, organizing and conducting learning activities aimed at acquiring individual experience, shaping emotional and social skills, or developing intra- and inter-personal skills that lead to success in life, while reducing the risk of undesirable behaviors, both in early childhood and in the future (Durlak et. al., 2015). To facilitate educational approaches, specialists have synthesized, based on the components of socio-emotional intelligence, distinct goals for emotional and social development. Therefore, the instructive-educational approaches aim at developing the emotional expressiveness of the children, the self-concept and the healthy interaction skills with peers, the adults or the elderly. (Stefan, Kallay, 2007). The successful achievement of the socio-emotional education objectives within the kindergarten requires not only the integration of the content of this type of education into all categories of learning activities taking place in the kindergarten but also the development of specific optional activities specific and specific projects complementary to curricular activities, focusing on extracurricular and volunteer activities, in partnership with the school, the community or the children's parents.

The most important aspect for the socio-emotional development of the child in the kindergarten is the relationship between the educator and the child. Once entering the preschool environment, the educator becomes an important adult for the child, even if it is not always easily accepted. The link between the child and the educator must be based on good mood and warmth, calm, sense of humor, in order to offer children the climate necessary to express their thoughts and emotions. The relationship with the educator is the one that influence the child's desire to attend the kindergarten and to take part in the specific proposed activities. To build a positive link between child and educator, trust and mutual

knowledge are absolutely indispensable. If the relationship is based on severity or emotional coldness, then the child will not open to new challenges and will resist the development of curricular competencies.

Educational preschool relationship is influenced by several factors:

- internal (personal) factors like characteristics of the teacher's personality, teacher's knowledge of child's psychology, social representations of the educator about the preschool child and his education, the teaching style etc. on the one hand, and the temperament child and level of its development, on the other hand;

- and external (social) factors like education policy, sanitary policy and practice, social policies reflected in the regulations related to kindergarten activities, didactic and non-teaching staff in the kindergarten, preschool organization management etc..

Obviously, an educator capable of creating a socio-emotional climate has well-developed socio-emotional skills. But learning and applying educational strategies specific to socio-emotional education can facilitate the development of the socio-emotional intelligence of children but also of the educator.

The way the educator reacts to the child's emotional manifestations influences the development of the emotional intelligence of the child. Recognition, acceptance / validation of the child's emotions creates a sense of self-acceptance (of what he feels) and conveys that what he feels is not wrong or incorrect. This validation by the educator is very important for the development of a healthy self, and sets the foundation for the development of emotional recognition and expression skills (Denham et.al., 2011). If the child's emotion is not accepted, he will learn that what he feels is not good, so he is not well, he will deny / refute / mask his own state by replacing it with a behavior that will be dysfunctional in time. In the same time this denial of child's emotion will subsequently undermine the development of the self-knowledge ability, in that it will be very difficult to discover what it really feels.

Therefore, it is very important that socio-emotional education starts with emotional literacy. The use of words that call emotions in different contexts is a way to teach children to recognize and name their own emotions and others. If the educator does not usually allow children to talk about emotions, about the emotional consequences of behaviors, then they will not appropriately learn "labels" that call emotions. The use by educators of a language that "draws children's attention to emotions or emotional reactions in the context of common interactions lowers children's risk of having difficulty understanding emotions as well as the consequences of their behaviors by learning to behave appropriate in situations of conflict". (Stefan, Kallay , 2007, pp. 44-45)

Educators able to facilitate and stimulate the development of socio-emotional intelligence in preschool children have some specific features in relation to the child: positive emotions in interacting with children, a warm, non-violent communication style, respect for (the recognition of and allowance) the child's perspective, unconditional acceptance of the child, awareness of the child's cognitive and non-cognitive development level, emphasis on the interests of children, motivation, concern for the development of socio-emotional skills, balance between excessive authority and total freedom in interaction with children, positive disciplinary strategies.

Recent studies (Carson & Templin, 2007; Hamre & Pianta, 2001; Pianta, Belsky, Vandergrift, Houts, & Morrison, 2008 apud. McCormick, 2013) emphasize that socio-emotional development is favored by a complex structure of teacher-child relationship, called "emotional support towards students". Educators who demonstrate emotional support are attentive to the child's needs, are positive, constant, provide stimulating material, play and interact with children, share experiences, support the children interests and learning by planning opportunities throughout the day to learn and practice social skills. This concept has been operationalized in the context of building a quality assessment tool for teaching activity, called the Classroom Assessment Scoring System (CLASS), also available in kindergarten version and the first years of primary school (CLASS K-3). (Sandilos, 2012).

The CLASS instrument was built by Hamre and collaborators on the basis of the theoretical and empirical knowledge of the group processes manifested in the school organizations. The instrument measures several dimensions of the teacher's classroom activity and it has been developed to identify key aspects of the quality of teaching, which may be related to the socio-emotional and academic development of younger children (Sandilos, 2012). Hamre and his colleagues (McCormick, 2013) argue for multifactorial approach of teaching staff practices, operationalized in a broad range of teacher

behavior divided into three main categories: emotional support of students, class organization and instructive support. The CLASS tool evaluates interactions between children and teachers in these major areas. According to the scale, teachers with higher scores should have a positive influence on the academic and socio-emotional development of their pupils.

Previous studies have shown that scores obtained through CLASS application may be related to changes in class behavior and academic outcomes for pre-school and lower-school children. Higher scores in the field of "emotional support" were related to the increase in emotional and social awareness (Cadima et al., 2010 apud. Sandilos, 2012), while lower scores were considered predictive of poor relations between the teacher and the child (Buyse et al., 2011, apt. Sandilos, 2012). High organizational scores have been linked to increasing learning behaviors (eg initiative, involvement, problem solving) as well as an improvement in early mathematical skills and adaptive behaviors (Cadima et al., 2010; Rimm-Kaufman et al. ., 2009, and Sandilos, 2013). Interestingly, higher levels of support in training were predominant in classes where teachers reported having students with significantly lower levels of self-control (Rimm-Kaufman et al., 2009 apud. Sandilos, 2012).

The design of the "emotional support" dimension of CLASS is based on the theories of attachment and social cognition, positive feedback and child-care interaction being essential components of this concept. The operational definition of the concept (used in the construction of the CLASS 2008) includes the following variables:

- the teacher's responsiveness to the learner's needs (if he identifies and responds to these needs),
- an open attitude towards the learner's own perspective,
- the absence of negativity,
- the feeling of safety
- the state of good mood.

Thus, this area assesses the extent to which teachers establish and promote a positive climate in their classroom through their daily interactions, as well as the extent to which the teacher demonstrates the awareness (or sensitivity) to the academic and emotional needs of students (recognize children's emotions, helps children solve problems, redirect problematic behaviors, and supports positive relationships between colleagues, constantly provides comfort, reassurance, and encouragement. (Pianta et al., 2008 apud. Sandilos, 2012).

Teachers who provide emotional support demonstrate positive emotions that are shared by students, are aware of and receptive to the needs and interests of children, and take into account their views on teaching-learning activities (Jennings and Greenberg, 2009 apud. McCormick et al., 2013). Classes with good scores in this area have "sensitive" teachers to children, meaning that they are constantly mindful of the children's states and needs and how they are satisfied. In such classes, teachers and children support and respect each other. Emotional support for group is especially important for children from problematic family backgrounds and vulnerable social groups, and especially at younger ages. The authors invoke research that highlighted the positive effects of emotional support in the kindergarten: fewer outsourcing problems, better focus on pregnancy and more effective attitudinal and cognitive involvement in learning activities. (Zaslow M. et al., 2009)

### **3. RESEARCH METHODS**

In this article we will present a tool for evaluating teacher-child interaction of "emotional support". Used in a broader research aimed at exploring the relationship between pre-school social representations of educators and the socio-emotional development of children.

The instrument was design starting from the CLASS, which involved measuring the indicators offered by the operationalization of the "emotional support" concept.

The tool is an assessment scale containing three dimensions of the teacher-child relationship:

**subdomain socio-emotional climate:**

- Educators and children are enthusiastic about their activities
- The educator shows respect for the children
- The affectionate educator with the children (comforts, rejuvenates them, comforts them)

- The educator uses a warm tone in communicating tasks / observations
- The educator has positive emotions during the interactions (pleasure / joy)
- The educator encourages positive / non-aggressive interactions among children (cooperation, collaboration)
- The educator is happy to spend time with the children.
- Children are happy to spend time with the educator.
- Children are looking for interaction with the educator.
- There is a positive climate in the group

**subdomain teacher's sensitivity:**

- The educator is constantly responding to students
- The educator is available for discussion about what concerns the children
- The educator is empathic
- The educator is concerned about the problems / absences of children
- The educator knows the potential and the limits of each child
- The educator offers adequate levels and forms of support for all children

**subdomain accepting and encouraging the perspective of children:**

- The educator offers opportunities for children to make decisions
- The educator allows preschoolers to self-organize
- The educator encourages children to make decisions and argue points of view
- Teaching-learning involves expressing children's questions

- The educator constructively accepts opinions contrary to his own, or apparently does not meet his expectations. Each descriptor was rated with a value between 1 and 7 in which: 1 = there is no evidence of that behavior / behavior is not manifested; 4 = there is sufficient evidence for that behavior / behavior is moderate; 7 = there is a great deal of evidence for that behavior / behavior is manifested to a great extent. The tool was applied to 12 teachers from six groups (level one and level two) in kindergarten no. 16 Targoviste. In order to ensure the accuracy of the evaluation, the scale was completed three times for each evaluated educator, respectively by the researcher, through self-evaluation and inter-evaluation (by the group partner educator). For each item of each dimension the average of the three assessments was calculated.

#### 4. FINDINGS

The data collected by observing the interactions are synthesized in the diagram below:

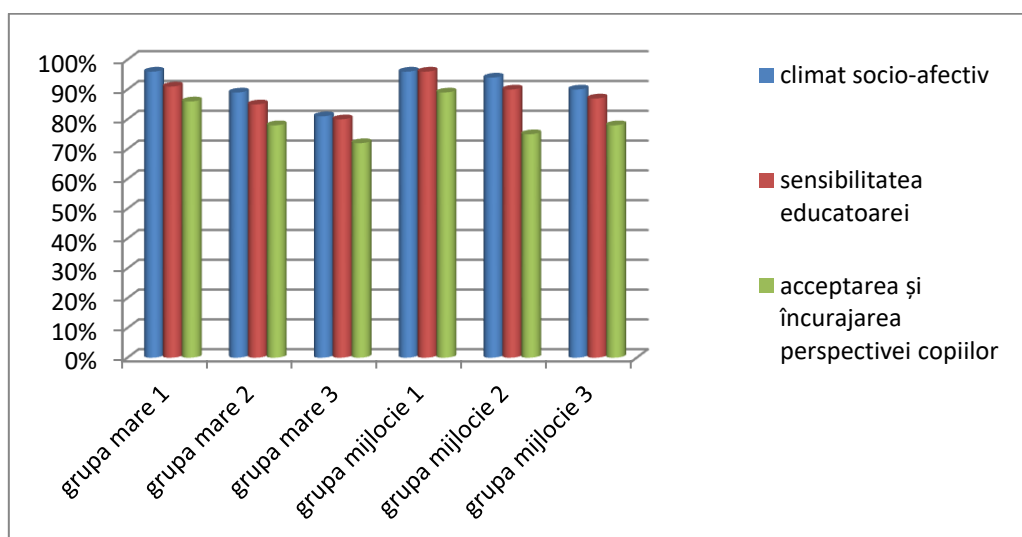


Figure 1. Level of manifestation of emotional support interactions on subdomains

Higher scores (over 75%) in all subdomains in each group of children allow us to appreciate that educator-preschool interactions are of the "emotional support" type.

The socio-emotional climate is the component with the highest scores in all age groups, which may be due to the predominantly positive content of the teacher's social representation of preschool child (TSRPC) and the functional dimension of TSRPC central nucleus, with two emotionally activated elements (love, joy), constituting prescriptive scripts which guides the teacher's attitudes and behavior in relation to the child.

Regarding the use of the scale, the subjects involved in research declared satisfied that is covering every aspect of child-teacher interaction during the daily activities and is quite easy to complete. Yet, the success of the evaluation is depending on the teacher availability and ability to assess herself and the colleagues, their honesty and goodwill.

## **5. CONCLUSIONS**

The article presented a new way, never used in Romania, to investigate the quality of the educator-child relationship, carried out in the context of a broader research aimed at exploring the role of certain teacher intrapersonal factors on the socio-emotional development of the child. The constructed instrument proved to be very good assessing tool for child-teacher relationship. This has big implication in assessing early education quality and also, in supporting a reflexive professional development. Using this tool, teachers became aware of their strengths and weaknesses in their interaction with the children, and doing so, they are able to improve the class climate and education process.

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**MOTIVATION AND PERFORMANCE IN SCHOOL  
ORGANISATION-STRATEGIES**

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***Abstract***

School organisation is representative as a model of motivation because of its importance in developing humans. It is not just an organisation with specific goals, but an organisation that teaches and builds humans style of motivation. This is the reason of that building motivation in school is a process and a lesson in the same time for next generation. This paper aims to analyse the types of human motives, forms of motivation, motivation theories and types of motivations that underlie behaviour in the organization. In this framework were presented models of optimization strategies of motivation in the workplace, may apply to the organization of the school. As such, were considered and described the following models: VICTORY,, "„ situational leadership" and motivation through optimization strategy,, coaching ". The proposed models are characterized not be considered as ideal models. This assertion is based on the following argument: strategies for optimizing motivation in school organization, are conditioned by the climate and organizational culture, management style, the expectations of staff in relation to the profession.

**Keywords:** motivation; school; motivational strategy; leadership motivational; coaching;

**1. INTRODUCTION**

For both, researchers from the field of psychology and specialists in economy, object and motivation issues are proved to be a topic of interest. It is explained that researchers from the field of psychology are interested about explaining the psychological mechanisms that underlie the behaviours and attitudes of individuals, but also of specialists in economy-improving the identification of strategies for optimizing productivity at work and explaining consumer behaviours. The issue of motivation is not specific to psychology and Economics areas only. This sparks the interest of specialists and continues to take steps in the fields of sociology, anthropology, religion, cultural anthropology s.a. From the definition perspective, the concept of motivation has different approaches "(from Latin *movere* = movement):" the totality of the factors in the body that causes the initiation, continuation or Routing and changing

behaviours and our actions "(Chelcea, S. *Iluș, p (coord), 2003, p. 229*), „an important lever, in the process of the individual self-regulation” (Pânișoară, G. Pânișoară,

I. 2004, p. 162). The concept definition is concentrated through three dimension: stimulating behaviour, behaviour, orientation preserving behaviour (maintenance and support). Corporate literature, consider the motivation very important "-like agent productivity-is supported by Henry Ford, which introduces the concept of “the production line”(1896). ( Landsberg. M., [2005], (2008), p.72).

In the development of individual and social behaviours, determinism, actionable rhetoric posits the explanatory level arguments related to the dimensions of the process by producing behaviours directed. In this respect, it considers that certain psychological determinants such as motivation, attitudes, emotions, beliefs, beyond etc can influence individual's social behaviours manifested at the level of the group. It appears, however, the need to answer the following questions: why we make certain types of behaviours? What exactly determines or influences the development of a specific behaviour? Who, or what, is dependent on the development of individual or social behaviour-specific purpose? Apparently, the answer is focused around size, meaning "in front of which is oriented and develops the whole existence. Beyond this, the basis of meaning lies motivation, determinant and its target.

Motivation is therefore, the activator structure, the engine of all undesirable behaviours or desirable that underlie human existence. Beyond this framework, operational conditioning of motivation is based on a number of different arguments within the intersection between intrinsic and extrinsic, between need and satisfaction, of representation and expectation. At the core of human actions can be grounds for sit: needs, desires, intentions, aspirations, end, expectations, once triggered, orients the work process. The basis for any reason they can identify three highlights: valence, life expectancy, instrumentality (Lazăr, G., 2005, p15).

This is explained by:

- reasons in professionally field are given the labour importance for the individual;
- life expectancy measures the success and positive consequences (process evaluation);
- instrumentality refers to the extent to which the expected results and the results obtained lead to other positive outcomes

The literature identifies several forms of motivation: positive or negative incentives, intrinsic and extrinsic, affective and cognitive. Positive motivation correlates directly with the individual's satisfaction in life in general report, and in particular, the organizational environment in which it operates. Negative motivation, explained in the context of the investigation of motivational adversive(threat, punishment, censure). Extrinsic motivation is based on individual factors or external sources or the activity which it carries out but which are required/required by other people. We also represent sets of activities which are favourable or not, professional role (e.g. if promoting/regression on the post, which may alter the level of financial resources). The basis for opening this kind of motivation you can identify the following factors: competition, recognition, avoidance of punishment, his gratitude, satisfaction, fear, rejection, self-image. Intrinsic motivation is based on the challenge of internal sources (needs) or those which originate from active involvement at the organizational level. Based on a mechanism directly correlated with labour (direct relationship between employee and task responsibility). As you mix the size intrinsic motivators include: feelings of accomplishment, self-fulfilling, personal and professional development. Sources of intrinsic motivation are: work and nature of the work, the results of the work, a desire to assert and personal achievement.

Cognitive motivation is directly correlated with needs: to know, to discover (the individual satisfaction according with the process of knowledge). Affective motivation is described as a recognition by the others ( taking the challenges or responsibilities just to avoid the fear to be disregarded by the others).

## **2. PROBLEM STATEMENT**

The theory concerning motivation can be found in mostly in psychology but also know the projections and in the field of economy. French scientist Le Saget (see Zlate, M, 2001) describes the evolution of motivation considering three periods (Table no 1)



Criteria	First decade (1900-1950)	The second decade (1950-1990)	The third decade (after 1990)
Period	The era of industrialization Tylor Theory	The human relations movement Content and process theories	Dynamic thinking, global vision Theories developed in different forms of management
The employee conception	„everyone is equally”, The same solution for all	Individuals can be grouped into categories; models of appropriate solutions	Every person is unique; solutions are unique to suitability under control
The motivation engine	Fear, hope, the advantages	Consideration of employees, work on adaptation, the recognition	Self-realization

**Table no 1. The evolution of motivation concept ( Le Saget, apud Zlate, 2001)**

Other theories on the subject motivation mechanistic approaches, continuous self-perfection and anthropological. In this framework we identify: theories centred on the study of the needs (Maslow), of McGregor-theory of “X” and theory of “Y”, theory “existence-relations-development” of Alderfer, the Theory of dual factors of Herzberg. According to this theory, there are two factors: extrinsic- hygiene motivators and others intrinsic generating satisfaction at work, the need to meet the needs of employees (achievement, recognition, self-realization). Other theories are centred on the study of behaviours and take into account the motivation and the dynamics of motivation in adopting behaviours (the Theory of expectations of Victor Vroom, the Theory of equity of J.S.Adams, the Theory of scope of Edwin Locke)

Types of stimulus that generate motivation.

Stimulus categories	Types of stimulus	Types of motivations
Materials, financial	Salary, awards, others benefits	Economic motivation
Work and its conditions	Content and assignment Physical conditions of work The finality of work	Professional motivation
Interaction of group members	Group’s goal, group structure, group size	Psychosocial motivation

**Table no 2. Types of stimulus that generate motivation( Lazăr, 2005, p 53)**

#### **Strategies to optimize motivation in the school organization**

In the opinion of the authors Davidoff and Lazarus 2002, (apud Zaharia, 2017), the "school" is identified as a special organization as an organization representing organizations, because they have specific educational purposes, certain ways of pursuing aims, and therefore certain particularities in the relationships between the various components of organizational life. The specifics of educational goals and the national vision on education influence the way in which the school is structured and functioning. In the following, three models have been selected that we feel can be successfully applied in the school organization.

#### **Strategic model “VICTORY”**

Motivation and represents a self-reliant coordinates based on success. They shall be described by actions directed towards, “Victory ”. In agreement with this assertion, in the following we describe, model, “Victory ” (Landsberg, M. 2008, p 21) based on specific actions geared towards obtaining conditional and success, „motivation ”. Steps in this model are: *vision*-constructing appealing about success. It is conditional on a concrete reality from which it developed. involves elements that relate to a person or group of persons (the personality of the group, appearance, personality, performance of other individual or collective-; *imagination*-how and when they intervene? Who and with whom it is involved? It is dominated by the persuasive argument, demonstrations, enthusiasm, training others in building the

vision. The vision which will result will have a heightened importance, so as to spur; *faith*-a strong vision will attract the trust and safety. Reliance partners must be accompanied by positive reviews towards the side that initiates the action. Feedback type: "you are the best!", "you're the expert, but together we succeed!" boosts the motivation of others in achieving the objectives of the commune; *the move to action*-at this stage it is necessary to obtain the support of others. Once completed in the previous stages, the chances of success are increased considerably. Is the stage in which they appear in the interior plan which will be hesitations but repressed as a result of expectances designed and validating formal and informal partners in organization skills; *obstacles* may be exceeded if there is a plan related to the way that sorts the specific activities required to achieve the objective. Removing obstacles shall be subject to the commitment to the importance of each of the activities in order to achieve results and the accuracy with which each task is described; *results*-efforts are rewarded, with or without the help of fortune; individual and individual efforts but also collective are rewarded; *expectance*-reaction to feedback-determinant of the results and quality of the results. Positive feedback, motivation and hence makes the success rate. Other optimization strategies of motivation in organisations are drawn from management activities. Contingent management ( Pânișoară, G. Pânișoară, I. 2004, p. 171) suppose that the employee earns points with each successful and recorded at a time when it considers the closely enough you can redeem rewards from the aforementioned. Involves techniques that provide feedback on the performance achieved and is stimulating the motivation.

#### **The model of "situational leadership"**

Leadership receives its output is focused around aspects relating to: diagnosis, flexibility and partnership for performance. Motivation and competence become necessary ingredients leader optimization of specific activities of the organisation. It identifies four different styles of leadership: the enthusiastic chief has a low proficiency but a big commitment; very confident in himself, he/she thinks he/she can move the mountains. For this first level is recommended to use driving style directive. As a leader you have said exactly what the beginner worker must do, how to do until, as it does not know. Is the stage in which the manager decides. In this stage it is not necessary to encourage employee because he is already enthusiastic and motivated; employee disillusioned is the most difficult moment for both leader because, although it is at the level at which they start to gather the skills, they do not exceed the average, while severe declines commitment. It is recommended that the manager to take on the role of mentor. This requires both investing in competences and motivation and commitment. About resolving a process task is developed through consultation, but still belong to the manager's decisions; the employee is capable of, but unreliable performer has developed competence above average, but his commitment fluctuates depending on its achievements or failures. It is recommended to use the style reassuring whereby the leader to succeed to motivate him and to encourage him. Because the level of competence is high calling to consultation, but the employee; independent professional is the level at which everyone is happy. The employee has a very high proficiency, as well as commitment. He is an expert. It is recommended to delegate the style. You no longer need to be encouraged at all times, and delegation of tasks shall be involved. It is time that the leader of the team and you can see if it is needed, but the staff member decide. Achieve maximum motivation.

#### **Strategic model "professional coaching"**

This model identifies group professional coaching adopted by organizations in particular to develop the professional skills of employees to increase work productivity. The coach as the agent of change, planning what needs to be done, explaining how to do it shows how to do it, creating the skills training and development opportunities he / she wants to develop, providing feedback whenever needed, correcting what needs to be done well done, encourages those who are not doing well what they are doing, rewards what is done well, and refrains from being excessively harsh with those who are not doing well what they are doing, evaluating what has been done, explain / justify how it assesses what has been done. The strategic function of the leader remains foremost beyond what is happening in the daily and short term. The manager becomes a leader when he is aware of the precise and predictable steps that his project undergoes (Cardon, A. 2006, 8). It is appreciated that there is a correlation between the degree /

level of integration into the employee's organization and its satisfaction with the work done (Bogathy (2004).) The more the employee is better integrated into the organization, the more his satisfaction with the work done is higher, motivation and result orientation increase, result orientation is present.

### **3. CONCLUSIONS**

Optimizing human resources motivation strategies at organization level is based on a mix of techniques and methods in which committed parties perform specific roles. Their success depends equally on the ability to put into practice certain methods and the degree of persuasion of actors involved in decision-making processes. In conclusion, one can say that there is no ideal strategy model for optimizing motivation in the organization. Each of the above models can lead to success or failure according to: the culture and climate of each organization, the level of involvement of both managers and employees as well as the determination to put into practice a growth strategy of motivation.

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**THE AUGMENTED TONALITY IN THE FIRST HALF OF THE 20<sup>TH</sup>  
CENTURY MUSIC**

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***Abstract***

The appeal to the tonality from the first half of the 20<sup>th</sup> century occurs in the cultural areas where the contact with the tradition is tighter and there is no stress on the originality of the artistic expression, originality that in the Eastern European music tends to substitute the artistic through the underestimation or deconstruction of the already existing musical languages. On the contrary, the Russian musical culture is open to any formula that would enrich the sonorous universe, admitting in the area of the tonality systems certain sonorous organization specific to ethnic traditions or even more, European ones. In this way the tonality is not removed, nor is it only just surviving in this context. It undertakes mixtures, incisions, grafting, allusions, thus generating an ethos of a particular specificity.

**Keywords:** augmented tonality; musical language; sonorous organization;

**1. INTRODUCTION**

The *augmented tonality* represents a conquest of the romanticism, of the post-romanticism, of national cultures, of the Vienna school and of the neoclassicism, etc. gaining more and more space in the sensitivity of the composers of the end of the 19<sup>th</sup> century and especially of those from the first half of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. It expresses the crisis of the tonal relations, it is the factor that undermines the stability of several century old structures. The erosion of the tonal classicism starts with the enrichment of the three sound accord, with the emancipation of the dissonance, with renouncing the obsolete resolvings, with the anchorage of the harmonic discourse in a panoply populated with chromatic elements whose destabilizing role will culminate in renouncing any type of sonorous attraction. Such is the case of the affirmation of atonalism when the Vienna school elaborates the expression deprived of any human flesh for which the democracy of sounds meant an illusionary freedom.

**2. PROBLEM STATEMENT**

Of course, the tonality crisis finds a solution in within other tendencies of composers as well. The neo-classical experiments and the urges towards cultures of folk origins will encourage the access to new sonorities, of tonal-modal nature.

### 3. RESEARCH QUESTIONS

To make a long story short, we could say that the augmented tonality will come to incorporate the type of continuous modulation based on chromatic modulations and sonorous enharmonic modulations, the accords with added notes, the allusions to Bartók's tonal-axis system and the polytonal structures, but also polymodal or even atonal, the chromaticism and excessive enharmonization which will determine the chromatic and enharmonic modulations, the landmarks of modal-folkloric nature, but also neo-modal, as well as the sonorities taken from jazz music.

### 4. PURPOSE OF THE STUDY

In this article we will try to identify every aspect mentioned above, referring to several pieces from the Russian music of the first half of the 20<sup>th</sup> century.

### 5. RESEARCH METHODS

At the basis of him we will make use in particular of the structural method whose origin is in its structuralism of Ferdinand de Saussure.

### 6. FINDINGS

First of all, here is *the second theme* from the first part of *Concert for violin and orchestra no. 2* op. 63 (1935) by Prokofiev, theme which starts in *B major flat* tonality but constantly evolves, surprising us:



This theme is the most authentic post-romantic in nature, of Lisztian and Wagnerian inspiration, treated unstably from a tonal point of view, as it modulates both inside itself, for several times, and on each of its return. Here, in the middle of the second measure, the orchestra modulates to *B major* through the 5 – 1 relation, *F sharp* and *C sharp* resulting from the ascending chromaticization of the 5<sup>th</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> steps of the *B flat major*. Of course, the B flat sound (an enharmonic *A sharp*) is the third of the dominant accord from the *B major* tonality, even if it is missing in this case. Thus, making use of the chromatic elements (in *B flat*), which have become diatonic (in *B major*), but also of enharmonic elements, Prokofiev modulates to seven ascending fifths. We are dealing here with a mixture between the chromatic modulation and the enharmonic one, intensely exploited during the post-romantic period.

The image shows the first three measures of the second theme. The piano accompaniment features a steady eighth-note bass line in the left hand and chords in the right hand. The key signature changes from B-flat major to E-flat major at the end of the third measure.

B flat: I      IV<sub>6</sub> I      B: V<sub>7</sub><sup>#</sup>      I<sub>9</sub>      E : V<sub>7</sub>      III<sub>6</sub>      I<sub>6</sub>.....I<sub>7</sub>      E flat

Things do not stagnate, but evolves in a perpetual tonal transformation, so that, at the end of the third measure, a simple seventh generates a new modulation to the *E major* tonality, the end of the theme

meaning a re-exposure and a new modulation, this time to the *E flat major* tonality. The example above is one of the many cases offered by the post-romantic music where we meet the continuous modulation type with sounds that arrogate functions of any type.

Prokofiev seems to generate modulations in a classical spirit which, in fact, are nothing but pretexts of making jumps to far tonalities, a defining characteristic of the postromantic style.

Still at Prokofiev we have instances where the *G minor* and *C sharp minor* tonalities are brought together in the first part of the same work, between measures 23 and 24, the pitch ratio between their tonics being one of augmented fifth/quint (diminished enharmonic fifth/quint), an aspect which is brought up in the 20<sup>th</sup> century by the creation and theoretical clarifications of the Hungarian composer Béla Bartók (1881–1945). He defines the tonal-axis system starting by listing the tonalities not according to the principle of perfect ascending and descending fifths/quints, but by listing them from a third to a small third.

The same holds valid in the case of Prokofiev as well, without any theoretical preoccupations of this kind on his behalf. He is rather intuitive about these general tendencies in the evolution of the musical language, his musical sensitivity displaying this aspect without stating truths of theoretical value. When he suddenly interweaves the *G minor* tonality with the *C sharp minor* one, his musical sensitivity had already accepted what would be formulated later. The empirical always precedes the theoretical sphere. The proof of this substitution also appears from the change of armour between the above-mentioned measures. Moreover, the augmented *C-F sharp* fourth which precedes the beginning of the first theme in *C sharp minor*, is no longer resolved by means of the augmented *B flat-G* sixth, but by attraction and resolving at the small *C sharp-E natural* third:



These determinations make us think of the tonal polymorphism of the diminished seventh accord, such an example also appearing in the 236-237 measure from the first part of the *Concert for violin and orchestra* (1948) by Dimitrie Kabalevski, where a diminished F sharp with a diminished seventh make



the connection to the *D flat major* tonality:

The enharmonic aspect of the augmented fourth interval is exploited to its fullest, the goal being that of feeling of tonal ambiguity. This holds true in the case of the same second theme at Prokofiev when the augmented fourth brings along a new resolution, based on a contrary harmonic development:

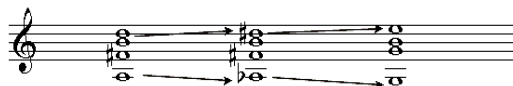


Of course, the Wagnerian musical revolution is as alive now as it was almost a century ago, even in the case of composers of neo-classical orientation. The same work of Dimitrie Kabalevski displays leitmotif-like allusions to Wagner. In measures 239-240 and 245-246 the composer inserts in the violin a famous melodic motif taken from *Tristan and Isolde*, based on a type of crossed chromatism:



Of course, the chromatic elements of all typologies, accords with added notes, overlapped accordic structure or polytonal passages complete the functional harmonic panel of the 20<sup>th</sup> century.

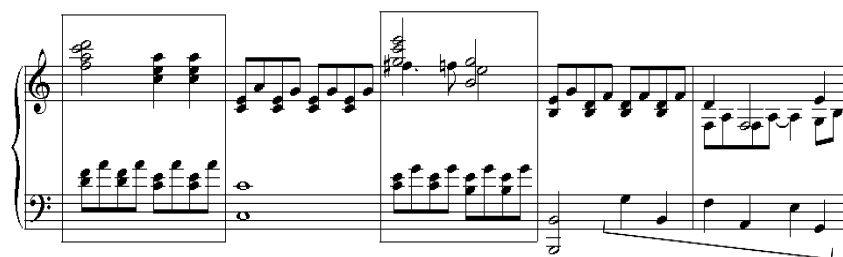
The same Kabalevski displays situations which allow chromatizations in opposition with surprising accidental harmonies which give birth to augmented and double-augmented intervals:



but also to an accord with a small added sixth,



and accords of seventh or augmented eleventh at Prokofiev, which are assimilated with some added note accords, of a profound harrowing nature which is felt within the limits of only two measures:



Still at Kabalevski, the chromatizations of sounds also happen in order to emphasise some other types of harmonic schemata which unveils a less usual path for the *C major* tonality as it consists of the swinging between the accord of the superior mediant, the one in *E minor*, and the *E flat major* one:



The relationship between the two accords is obvious. One notices the fact that the accords are moved to the 1<sup>st</sup> twist, both of them preserving the mutual third (the *G* sound). In this context, the sounds *B flat* and *E flat* can be interpreted as some inferior embroideries of the *E minor* accord. The *E flat major* accord has no intrinsic functional value but it represents a case of accidental harmony. Moreover, one can hardly talk about a sudden modulation of the tonality of *E flat*, but rather about a colouration of the harmonic discourse, about its enrichment with new sonorities, skilfully inserted within the traditional one. The functionality of this schemata contains relevant premises because the very first theme is based on the indecision between *E natural* and *E flat*, fact which constitutes a reminiscence of modal origin.

Here are some other situations of this type (measure 168), when, during the work/piece, the soloistic countermelody attacks with a normal sound, in *arco*, a passage largely constituted from a gradual

development, with little melodic jumps, based on an isochronal mono-rhythmia, the accompaniment being obtained on the grounds of this indecision between minor and major:



The Gist instrument unfolds a countermelody whose beginning unveils affinities with the *C major* tonality, the accompaniment being the one that regulates the sonority of *A minor*. Naturally, the same tonal bivalence is found here as well through the alternation of *A minor* with *A major*.

And of course, another situation is measure 188 where the accompaniment maintains rhythmical ostinatos, whilst during the second phrase, the second theme is taken partially imitatively by the orchestra at the same interval, by a three measures phase difference, the harmony being characterised by the tonal division between *D minor* and *D major*:



In another situation, the *B flat minor* and the *A major* tonalities are suddenly put together, demonstrating a significant tonal contrast, both by the qualitative difference between the minor and the major, and by the eight ascending fifths distance between their tonics.

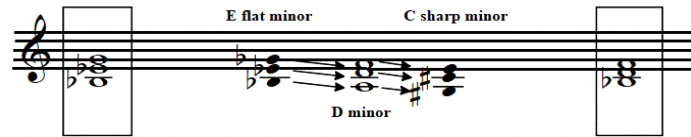
At a quick look at the accords from the tonics of the two tonalities, one finds significant similarities. Their fundamentals are situated at a small second interval, whilst the thirds, from an enharmonic point of view, are mutual:



In another case we have the evolution of the harmonic frame based on the *E flat major* and *B flat major* alternation, with the imposition of the latter towards the end. The *D minor* accord claims its dominant function in the *B flat major* tonality, by bringing it in the second twist. This happens due to the substitution of the 5<sup>th</sup> step with the 3<sup>rd</sup>, a modal step with the function of a superior median. The accord brought up determines the opportunities for certain chromatic experiments since its sphere of influence

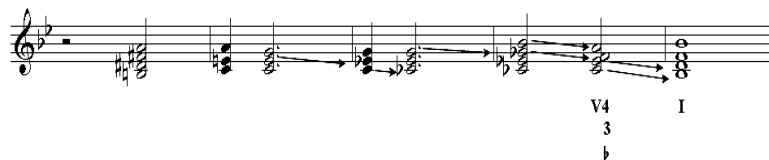


encompasses other two accords, still minor, situated at a small second interval, ascending or descending as against its fundamental:

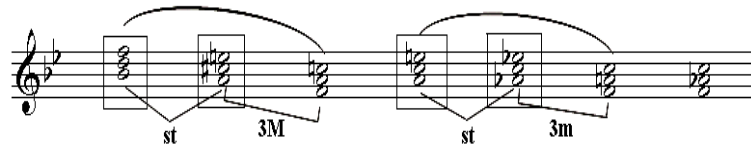


In doing so, here comes a generalised parallelism to all sounds of those accords, a mechanism employed mainly in the impressionistic music. The E flat minor accord is a result of the descending chromaticization of the third of E flat major's accord, whilst the accord of the C sharp minor comes from the harmonic or melodic variant of the *D minor* tonality, admitting, of course, the alteration of the subdominant as well (the fifth of this accord), fact which determines a harmonic relationship claimed even since the times of the gothic musical style.

At Prokofiev, we have a series of depressive chromaticizations, whose terminus point is to be found in the *B flat major* tonality, which is stated through the dominant accord (F major) with small seventh and diminished fifth:



The examples of intense chromaticization do not stop here. A transition passage precedes the processing itself within the development of the more important thematic elements, starting from *B flat major* and ending in *F major*, a series of arpeggios interpreted as in a dialogue, either by the orchestra, or by the violin, deconspiring its intensely chromaticized harmonic evolution.



Similar structures slide chromatically descending such as the *B flat major*, *A major*, *A flat major* accords, the introduction of the *F major* accord generating the chromatic indecision of *C sharp* with *C* and *A flat* with *A natural*, fact which confers modal allusions to this fragment.

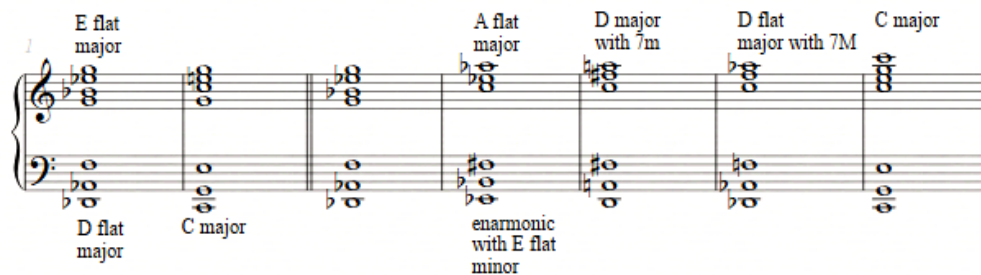
At the end of the development section from the first part of Prokofiev's concert there appears one of the most dramatic and monumental passages of this work, homophonically built within the entire orchestra, with a consistent writing density, poly-timbrally spread out, which entails, from a harmonic point of view, a series of descending chromatic intervals of different melodic lengths, with a *ritardando*

movement, fact which strengthens the monumental expression and prepares the new thematic moment of

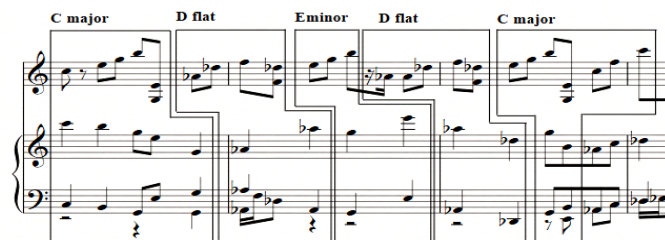


the concert:

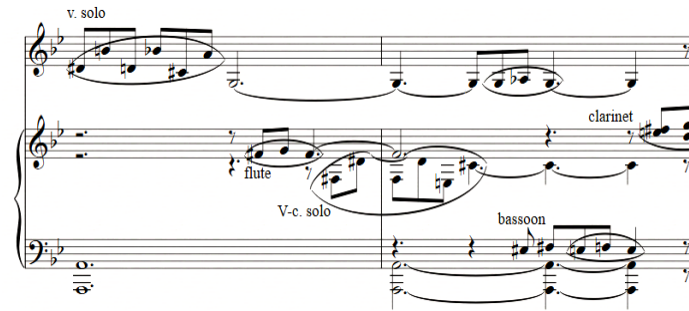
A new section from the end of Kabalevski's concert brings sonorities from the world of jazz. Here is a harmonic synthesis with structures of accordic overlaps, seventh accords or parallel chromatisms:



Here is one of Prokofiev's sarcastic humour moments, in which he hijacks the theme from the initial sobriety and confers a grotesque nature to it by the rhythmical diminishing of the thematic head and the polytonal conspiracy created between *C major/E minor* and *D flat major*:



It is Prokofiev again who brings forth, by means of an *A natural* pedal, a type of orchestral writing specific to expressionism, which is based on two motifs, one made of ascending small sixths which chromatically succeed descendingly, and a second one, a simple ascending chromatic mordent, which already anticipates the specific theme of the next section. Through his manner of succession and alternation of motifs, through their orchestration ensured by the *klangfarbenmelodie* technique in a quasi-tonal ambiance, Prokofiev reaches the limits of functional tonality:



But here are some situations containing new allusions to Béla Bartók, in the *Concert for violin and orchestra* (1940) by Aram Khachaturian, one passage being accomplished through a tetrachordal scordatura with an ascending extension of a semitone:



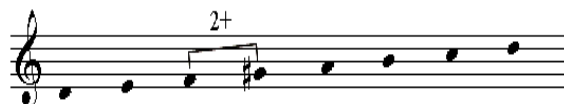
However, the great merit of the augmented tonality is represented by the insertion of a great diversity of folkloric, exotic and even neo-modal structures. The one who uses them the most is Aram Khachaturian, due to his affinities with the Armenian folklore. The second part of his concert abounds with elements of this type. The introduction begins with a calm sonority in the grave register which displays a constant modal frame. In the beginning we have a passage which crosses a *melodic E flat major*, the equivalent of the *acoustic mode 2*:



A Phrygian motif based on a triolet formula introduces Iberian sonorities, its role in the shaping of the musical form being referential:



Here is the structure of a mode called *chromatic 1* (measure 44), largely present in the folklore of any country. The basic characteristic element of this mode is the augmented second in the three and four steps whilst the large sixth and the small seventh on the tonic are some of the secondary characteristics:



It is only a few measures later (measure 50) that a new modal structure is inserted even if this aspect is not as apparent as the previous example, being followed by an *acoustic 4*, similar to the Phrygian one except for the fact that the fourth and the fifth steps are lowered by a semitone, making thus a fourth and a diminished fifth with the tonic:



Later on, some other sonorous structures appear as well, such as a pentatonicity (measure 53) enriched with chromatic elements,



some structures reminding of the harmonic minor (measure 55), even a *chromatic 4* mode (measure 58), similar to a Dorian mode on C but with a lowered fifth step, fact which determines the appearance of the augmented second between the fifth and the sixth steps, and of the diminished fifth on the mode's tonic,



or of an *acoustic 1* (measure 60), a lydian-mixolydian:

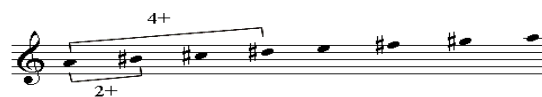


all the structure presented so far deconspire the great modal variety used by Khachaturian , the composer proving himself to be a profound connoisseur of the Armenian folklore, and not only, which he has the opportunity to work upon and to give life to in the cult creation.

Moreover, one may notice in the 82-84 measures the presence of a *chromatic 6*, whose structure resembles, due to its beginning, an *acoustic 4*, with the sole mention that the fifth on tonic becomes perfect, reason for which there appears an augmented second between the fourth and the fifth steps:



Khachaturian's predilection for chromatic modes is obvious because he preserves modal conjunctures of this type (*chromatic 3* – with an augmented second between the 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> steps, and with an augmented fourth and a large seventh at the basis) in the development, such as the following:



Here is Khachaturian using a double chromatic mode as well (measures 87-88), mode known in the Romanian folk music as the *Gypsy mode*, and in the Byzantine music as the *mustard mode* or *key 6*,



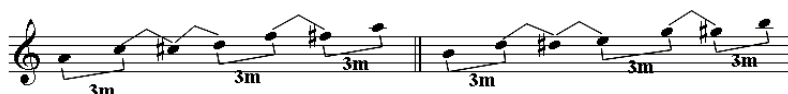
or reiterating modal structures used in the first part of the concert, contradicting the thesis of chaotic or unconscious use of them:



It is true that, in the first part of Khachaturian's work, the soloist instrument unfolds at a certain moment, after having exposed the main theme, a series of arpeggios whose structure can be detailed by means of the following minor-major tetra-tones:



The bridge brings along modal typologies derived from the previously mentioned ones, this time completing the octave frame, reached as far as octaval semitonic hexatones:



Once again, Khachaturian demonstrates his inexhaustible artistry of inserting modal structures of oriental origin by proliferating chromatic structures such as the following one, with a hesitating melodic contour, assigned to the violinist, which leaves empty spaces within the octave:



But here are situations of neo-modal construction. In the first part of Kabalevski's work, within the section corresponding to the modulating phase of the sonata (measures 63-83), it follows an ambiguous tonal path. The interpretation is rather made through the perspective of the limited transposition modes, the entire fragment between measure 63 and measure 72, being in fact a truly modal zone. Analysing both the violin score, and the piano reduction, we notice Kabalevski's affinities with a modal background that was not unfamiliar and which he uses in the context of some syntheses with the tonal frame, enlarging the tonality in the spirit of certain common experience at that time. We have a *tone-semitone* mode (the *mode 2* theorized by Olivier Messiaen) transposed on the E flat sound, obviously taking into account the enharmonies that appear incidentally and not as a result of functional anticipations:



The same happens in the stage where one notices the preservation of the modal climate in the so-called modulating zone of the bridge which brings along the same tone-semitone structure, transposed this time on the F sound:



Going back to Prokofiev, a fragment of only four measures (measures 74-77) made of chromatic mixtures interpreted both by the violin, and the orchestra makes the connection with another subsection (measures 78-91) where the perpetuation of the figuralism at the soloist instrument, the repeated accords or the tremoloed pedals, the orchestration which, through the combined intervention of the horns and trombones, creates a moment of singular local colour accompanied in a polytimbral manner by the clarinet and the bassoon and later on by the oboe, the existence of a certain modal frame, the indecision of the melodic cells whose quasi-repetitive succession is resolved by the violinistic ostinato, and the allusion





or some unmodified *alfa accords* (major-minor) incorporated within the harmonic fabric of the transition from the second part of the same work:

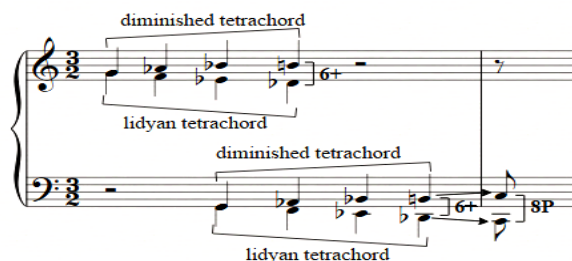


At Khachaturian, the second section of bridge of the first part brings a modal frame which completes almost entirely the empty spaces of the octave,



the mentioned structure being part of the tonal-modal (synthesis) integrated systems mentioned by de Victor Giuleanu<sup>3</sup> when referring to those systems made of nine sounds on the octave frame.

On the other hand, what is interesting at Prokofiev from a harmonic point of view is the one measure connection (measure 156) by means of which the tonality of *C minoris* brought along, measure which speculates the functional attractiveness of the augmented sixth and its resolving in the octave. Moreover, the overlapping of an ascending diminished tetrachord on a descending lidyan tetrachord creates a specific polymodal atmosphere:



A similar thing happens with Khachaturian, the two structures being brought up this time by means of a parallel development, resulting a series of augmented fourths (with only one exception) which create a mysterious and exotic atmosphere:




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<sup>3</sup> Giuleanu, Victor, *Tratat de teoria muzicii*, Editura Muzicală, București, 1986, p. 490.

Khachaturian has also a moment of local colour which spreads a certain perfume of an exotic essence which juxtaposes minor accords from the first twist, whose ascending path has as its terminus point a minor accord in a direct state:



as well as situations where bimodal frames are built because the theme supports a Phrygian on the *E* sound:



while the accompaniment imposes a specific cadence upon the *aeolian on A* (5 without a sensitive and 1).

## 7. CONCLUSION

All these examples are musical utterances which unfold within the attractions of tonal and functional nature, enriching thus their content with sonorities which seem to have sprung from the popular practice or from any speculative-theoretical approach of the composers from the first half of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. Sometimes, their share is so great that one can hardly find relations of tonal nature, reason for which marking any armour becomes superfluous. It is Khachaturian's case as well, who gives up the marking of the armour of D minor. The art music has always supplied us with a great variety of sonorous combinations, of aggregates and structures which have gained, in time, a certain significance ready to be assimilated and thoroughly studied by the music lover's sensitivity. It often happens that a theoretical treatise scarcely manages to grasp a few essential formulas. It is never exhaustive as neither is the present study. The purpose of approaches like this is that of drawing the attention upon certain harmonic theories, insufficiently explored, whose richness proves the coexistence of seductive musical languages, never sufficiently explored, with inexhaustible expressive resources.

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**MCDSARE: 2018**  
**International Multidisciplinary Scientific Conference on the  
Dialogue between Sciences & Arts, Religion & Education**

**SCIENCE MEETING ART: VOCAL TECHNIQUE AND  
SPONTANEITY IN THE CONTEMPORARY ACTING**

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***Abstract***

In the contemporary theater, the actors need to sound as normally and spontaneous as they do in every day conversations. But in order to be heard by the audience in a large theater, they have to acquire voice and speech skills. The search for an equilibrium between technique and emotional freedom is still one of the most important challenges that acting schools are facing. Bridging the creative, imaginative inner self with the skillful outer communicative one requires the most diverse contributions in an interdisciplinary dialogue combining physical disciplines like Alexander Technique or Yoga with the new insights into the working of the mind, the body and the emotions provided by neuroscience. In the effort of shifting the controls from external, physical muscles to internal, emotional impulses I think that the scientific perspective offered by Antonio Damasio can give a great deal of help. The way in which this recent research can provide new approaches of the functioning of the human voice in the theater, a voice that is in direct contact with emotional impulses, is the main interrogation of this article.

**Keywords:** Science; Art; Vocal Technique; Spontaneity; Contemporary Acting;

**1. INTRODUCTION**

Research in the vast field of neuroscience has produced over the last twenty years unprecedented advance in the understanding of the functioning of the brain. Part of this research relates to the way emotions and feelings are triggered, to the role they play in decision-making and to the way areas in the brain that we cannot control consciously determine our behavior. The boundaries between psychology and neurology become increasingly permeable, as more and more human behavior finds its explanation in the genetic, physiological or pathological determinations that shape the human brain.

**2. THE BODY-MIND CONNECTION: A DOUBLE SENSE HIGHWAY**

Psychological realism revolutionized actor's art by emphasizing emotional truth, discovering and assuming the psychological motivation of scenic action, stimulating the spontaneity and emotional freedom of the actor (Stanislavski 2013, pp. 21-4). The emotions, feelings, decisions (rational or not) of the actor and / or the character are the fabric of the actor's art itself. All these concepts, intensely used today, are in the area of influence of recent neuroscience findings. These findings can bring scientific

rigor and consistency to some notions and working methods in the acting pedagogy that still leave much room for subjectivity.

Surprising conclusions can be drawn from the analysis of these discoveries in the perspective of reconsidering the working methods of the theater of representation, which are using the playful impulse of imitation of behaviors and the training of facial or corporal expressiveness to characterize various dramatic or comic typologies, whether we refer to commedia dell'arte (Fo 2009 p.38) or to the heretic Michael Chekhov (Chekhov 1991, pp. 35-41). On the other hand, the pedagogy of voice and speech, can find new methodological approaches by using the evidences provided by the neuroscientific research.

In the following, I will review the main findings and hypotheses provided by neuroscience which may, in my opinion, may have an important impact on the pedagogy of actor's art and the pedagogy of voice and speech.

Professor Antonio Damasio, whose main field is neurobiology, especially the neural systems which support emotion, memory, decision-making, language and consciousness, has proved that emotions play a critical role in high-level cognition (Damasio 2017 p.118). Studying the cases of patients with lesions of specific areas of the brain, Damasio has found scientific evidences of the neurological substrate of feelings.

"Imagine, for example, an individual who, as a result of the damage to an area in the brain, becomes incapable of feeling compassion or embarrassment when it comes to feeling compassion or embarrassment, but he may feel happy, sad or scared absolutely the same as before to establish neurological affection (...). Or imagine an individual who, after suffering the damage of another area of the brain, is unable to feel fear in situations where fear is the right reaction, but he can still feel compassion." (Damasio 2010, p.9)

Starting from the observation and mapping with imaging techniques of anatomy and brain activity, both for patients and for subjects without neurological conditions, Damasio provides a comprehensive understanding of the mind-body relationship. The researcher makes an important distinction between emotions and feelings, emotion being a complex set of neural and chemical responses that create a distinct pattern, responses produced by a normal brain when detecting an emotional stimulus, an object or event, present in reality or in memory. In Damasio's sense, emotions are automatic responses, resulting immediately in a temporary change in the state of the body and the brain structures that map the body. The human brain is genetically programmed to respond to ESAs with some repertoire of actions, but it can also learn to react to new stimuli.

"Emotions play on the body scene. Feelings play on the scene of the mind" affirm Damasio, synthesizing the essential difference between emotions and feelings from the physiological point of view. So feelings are perceptions of changes made to the body by emotions, a mirroring of the bodily state in the brain, and perceptions of thoughts related to these states. According to Damasio, feelings translate into the mind's language the ongoing vital state. So what distinguishes a feeling from any other thought is that their essence consists of thoughts that represent the body involved in a reactive process. If we do not feel a certain bodily condition with certain characteristics associated with pleasure or pain we cannot consider a certain thought as happy or sad. The bodily condition we feel while we have that mind is what gives it the feeling of feeling. More specifically, the cartographic representations of the innumerable aspects of bodily states in sensory regions designed to receive signals from the body are the immediate substrate of feelings.

If the succession EMOTIONAL STIMULUS (real object or recall / thought) - EMOTION (change of bodily states) - FEELING (the perception of the emotional changes) confirms, basically, the fundamental idea of psychological realism that thought is the one that determines the occurrence of emotion (or feelings- in the theater is not used to make the distinction proposed by Damasio), some experiments made by neurologists seem to confirm that the path from the body manifestation to the feelings is also possible.

An experiment on a patient suffering from Parkinson's disease, whose brain was stimulated in a particular area with an electrode, in order to alleviate the symptoms of the disease, revealed, quite accidentally, that the bodily manifestations of a strong emotion (in this case, crying in the roar, triggered by the electrical stimulation of the areas responsible for crying) can in themselves cause the thoughts of

that emotion to emerge, and so the way from the body to the mind is possible( Damasio 2003, p.30) Practically, although the patient had no sad thought in the mind before electrical stimulation, minutes after the crying was triggered by accidental stimulation of the area responsible for the activation of this bodily manifestation, sad, depressing thoughts appeared in his mind. Less than 90 seconds after the current has been interrupted, the patient's behavior returned to normal. The sadness and the crying disappeared as suddenly as they had come.

“The electrical current had not passed through the general motor control structures as it intended, but they had crossed one of the brainstem nuclei controlling certain types of actions. These actions, as a whole, produce the "sadness" emotion. Their repertoire includes movements of the facial muscles, mouth movements, pharynx, larynx and diaphragm necessary for crying, as well as various actions that result in the production of tears ... Thoughts related to emotion only occurred after the emotion was triggered.” The reason why such an event was possible, explains the American neurologist, is that associative learning has established connections between emotions and thoughts through a rich associative network and works in a double sense. Some thoughts evoke certain emotions, and vice versa.

These double-ties have been made even more apparent by a study led by Paul Eckman. Subjects were asked to move certain face muscles in a particular order, so that their expression would become (without subjects realizing) one of happiness, of fear or of sadness (Eckman 1992, pp 36-8). The subjects did not know what kind of expression was on their face. And although initially there was no thought in their minds to trigger the expressed emotion, shortly after they composed that facial expression, the subjects were feeling the feeling that corresponded to that emotion. Actually, with the triggering of parts of the pattern of emotion (under the control of the experimenter and not motivated by the thoughts of the subjects) the corresponding feeling wore triggered too.

### **3. THEATRICAL AUTHENTICITY AND THE SCIENCE OF FEELING**

The experiments described above demonstrate, in my opinion, the validity of some theatrical methods unjustly evicted from the mainstream pedagogy of acting. If the facial expressions or bodily mechanisms can produce real feelings, as demonstrated by these research, the area of actor's creativity can be broadened by free, unbridled exploration of this path (from body to mind / form to content) abandoned by the mainstream pedagogy (of Stanislavskian inspiration) as obsolete. One can, for example, reconsider the Michael Chehov method, which propose the search for a psychological gesture, a body attitude, or a specific motricity and not the psychological reasons as starting point of the actor's work to discover the character.

A remarkable evidence of the validity of Chehov's approach is provided by Damasio's observation on his own behaviour (Damasio 2016, pp.123-5). The American neuroscientist examines a seemingly minor episode. At one point, while working in the lab, he got out of the office, took a few steps, and suddenly for no reason, a certain colleague, Dr. B, came to mind. Reacting mentally the movements that just had made them, Damasio realized that without wanting, he had imitated exactly the way his colleague went. He realized that mental images of the way Dr. B was moving had been made by the image of his own muscles and bones that adopted the exact patterns of movement of colleague B.

“In short, we were going dr. B; I had represented in my mind my animated skeleton (technically, I had generated a somatosensory image), and finally, I was remembering a corresponding visual equivalent for that particular musculoskeletal image, which turned out to be my colleague's.”(2016, p. 123)

Damasio concludes that our connection with others is established not only through visual images, language and logic, but also by something deeper in our body: the actions by which we can mimic the movements of others. We can make translations between four elements: (1) the effective movement, (2) the somatosensory representations of the movement, (3) the visual representations of the movement, and (4) the memory.

“The good actors, of course, use these tools to a great extent, whether conscious or not. The way in which some of the most important of them embodies certain personalities in their creations makes use of this ability to represent others, visual and auditory, and then to give them life in their own body. That

means getting into the character's skin, and when this process is completed with unexpected, invented details, we have a role played brilliantly "(2016, p.124)- Damasio's conclusion is in fact a definition of actor's art in the sense of Michael Chekov's method, being a consistent scientific argument in favor of the validity of his pedagogical approach.

Perhaps one of the most well known problem that every student actor has to overcome is commonly referred to as the "stage fright". This is actually a "fight or flight" response (also called the acute stress response), a complex process involving many systems operating together to help the individual avoid a source of danger. The instant the brain perceives a potential threat, the Sympathetic Nervous System (SNS) is activated, triggering a cascade of electrical, neurochemical and hormonal transmission of information throughout the body, preparing the individual for fighting or fleeing (Siegel 2006, pp. 382-6). The actor is supposed to have free access of his emotions when acting, but the "fight or flight" response is preventing this access because in a life-or-death situation (or one that is perceived, psychologically, with a similar gravity) emotions are potentially deadly indulgences, so the body makes sure to push them down, enabling it to focus on saving itself. The system is set up to react now and feel later, when the individual has time to process these strong emotions. Even more, the response is inhibiting the lacrimal gland (responsible for tear production) and salivation, impairing the actor's physical ability to cry and even to speak properly.

Once the SNS triggers "fight or flight" response, dilating the bronchial passages, arresting peristaltic activity in the bowel etc. the Parasympathetic Nervous System (PNS)-via the motor neurons of the vagus nerve- initiates the work of bringing calm and balance in to the system ( calms the heart, it narrows the air passages to prevent over-breathing etc). The vagus nerve emerges from the brainstem and descends downward through the body, penetrating the diaphragm to connect with the Enteric Nervous System. It also controls a few skeletal muscles, such as the pharyngeal constrictors and the muscles of the larynx involved in the voice production. When the vagus nerve is over stimulated, as in prolonged and recurring stress response, it can cause the throat to tighten (restricting breath) and impairing the voice production (Gershon 1998, p.105). The neuroscience is providing us crucial information about the physiological mechanisms involved in the stage fright, helping us to understand much better the physical and emotional state of the student and to find more efficient and appropriate ways to help free the body of tensions and to prevent the emotional and artistic blocking.

Using the evidences provided by the study led by Paul Eckman (1992, pp 36-8) one can approach the mechanisms of laughter and crying with more freedom and confidence. Exercises by which the student actors train to trigger playfully the bodily mechanisms of laughter or crying and the transition from laughter to crying and vice versa can give spectacular results in solving difficult scenic situations and unlocking the emotional energy. When it comes to extreme emotional manifestations, the student often gets stuck, even if he/she has all the well-built psychological motivations (who they are, where they come from, why they do / say what they do / say?). Because crying / laughing out of the blue means to mobilize specific physiological mechanisms (in Damasio's sense, emotions strongly anchored in the body) sometimes artistic imagination is simply not enough to trigger them. The emotional stimulus provided by the imagination is, in some cases not powerful enough to trigger a cascade of complex physiological responses, such as laughter or crying.

From my didactic experience, crying in comic situations is more difficult for the student actors to engage than in tragic or dramatic situations. Probably because the comic situation determines at the conscious level a distancing effect on the character, distance which makes it difficult for the student to fully respond to the emotionally appropriate stimulus proposed by the conscious mind. In such cases, the training of the inverse, body-to-mind path can be a saviour.

The support that this type of training offers is based on the mobilization of areas in the brain that escape volitional control. It seems that responsible for the trigger modulation of laughing and crying mechanisms is the cerebellum. This regulatory actions of the cerebellum are the effect of learning-in the sense of creating links between some social contexts and some profiles and levels of emotional response (Schmahmann J. D.&Pandya D. 1997, pp31-60). So by specific training we can make new connections between social context and emotional response so that the cerebellum is triggering the complex physiological mechanisms involved.

There are many scientific evidences that much of what we learn to do is stored in the brain in the form of reflexive behaviours that, as they are practiced, require the increasingly involvement of the conscious mind. The most common examples are cycling, driving or even speaking. Basically, after sufficient repetition, we have the feeling that the body knows for itself to make these complex actions. This ability to store and learn new behaviours is based on the flexibility of the human brain and on its ability to “engrain patterns on the circuit” (Eagleman 2017, p.97). Another consequence of understanding the ability of the brain to create and access “zombie programs”( 2017, p.98) which are vast neural connections that activate automatically is the necessity that any change adopted in speech, after practicing in exercises - in which the conscious part of the mind has a preponderant role-is used in everyday speech, so that the new habits replace in time the existing patterns of neural, vocal and muscular connections with new ones, also automatically responsive. Only after the new habit is consolidated in the everyday speech, it can be used on stage.

#### **4. CONCLUSION**

The process of changing one’s habits of speech and freeing the voice means working at a very profound level within the human organism. The way in which an individual use his voice, breath, posture and pronunciation is inextricably linked to his identity and is shaped by his life experiences. When we encourages the making of even small changes in areas as posture and breathing, releasing tension in the neck, jaw or the root of the tongue, the habitual use of the musculature of the face or the pharynx, we are having a direct impact on the student’s most intimate self.

When we work with a young woman who habitually uses a shallow, breathy voice and encourage her to discover and build a more resonant and powerful voice, with deeper harmonics, we are giving her not only access to a richer sound but providing her with an experience that can change her self image and the way she relates to others. So, in order to engage in an everyday use of this new, resonant voice she has to get used first to the feeling of presence and power it gives her.

The fear of being less acceptable to his family or peer group can be an important obstacle for the student in the learning and using accurately and naturally the standard pronunciation. Student actors from Republic Moldova, often told me that they feel rejected or belittled by the peer group or family for trying to speak “different” or “superior”. Every psychological obstacle has to be openly discussed with the student actor (actress) in order to be overcome by him (her) in the everyday speech.

The transition from specific exercises directly to the use of new habits in working at the actor's art workshops, without having a period of stabilizing the new patterns in everyday speech is totally unproductive. After a period of transition, the plasticity of the brain will make the new frequently used neural circuits become stronger and more stable, while the old reflexes will be wiped out of the system, being less and less used. The brain's ability to stabilize the neural circuits often used and to wipe out the unused ones is an adaptation to the need for speed and energy-saving brain functioning, crucial conditions for survival so it’s deeply engraved by the evolution in the human DNA (Eagleman 2018 p.26) .

The brain learns about the new way of being, moving and speaking and forges new neural pathways throughout the brain and central nervous system and their neuromuscular connections to support and facilitate the new body use, as well as dissolving old neural pathways that are now obsolete.

Consequently, if the new habits are not stabilised by the use in the everyday conversations, when the student actor will have to access his sensibility and deep motivations, his sincere self will automatically switch to the old habits of speaking that feels more “real” and truthful.

An increasingly detailed understanding of how the brain works can provide effective learning tools and methods, especially in the area of artistic expression, in which the body-mind relationship is essential.

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## MCDSARE: 2018

### International Multidisciplinary Scientific Conference on the Dialogue between Sciences & Arts, Religion & Education

#### VALORIZING THE ARTISTIC CULTURE OF THE STUDENTS IN THEIR TRAINING TO BECOME PRIMARY AND PRESCHOOL TEACHERS

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#### *Abstract*

This study investigates aspects related to the artistic knowledge, profiles and teaching techniques of primary and pre-school certification students from University of Oradea's Pedagogy of Primary and Preschool Education program. The study includes 126 participants who completed a survey about their knowledge, artistic profiles and techniques for teaching art and music in preschool and primary school classes. The survey consisted of 24 items, 5 open ended questions, one question asked participants to make connections among specific art elements, and eighteen Likert scale questions. The purpose of this study is to assess how well our pre-service teachers understand and are prepared to teach art and music to their future students. It is important for professors at the university to understand how prepared our students are in the field of art so that we may continuously improve our teaching program. This study answers the following research questions: 1. How prepared are our pre-service students to teach music and art when they become preschool or primary school teachers? 2. How do students propose to select the repertoire of songs and work materials for artistic and plastic education activities? 3. How important is teaching music and art in the minds of our students? Based on the results of our research, we will make recommendations for the improvement of our music and art teaching program at the university.

**Keywords:** artistic culture; artistic education; primary and preschool education, art; teaching;

#### 1. INTRODUCTION

What is art today? What does culture mean today? What does this mean for the artist, the public, the critic, the educator? How is artistic culture now formed and how is it transmitted? What is the basis of the arts initiation? The difficulty of answering the above questions and defining art and culture results precisely from the fact that their status changes constantly. In spite of the large number of definitions of art and culture, the synthesis of perspectives provides an incomplete picture.

In the present paper we do not intend to formulate exhaustive definitions of what art, culture, education are, but to capture their essential aspects, which, when harmoniously combined, contribute to the preservation of authentic value as a constant, always alive in the culture of humanity.

Primary and Preschool teachers play a vital role in the process of developing a culture that is opened to the arts in our young students. As professional educators who train our future teachers, it is important for us to continuously grow in our knowledge and skill to help prepare our students to become primary and preschool teacher who will further the arts in their classrooms.

## **2. PROBLEM STATEMENT**

From the artist's point of view, art must not be defined but be breathe. Art is the human activity through which the preoccupations, beliefs, questions, ideas etc. get outlined as they merge with the emotions and feelings they generate. At the risk of setting out a cliché idea, we agree that the artist merges with her/his art to such an extent that an attempt to articulate her/his ideas about it is superfluous. We can see, however, that if prior to the 20<sup>th</sup> century artists were mainly concerned with finding new forms of illustration of reality, afterwards, the creator's attention goes further on the idea of translating a play of possibilities into art.

Escaping from the reality of everyday life in trying to (re) find goodness, beauty and truth in their purest form is one of the possibilities that art gives us all. The idea that art "is an exhale of the everyday world and an attraction of the whole human being - as a unity of living and thinking - to another world, proposed and portrayed in the very work of art" (approx. quote) (Aslam & Moraru, 2017, p. 49), emphasizes that man has access to this world of art with the help of the keys of knowledge and sensation.

After a proper initiation, the art consumer has only to let go of the spell of artwork, rediscovering the world as if for the first time. We can ask whether there is aesthetics beyond beauty or whether harmony is just an attribute of art, and the answer can send us with the thought of a very wide audience, including those in peripheral areas, where the aesthetic takes particular forms. It is worth remembering, in this context, the artistic creations that fall within the aesthetic of the ugly, as forms of expression of the less beautiful but certainly intense experiences. Regardless of the aesthetics in which art falls, it is currently a product for anyone. The difference between art consumers is given by the level of education related to the arts.

We agree with the statement that "since art suggests an alteration of the mundane, a transformation of everyday world, artist and viewer to some extent, need landmarks in their journey, and these landmarks have been given over time what was called artistic canon" (approx. quote) (Aslam & Moraru, 2017, p. 56).

The art critic sets milestones and places artists' creations on a value scale based on aesthetic criteria. Although art is now being addressed to a wider audience, the spectrum of works of art that require critical analysis narrows. So, for contemporary critics, art is a form of elitism that requires profound knowledge, a living intuition, and refinement.

The consonance of the above ideas is illustrated synthetically in the statement: „All artistic manifestations can be reduced to the common denominator of the communication act. Hence, the syncretism of the arts, through which works are not so differentiated, even when their raw material is different. Painting bears the rhythm of music in the germ, as music is a sound architecture. Poets have often rhythms in melancholic tones, as painters have given their panels a musical harmony.” (approx. quote) (Mociulschi, 2013, p. 9)

As noted in the previous paragraphs, most art studies give greater importance to the artistic product, that is to creating art. The process of artistic creation is less debated. Is it because the artist's fuss or the phases through which matter passes to the completion of the artwork does not necessarily fall into the aesthetics of beauty? Or because artistic labour is an inner, mysterious act, inaccessible to the eye of the outside world? Psychology is the field that attempts to capture the specificity of the act of creation, placing at its core creativity as an essential attribute of the human personality.

The popularization of works of art is an extensive and complex process carried out on several levels, which involves different approaches depending on factors such as culture, age, level of education,



economic level and interests of those to whom it is addressed. In the context of this paper, we turn our attention towards one who helps prepare the art consumer, the teacher. The way the teacher relates to art, the extent to which he/she feels and knows the arts and his/her willingness to be opened to new. The teacher's permanent curiosity will be reflected in his/her work with the children.

As a "patrimony of values, the axiological universe in which man acquires his dignity" (approx. quote) (Georgiu, 2001, p. 37), human culture is formed and developed through a dynamic and continuous education. We find this idea also in the literary studies of Umberto Eco (2002), which states, "every human being lives within a certain cultural model and interprets the experience based on the universe of assimilation forms he has acquired" (approx. quote) (p. 149). Since culture is a goodness that man acquires, he assimilates it, we can agree with the statement: "Artistic education is defined in short as a sum of means of learning that will provide the student with access to art and, thereby helping him to form a vision of himself and of the world in which he lives" (approx. quote) (Iacob & Mihăilescu, coord, 2016, p. 17). Artistic education activities carried out with children are of great importance not only to achieve our fundamental goal of shaping and developing artistic culture, but also because through art they have the chance to escape from the demanding reality of student life. Art proposes a different world. At the same time, art forms a consistent part of what we call generic culture and represents both the factor that produces permanent changes in its evolution, and its stability factor (Wolf, 1999, p. 289).

According to Radu (2008, pp. 79-81), the level of knowledge and graphical representation of an adult who has not trained in this direction stagnates at the point at which he reached at the age of puberty. From a musical point of view, we can also talk about the fact that the lack of continuous training in vocal and/or instrumental singing leads to lower interpretive capacities. Can we, therefore, consider that in initial teacher education for primary and preschool, we must limit ourselves to capitalizing on those knowledge and artistic skills that pre-service teachers have acquired during gymnasium studies? Shouldn't young students have teachers who are prepared to effectively integrate the arts into their lives in school? Doesn't the university have an obligation to move its future teachers beyond what they learned about the arts in gymnasium?

### **3. PURPOSE OF THE STUDY**

This study investigates aspects related to the artistic knowledge, profiles, and teaching techniques of primary and preschool certification students from University of Oradea's Pedagogy of Primary and Preschool Education program. The purpose of this study is to assess how well our pre-service teachers understand and are prepared to teach art and music to their future students.

### **4. RESEARCH QUESTIONS**

This study answers the following research questions: 1. How prepared are our pre-service students to teach music and art when they become pre-school or primary school teachers? 2. How do students propose to select the repertoire of songs and work materials for artistic and plastic education activities? 3. How important is teaching music and art in the minds of our students?

### **5. RESEARCH METHODS**

#### **5.1. Participants**

The study was attended by 126 students from the University of Oradea, the Faculty of Social and Human Sciences, specializing in Pedagogy of Primary and Preschool Education. Out of these, 19 students (15.1%) are in the first year, 43 students (34.1%) are in the second year, and 62 students (49.2%) are in the third year (2 students (1.6%) did not answer in the questionnaire); 71 students (56.3%) are enrolled in the regular day program and 54 students (42.9%) are enrolled in the weekend program (one participant did not answer). The average age of the students is 26.2, the students range in age from 19 to 56 years old. There are 123 female students (97.7%) and 3 students (2.3%) are males. There are 71 students (56.3%) who come from urban areas, and 52 students (41.3%) from rural areas (3 students (2.4%) did not complete this question).

89 of the participants (70.4%) graduated from high school and 35 students (27.7%) have earned a 3-year or 4-year university degree (2 students (1.6%) did not answer this question). 65 participants (51.6%) graduated from the theoretical profile high schools, 25 students (19.8%) graduated from technological high schools, and 27 students (21.4%) graduated from vocational high schools (8 students (6.3%) did not answer this question). Additionally, 96 students (76.2%) have no experiences of working in education, while 30 students (23.8%) have at least one year of experience working in education.

### **5.2. Method and evaluation tool**

We developed a questionnaire containing 24 items: 5 open ended questions, one question asked participants to make connections among specific art elements, and eighteen Likert scale questions. The questionnaire items ask for answers about knowledge, artistic profiles, and techniques for teaching art and music in preschool and primary school classes.

To investigate how students receive information in the field of arts, 7 items were devised. To capture how they can capitalize on educational practice, 17 items were developed. Four questions (16, 17, 18, 22) relate to how students receive information in the field of music culture and education. These questions include: 16. *What types of music do you listen to?* 17. *List your three favourite artists.* 18. *Name your three favourite piece/works/songs.* 22. *Asses your own level of creativity* (scale of 1 – 5). Items 21, 22 were designed to illustrate how students receive information in the field of artistic and plastic education: 21. *List three painters that you know.* 22. *Assess your creativity level* (scale 1 – 5). Additionally, students were asked to answer questions related to the qualification of the teaching staff with which the music education classes were held in their previous stages of preparation. These questions included: 19. *The qualification of the teacher that conducted the music class was:* Fully Qualified, Substitute Qualified, Substitute Unqualified, Other Qualified, Unqualified. 20. *Grade on a scale of 1-10 how effective the music classes were for you.* Eight questions (Questions 8–15) were developed to investigate how students intend to use arts information in educational practice and translate them into musical education activities. This section of the survey included questions like: 9. *In interpreting songs with children, I care about ...* 11. *From my point of view, interpreting a song means ...* Items 1-7 required students to provide an answer on how they translate into artistic and plastic education and technology education information from the arts. These questions included items such as: 1. *When I have visual arts and practical skills, I choose the colouring plate because ...* 7. *When I choose my work patterns, I first take into account the following criteria ...* Additionally, students were asked to provide an answer on the self-perceptual level of creativity and the importance given to artistic education in the activities of preschool, lower school and gymnasium students. (item 23). *Assess the role of arts activities in preschool, lower school and gymnasium* (item 24).

## **6. FINDINGS**

The study results are presented using descriptive indices or by showing the percentages for the response for each category of the questionnaire items. The quantitative analysis of the results is presented considering first the organization of the questionnaire items around the dimensions of education: musical education, artistic-plastic education, and technological education. Second, data around the capacity to receive and apply information in the artistic field in didactic activity with preschool and small school children.

### **6.1 Reception of artistic and musical culture by students**

From the students' answers to item 16 (What kind of music do you prefer to listen to?) the favourite music genres include:

1. classical music (m = 3,032, sd = 1,430)
2. pop music (m = 3,008, sd = 1,456)
3. religious music (m = 2,814, sd = 1,478)
4. ambient music (m = 2,806, sd = 1,406).
5. maneels (m = 1,387, s.d. = 0,871)
6. rock music (m = 1,935, s.d. = 1,311).

For item 20 (How attractive did you consider the music education classes in the gymnasium?) the students assessed their musical education classes as attractive. The mean score for students (on a 1-10 scale) was 7,698 (s.d. = 2,284). 82 (65,1%), assessed their music teacher in gymnasium classes as a tutor; 16 students (12,7%) rated their music teacher as a teacher of a different specialization; 6 students (4,8%) rated their music teacher as a qualified substitute; and 6 (4,8%) rated their music teacher as an unskilled substitute.

The sources from which students find information in the arts include:

1. the Internet (m = 4,174, s.d. = 1,035)
2. TV shows and TV documentaries (m = 3,376, s.d. = 1,261)
3. reading (m = 3,312, s.d. = 1,227)
4. concerts (m = 2,584, s.d. = 1,302)
5. exhibitions (m = 2,704, s.d. = 1,313)
6. art albums (m = 2,768, s.d. = 1,287)

Painters Michelangelo, Da Vinci, Picasso, Grigorescu and Luchian are mentioned by approximately 100 students (80%). Names such as Andreescu, Boticelli, Renoir are found in approximately 38 students (30%). Brauner, Klimt, Monet and Miess are mentioned in considerably smaller proportions.

The preferred composers and artists mentioned by respondents cover a wide variety of musical genres. Students named the following: Vivaldi, Mozart, Beethoven, Porumbescu, Aurel Tamas, Florica Ungur, Florica Duma, and Andra, Smiley, Il Divo, which shows that students' musical preferences are diverse. The musical works or favourite songs listed are in most cases associated with the performers or composers mentioned in the previous item.

#### **6.2 Valorizing of information from artistic culture in artistic-plastic and technological education by students**

The reason students respond to the use of colouring cards (item 1) in visual arts activities and practical abilities is:

1. they easily associate with the topic of the week or the day (m = 3,672, s.d. = 1,196); used by children (m = 3,619, s.d. = 1,144),
2. using their children, they get beautiful works (m = 3,352, s.d. = 1,14)

On the other hand, the lowest average for this item is for the answer variant being used successfully by other colleagues (m = 2,992, s.d. = 1,273).

The highest average for item 2 in the use of cut elements offered for assembly in children's works during practical skills were as follows:

1. I prefer not to give children cuts but leave them to cut them off (m = 3,261, s.d. = 1,213)
2. will fall more easily during the given working time (m = 3,258, s.d. = 1,396)
3. children will not be injured during work (m = 3,432, s.d. = 1,315)

The lowest averages were obtained because less time would be allocated and explained (m = 2,296, s.d. = 1,136) and because the small ones could not perform other steps in the work (m = 3,328, s.d. = 1,169).

Item 3 of the questionnaire refers to aspects that students take into account when selecting their work materials for the activities. According to the answers offered, the work materials are selected according to:

the consistency between the type of brush, the working material and the work stand (m = 3,968, s.d. = 1,054)

the materials are of quality (m = 3,928, s.d. = 1,001)

brushes of all sizes (m = 3,640, s.d. = 1,240).

Students would not opt for cheap material (m = 1,944, s.d. = 0,961) and would not leave parents to choose the work materials (m = 2,064, s.d. = 1,112). However, in determining the correlation between working materials and the obtained workmanship (item 4), it was found that students only achieve 36,14% of the correct correspondence in the use of water-colour work, 46,51% correct correlation in the use of work with coloured pencils, markers and 54,21% in the use of tempera, gaus, and acrylic work

techniques. A fairly high percentage is also for those who do not provide variants for the three correspondence situations (13,25%, 24,41%, 16,86%) when solving item 4.

Since one of the common rules in the classroom is to protect the group/classroom furniture and clothing, to prevent possible shortcomings in artistic and plastic education (item 5), students consider it important to use water ( $m = 4,00$ ,  $s.d. = 1,077$ ), that it is more important to experience and use dressing gowns or materials to protect the furniture ( $m = 3,333$ ,  $s.d. = 1,332$ ) or to work clean ( $m = 3,332$ ,  $s.d. = 1,411$ ). They do not intend to offer homework ( $m = 1,976$ ,  $s.d. = 1,124$ ) or use exclusively coloured pencils and markers ( $m = 2,656$ ,  $s.d. = 1,032$ ).

When looking for work patterns (item 6), they prefer patterns downloaded from the internet ( $m = 3,976$ ,  $s.d. = 0,924$ ), books ( $m = 3,632$ ,  $s.d. = 1,096$ ) and less from other colleagues ( $m = 2,848$ ,  $s.d. = 1,150$ ).

The criteria according to which they choose the work materials (item 7) are those related to the beauty of the work ( $m = 4,048$ ,  $s.d. = 1,014$ ), the novelty of the working technique ( $m = 3,736$ ,  $s.d. = 1,078$ ) with which the children are familiar ( $m = 3,658$ ,  $s.d. = 1,014$ ).

### **6.3. Valorizing of information from artistic culture in music education by students**

In choosing the song they propose to teach children (item 8), the students consider the following:

1. the content of the ideas of the song ( $m = 4,040$ ,  $s.d. = 1,080$ )
2. the song to be dynamic ( $m = 3,968$ ,  $s.d. = 1,054$ )
3. have a simple formal structure consisting of easy-to-memorize phrases ( $m = 3,84$ ,  $s.d. = 1,065$ ) ( $m = 3,736$ ,  $s.d. = 1,012$ ).

They choose less songs that contain explicit interpretation ( $m = 2,48$ ,  $s.d. = 0,894$ ), or do not specifically follow that the voice of the performer is beautiful ( $m = 2,544$ ,  $s.d. = 1,285$ ).

In interpreting songs with children (item 9), students intend to focus on:

1. the appropriate breathing ( $m = 4,024$ ,  $s.d. = 1,019$ )
2. the song's content ( $m = 3,888$ ,  $s.d. = 1,044$ )
3. the accuracy of the tune ( $m = 3,824$ ,  $s.d. = 1,032$ )
4. the singing of the song ( $m = 3,492$ ,  $s.d. = 1,100$ ).

When I give the tone for a song (item 10), students:

1. aim to keep the same tone for each interpretation ( $m = 4,246$ ,  $s.d. = 0,943$ )
2. use a laptop / phone / tablet application ( $m = 3,456$ ,  $s.d. = 1,241$ )
3. do not think the tone is not important ( $m = 1,680$ ,  $s.d. = 1,051$ )
4. would not even use a musical instrument ( $m = 2,136$ ,  $s.d. = 1,095$ ).

From their point of view, students think that interpreting a song means (item 11):

1. to play respecting the formal structure of the song ( $m = 3,658$ ,  $s.d. = 1,339$ )
2. respect the ratio between voice and instrument intensity ( $m = 3,584$ ,  $s.d. = 1,320$ )
3. sing in concordance with the musical accompaniment ( $m = 3,576$ ,  $s.d. = 1,357$ )
4. sing synchronized ( $m = 3,560$ ,  $s.d. = 1,247$ )
5. interpreting interpretations ( $m = 3,560$ ,  $s.d. = 1,240$ )
6. less singing at will, regardless of context ( $m = 1,928$ ,  $s.d. = 1,130$ )
7. singing loudly ( $m = 2,160$ ,  $s.d. = 1,152$ )
8. just sing ( $m = 2,232$ ,  $s.d. = 1,171$ )

To encourage children to sing clean and easy (item 12), students consider that:

1. the guidelines should be correctly formulated ( $m = 4,208$ ,  $s.d. = 0,994$ ),
2. it is necessary to explain and model the desired sound pattern ( $m = 4,039$ ,  $s.d. = 1,091$ ),
3. giving the personal example ( $m = 3,944$ ,  $s.d. = 1,186$ ).
4. I do not care about this ( $m = 1,408$ ,  $s.d. = 0,976$ )
5. let the children intuitively sing ( $m = 2,464$ ,  $s.d. = 1,111$ ).

In musical activities (item 13), students admit that it is important to explain as much as possible each indication ( $m = 4,008$ ,  $s.d. = 1,110$ ), but it is important to ensure the music flow ( $m = 3,912$ ,  $s.d. = 1,164$ ). At the same time, the music has a greater weight than the speaker ( $m = 3,688$ ,  $s.d. = 1,102$ ), it contradicts with the answer it is good to stop after solving each task to make judgments (even after a song), which also got an increased average ( $m = 3,619$ ,  $s.d. = 1,205$ ).

In the musical activities with children, students would prefer to learn and to sing (item 14):

1. songs from different children's songs (m = 3,976, s.d. = 0,902)
2. internet songs (m = 3,547, s.d. = 1,128)
3. songs from the children's repertoire (m = 3,51, s.d. = 1,202)
4. songs taken from colleagues (m = 2.624, s.d. = 1.090).

The self-assessed level of students' creativity (item 23) is slightly above average (m = 3,491, s.d. = 1,165 on a five-step Likert scale).

The role of artistic education during the stages of human development is considered to be important, both at preschool age (m = 4,555, s.d. = 0,908) and small school (m = 4,447, s.d. = 1,063) and gymnasium (m = 4.103, s.d. = 1.158).

## **7. CONCLUSION**

The results of the descriptive study undertaken allowed us to obtain the answer to the research questions but also to reflect on the validity of the answers provided, in accordance with the spontaneous observations of the course activities, seminars, or specialized practice conducted by the applicants with the students along their training at the level of bachelor studies.

Research Question 1: *How prepared are our pre-service students to teach music and art when they become preschool or primary school teachers?*

Compared to seminar activities where students actually solve certain didactic tasks, their answers to the questions in the questionnaire indicate a wider artistic culture and a better knowledge of working techniques and art-specific language elements. Therefore, in interpreting the results of the work instrument used, we do not exclude the possibility that the students have selected desirable answers instead of the variation corresponding to the action they are taking. Students' answers indicate a medium level of their artistic culture (like gymnasium graduates), but a real concern for continuous training as a prerequisite for their professional activity.

It is interesting to note that there are a number of contradictions in the answers given by the students. For example, they say it is equally important to provide detailed explanations of musical interpretation and to perform musical activities in which the speech has a very small weight. Another contradiction can be found in the answers that underline the importance of the exact tone for singing the songs in the repertoire and the lack of any musical instrument as a landmark. From the answers offered, students demonstrate that they understand the importance of using quality work materials, but less than half realize correct associations in the correspondence of working techniques.

Research Question 2: *How do students propose to select the repertoire of songs and work materials for artistic and plastic education activities?*

According to the answers most often, students are looking for online resources for didactic activities and do not intend to take over from other colleagues' ideas about the songs they propose to children or the teaching materials (e.g., colour cards etc.).

Although the collection of songs is mentioned by a considerable number of respondents as a source for the diversification of the repertoire of children's songs, the activities carried out with the students reveal that their solfegiosis skills are limited.

Research Question 3: *How important is teaching music and art in the minds of our students?*

Students consider that the study of arts is very important in all stages of the development of children and young people.

### **Perspectives**

While initial teacher education for primary and preschool education is late for the acquisition and development of imaging techniques and vocal and instrumental vocal skills, we can still guide students' learning to capitalize on their artistic culture in order to adequately choose content. Beyond the context of courses and seminars, we offer, for example, extracurricular student activities, aimed at viewing art films illustrating the inner world of artists. These can be followed by debates on the topics presented in the films, on cinematographic achievements etc.

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**DESECRALIZING OF MUSIC**

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***Abstract***

The evolution of science and technology during the contemporary period is an unprecedented phenomenon in the history of mankind, generating at the level of the human psyche the impression of a need for a minute organization of time, in the desire to do as many activities as possible. This agglomeration of everyday life is justified by various needs such as improving the standard of living or the continuous development of conquests in these areas, neglecting almost entirely the consequences on the psyche and the sensitive dimension of the human being. The fact that they have made tremendous progress does not ensure, as we would have expected the welfare of society, but on the contrary, it contributes to the robotization and annihilation of human sensibilities. In this context, the art of music and all other arts suffer from many malformations, constantly departing from their sacred origins, adapting themselves by sacrificing authentic values to an artificial environment lacking in consistency, empathy and emotion. This paper proposes going back to origins and highlight the initial artistic goal in antithesis with the contemporary social and artistic organism.

**Keywords:** Sacredness; technology; education; values;

**1. INTRODUCTION**

Over the years, the technique development proved to be useful from the general evolution point of view, increasing the personal comfort and helping the most scientific discoveries of humanity until now, but step by step, this has proved to be nocive for what is called humanism, natural and obvious, and getting higher the most wanted desire of creating an artificial environment instead of a natural one. „ The transformation of technology in an environment has undesirable consequences over human life and society. The technological environment cuts and destroys the natural and cultural environments. The simplifying reducement of human being to a simple logical algorithms operator produces an alienation. But what can not be reduced to a integrated logical sequence and introducing it in a procedural system, to assure efficiency , is excluded. ” (Lemeni, 28.01.2015). Actually, using the technology excessively and forcing to attach it in everyday life chores, cancels the sensitive and spiritual dimension of a person, that is tremendous and formost in a someone’s fulfillfull life .

More than this, the constant need of discover the new among social and political factors goes to annihilate the need of education the sensitive part of the person, thinking that is the last job from the

priorities list to do. And precisely this part of cutting off or dilution the human part represents in fact the cause of cutting the collective conscience to each we assist so helpless. Without a healthy and sensitive conscience, the real values field and not the material one promoted nowadays, we can see our lives degradation: economically, socially, politically, educational, cultural and spiritual. "Life is based on communication and living together with persons is replaced with a robotic behaviour based on standard rules and non personal procedures. Words and gestures are exhausted through general templates by procedures that mutilate life". (Lemeni, 28.01.2015) This problem has been risen even back from late antiquity through Saint Augustin's writings, the one who „doesn't deny the fact that industry and people's art made extraordinary progress over time, but he is ready to add that these material and intellectual progress isn't complete without the moral one. Because if all these made people to gain profit, they can also destroy them as well". (Dr AKE Patrice, 2005, p. 249).

## **2. PROBLEM STATEMENT**

In the historical context in which the material and technology dominate the humanism, in which social, political, economic and cultural problems force to adapt the person, to emigrate or to increase the labour hours, neglecting the educational part, we can say that we assist to the darkest arts evolution until present, including music too. Cutting time to small pieces, surviving fight or questioning education and social mechanism from politics, are just a few factors that have generated huge damages to the whole Romanian society levels, damages that are practically impossible to adjust, regarding the evolutionary tendencies. This research tries to go back to its roots and origins, to highlight the real purpose of music, in the desire to bring to the forefront the importance of musical education in the formation of a sensitive personality to the needs and problems of a society beyond the personal ones.

## **3. RESEARCH QUESTIONS**

Can musical education, practiced in today Romanian school, without vocation, grow the pupil's sensitiveness with spiritual, moral, ethic and cultural values? Can musical education be part of the personal development, improving communication skills, the knowledge capacity or self education, team work, social activities development of volunteering or rising self-esteem? We try to answer these questions in order to make fast X-rays over the Romanian educational contemporary system obeyed to annual educational reforms.

## **4. PURPOSE OF THE STUDY**

The purpose of the study is to highlight the sacred origins of music in antithesis with the sound of contemporary music.

## **5. WHAT IS MUSIC?**

Music is a "hard to get art" (Bălan, 1966, p.3). It represents the most direct and profound form of communication to transmit spiritual state of happiness, sadness, hate, concern, comfort, harmony or fulfillment, without considering the social, economical or ethnic differences. "No human art can put in words the flowing of a river, even more the deepest and mysterious soul. Only music makes it flow upon us. The soul learns to know the sounds mirror." (Gagim, 2003, p.11)

This has been accompanying the man from birth, being present over the years, in all the states of all manifestations of a religious or profane nature. To understand the real force of music on human psyche and its role in education and social life, you must know the origins and the context where it appeared, how it was formed and especially its purpose.

### **5.1 The sacred origin of music**

The first origin of music was divine, from the sky. According to the biblical data, God created the light, the skies with the Earth, the waters and the land, the Sun, moon and other stars, sea and land creatures and finally after the seven mighty days, through the power of the Word. „First of all it was the Word, and the Word was God himself, and the Word was with God and The Word was God. „ (The Bible of Saint Scripture of the Old and New Testament, 2009, p.1) „ And the Word has made a body and lived among us with gift and truth". (The Bible of Saint Scripture of the Old and New Testament, 2009, p.1) So,



our universe was born of love from the holy power of the Word, The Word is no one else but God himself, and Heavenly music was born in the same time with the man. "The morning stars burst into gladness, and all the sons of God were screaming with joy." (The Bible of Saint Scripture of the Old and New Testament, 2009, p.550) Its role was not entertainment, polishing the everyday life of man, but praising the Magnificence and Goodness of God. The Incarnate Word itself, Jesus Christ, the Son of God, sang with his disciples songs of praise: "After singing the songs of praise, they went out climbing the Mount of Olives." (The Bible of Saint Scripture of the Old and New Testament, 2009, 980)

Along with the Word, music is the second method of communicating the divine-human message, with more than 600 verses in the Bible being found about it. "Shout to the LORD with shouting joy, all the people of the earth! Cry out, cry and sing praise! Sing unto the Lord with the harp, with the harp, and with the songs of your mouth. With trumpets and sounds of the horn, shout before the king, to God!" (The Bible of Saint Scripture of the Old and New Testament, 2009, 610) So the primary purpose of the first music was to glorify God and His Majesty.

### **5.2 The secular origin of music**

From a scientific point of view, the music would be the same age as the primitive man, about 40000 years, the end of the Paleolithic, according to the many musical suppositions debated over time without, however, having concrete evidence and attributing an artistic goal to those times. "Music appears to man originally as a mystery as a spell." (Gagim, 2003, p.13) It is supposed that the very struggle for survival and adaptation to the environment were the main sources of inspiration for the later artistic form of later music, the onomatopoeic sound being the main form of communication between people. "Reduced to a more limited gestation, predominantly buco-facial, the pantomime became, at the end of a long evolution, song and language; Instead of mimicking the deeds of the physical world, man imitated them through sound and rhythmic movements"(Biberi, 1968, p.15). The first function of prehistoric music was the magical, ritualistic, communication and induration of supernatural forces, and later it was used for religious purposes, to dynamize the process of work or to need exteriorization of the soul states. Over time, the primordial, sacred, role of music has been replaced and forced to obey worldly superficial desires, diluting the initial purpose of the world to its very end. Unfortunately, "today, the heart of music seems to rust like the iron rust, and its aura has left somewhere down, we could even say downstairs, in the area of the womb, sexuality, where instinctual energies make the law alone, claiming prosthetics and artefacts, which convince us that the bounded, promiscuous spirit detests the elevated, steadfast spirit." (Dănceanu, 2007, p.87) The causes that have consistently contributed to the removal of the original purpose of music and, together with it, to the degradation of the humanistic principles are found, as I spoke earlier about the social, economic and political problems confronting contemporary Romanian society and not only. A healthy social body can not function independently of its vital functions, especially since its heart, sensitivity, creativity, freedom, soul are amputated.

### **5.3 Desacralization of music in the context of Romanian contemporary education and society**

"At first, the scholarly music was of divine origin. Gradually, it became human, then animal and vegetal, so that today it is predominantly a part of the mineral, from the inorganic chemistry." (Dănceanu, 2007, p.87) Its desacralization gradually developed, being directly influenced by the problems in the Romanian education system, the problems caused by the absence of a realistic plan of reform with regard to social issues, politicization, globalization and chaotic technology.

### **5.4 Musical education in Romanian school**

"In the structure of the Romanian pre-university education, only two disciplines in the artistic field have a mandatory, individualized status, throughout the compulsory education" (Apostu, 2016, p. 28), Musical Education and Artistic Education.

At the level of primary education, musical education is taught in an interdisciplinary way that has at its core the disciplines Music and Physical Education, matter itself being called Music and Movement. The actual time allocated to it in grades I and II is two hours a week, with the third and fourth grades having a one-hour frame plan. In gymnasium education, the artistic field is integrated into the framework plan in the curriculum Arte, which includes Musical Education and Plastic Education, materials belonging to the common trunk, which have as teaching time one hour per week, with the exception of the 8th grade , where the time spent on the study is 30 minutes / week.

"During the lower cycle of the high school (OMECE No. 3410 / 16.03.2009), the Music Education and Visual Education disciplines were allocated one hour / week, in the 9th grade, and one hour to two weeks, in the class of Xa." (Apostu, 2016, p. 28) At this level, Music Education classes are almost entirely excluded from the framework curriculum, which is allocated according to the class profile, one hour per week, one hour to two weeks, or even the total elimination of depending on the class profile. Moreover, in so little time spent studying music and the arts in general, school programs converge towards the idea of cultivating a diverse general culture, which is not bad, but at the expense of cultivating the spiritual and sensitive dimension of the student. In this context, music and the arts in general, those dealing exclusively with educating the sensitive and spiritual dimension of the human being, are almost annihilated. It is practically impossible for the 9-hour Seminar of Visual Education and Musical Education, both in secondary and high school, in the case of classes that have one hour to two weeks in the program, to achieve:

- initial testing,
- two evaluation hours,
- one hour to complete the school situation,
- in the rest of the allocated time, 5 hours, teach theoretical, historical and practical notions, designed to develop the "affective, creative and aesthetic dimensions of their own personality" as proposed by the Ministry of Education in the curriculum.

Also, in the "high school cycle" one hour / week is provided for the Artistic Education discipline only in the theoretical field, humanist profile (we do not take into account the vocational branch, artistic profile, because it has a different status, configured in relation to the field of specialization)." (Apostu, 2016, p. 28) This was included in the framework plan also in the desire to achieve a negative financial economy for the arts by merging Music Education with Visual Education, which proposes "reevaluation of the competences acquired by students by studying the disciplines within the art curriculum, in 9th and 10th grades - the high school cycle" (Apostu, 2016, p. 31). According to this objective, the subject itself should capitalize on the information gained in the Visual Education and Musical Education disciplines in the 9th and 10th grades, which is impossible from two points of view:

- The Visual Education Teacher can not capitalize on the skills gained at the time of Musical Education and vice versa;

- Artistic Education, according to the school curriculum, is centered on the reevaluation of cultural heritage elements: "identifying the local patrimony elements in the context of the national heritage, according to stylistic and historical landmarks; the evaluation of listed patrimony as a basis for the identification, reporting and promotion of unclassified projects; the development of patrimony cards for local heritage items, etc." (<http://oldsite.edu.ro/index.php/articles/curriculum/c556+590/?startnum=21>) As a matter of fact, Artistic Education has a completely new theme that goes beyond the competence of any teacher in the Arts area and can only be taught by a third cultural patrimonial specialist.

Also, at pre-university education level, there is the possibility of setting up new, expanding or deepening school curricular that are part of the school curriculum (CDS), theoretically designed programs, depending on student options. Basically, "the choice of CDS programs is often determined by the expectations of parents and teachers, rather than by the actual student training interests. The size of the school or its human resources are also important, and the interest in deepening and developing some of the subjects being tested will also influence the offerings that focus on new areas of study in the artistic and cultural area" (Apostu, 2016, p. 31). As long as the arts are not taught at the level responsible and professional at the pre-school stage, capitalizing on individual and not collective talent as they do today, have no chance in reaching the primordial goal of cultivating consciousness with moral, ethical, cultural and spiritual values, or re-establishing respect for society.

## **6. FINDINGS**

Regarding this, we can not talk about an education centred on values and attitudes, competences and practical skills, as the National Education Ministry proposes, but a more likely kneeling the spiritual things, the beauty of things. Because of the overdosed curriculum context to main subjects according to each profile of a classroom, and of an absent educational program centred on real pupil's competences,

Art classes are almost disappearing or minimized in the personal development importance, and maybe the most education's dimension, in order to have a healthy society, based on authentic values. Art classes have the goal not only to cultivate on the level of consciousness the primordial spiritual values, to enrich the human being with aesthetic, sensitive, moral and cultural virtues, but also have the capacity to stimulate imagination and creativity, to encourage teamwork, to level up social differences, to eliminate racial prejudices.

## **7. CONCLUSION**

“Musical language proved to be the most noble form of destroying social, ethnic and religious or racial differences.” ([https://cantusmundi.com/ro/?show\\_default](https://cantusmundi.com/ro/?show_default)) This is a divine gift, part of space, “the universe created by God as a whole in harmony, organised for eternity between space and time” (<http://www.dex.ro/cosmos>), it is the shortest way to communicate the artistic intentions, addresses to all the people, no matter what age, nationality or knowledge they have, and especially with a unequivocally catharsis effect on human conscience. Along time, it is proved that music has no limits of feeling and understanding life, all the human activities, it springs from the most intimate part of the creature-soul and it is addressed to the soul, it has the power to unite and level up prejudice but to cultivate the person with esthetical, moral and spiritual values in the most profound and perfect shape. But today, unfortunately we assist at desacralizing arts, the irreversible degradation of the contemporary society, the Romanian school having a destructive role in this process by lacking real solutions that should aim at valuing on the real skills of each pupil. And here, musical education can not cultivate pupils sensitivity with spiritual, moral, ethic and cultural values anymore, can not improve the personal development, communication skills, knowledge or self knowledge, team work, volunteering activities or growing self-esteem. The causes can be detected by social problems, economical difficulties, politics, excessively high tech, globalization, sound body is transformed into a one of manipulation and destroying the process of growing up the next adult's personality.

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## IMPORTANT STAGES IN THE TRADITIONAL ARTISTIC EDUCATION IN THE 18TH CENTURY – 20TH CENTURY

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### *Abstract*

The outstanding personalities of their every epoch were concerned with education along centuries. The pedagogical and didactic activity before Christ represents a major landmark for the present times and is the richest source of inspiration and of acknowledgement of major universal values. History enriched humanity with valuable personalities since early times such as Socrates, whom we discover two basic ideas referring to pedagogy that is “I’m aware that I don’t know anything”. Both Socrates and Plato and Aristotle, through their writings start the science of pedagogy. Aristotle is the prototype of the professor and the promoter of progressive development of the human nature with him, the three sequences of the evolution of the soul: the corporality, sensitiveness and intelligibility need different approaches. The next period brought great Christian educators on the scene of artistic education such as St. Basil the Great, Gregory of Nazianzus, St. John Chrysostom and Thomas Aquinas. These hold God before all aspirations and events. The 17th century brings to the attention in the area of the education an important and controversial figure the philosopher and pedagogue Jean Jacques Rousseau who issued many ideas that influenced new pedagogical trends. He realized that the aim of education is the rehabilitation of the social man, and this rehabilitation should be made according the lows of God. The ideas of Jean Jacques Rousseau are to be found with John Locke who initiated theories according with which the man is born free and uses his reason as he will. He criticizes the medieval education and deals with the children’s education, attempting a particular teaching. He suggests courses for training in various jobs as: engraving, perfume making, drawing, etc. The essence of John Locke’s thinking consists in the fact that it approaches an attentive observation of the inner soul of the child and of his temperamental features and above all of the stages of physical and mental development. The personality who achieves for the first time in history solidarity between the productive activity and the educational one is Johann Heinrich Pestalozzi, who starts a social educational establishment for children. The 20th century brings the focus on the child in school. The research made especially by Jean Piaget and Ellen Key demonstrate this.

**Keywords:** Pedagogical activity; professor; Christian educators; philosopher; social education;

### 1. INTRODUCTION

The artistic pedagogy in Europe 18th – 19th includes work of John Locke to Jean Jacques and Johann Heinrich Pestalozzi. An outstanding pedagogue of the age is John Locke (1632 – 1704) who said

that 'There is nothing in the mind until it is the senses'. He studies at Oxford (Christ Church College), he is elected a member of the Royal Society and publishes his most important philosophical work. According to Locke's theory, the man is born free and uses his reason as he pleases. The human being can be educated; the role of the pedagogue is a very important one as he is modeling the student abilities. Like Rousseau he seriously criticizes the mediaeval education and supports the private education. Moreover just like Rousseau, Locke clearly deals with pedagogical education of children, stating the idea that every child is particular and that is how it should be and the necessary methods of education as well. He is the champion of introduction of courses for jobs like engraving, perfume maker, writing, reading, drawing, etc.

He identified three types of education: the physical, the moral and the intellectual one. He is for self-control and he states a series of requests by which the educator should be guided. The most important pedagogical writing of Locke is the selection of thoughts: *Quelques pensees sur l'education* ("Some thoughts concerning Education), published in 1693, which actually is a selection of letters written by Locke to his friend Edward Clarke, to help him educate his children.

Jean Jacques Rousseau makes a sensitive and epic picture of physical ages and their corresponding stages of growing of the child. In the middle of his concerns he places the child and all the elements that contribute to a nice and harmonious evolution. He understood that the goal of the education is the reconstruction of the social man, and this molding being made by the laws of God. In this writings God can be found in nature, society and reason as well. The beauty of the bunch of information consists in harmonious mix of all issues mentioned above. The ideas that tormented Rousseau are to be found in writings, as themes of some contest of the Academy in Dijon concerned with the progress of sciences and arts, what is the origin of the inequality among people?

His writings are full of a strong humanist spirit. The essence of the Rousseau's doctrine consists in the fact that "The student is removed from the society of his time and raised in the society of the educator and once he is molded to go back to the society, having the purpose to improve it by the student's descendants according with the new system.

Jean Jacques Rousseau proves to be a minute, careful observer of raising and education of the child, starting with the family frame. He explains clearly by examples of parents who are supposed to take measures and suggests methods by which these can educate and train a child.

In this book "Emil", he doesn't hesitate to express his sincere opinions about on Locke, coming into conflict with the latter's ideas concerning teaching a child to read. If Locke wishes to use methods of learning to read by as he says: 'we can use bricks and toys on which there are letters to teach the alphabet by playing, by which we can make this process pleasant and fun. Full of useful ideas and rules, the collection 'Emil' is an important ABC for the teachers nowadays. Jean Jacques Rousseau is very attentive to all activity in which children are involved. This he provides us with a help and decoder of the child's behavior. He says that the child must be given the problems and let to solve them by himself. He is not supposed to know anything because you told him so, but because he himself understood, not to learn science, but to discover it.

His fundamental work "Emil" or „De l'education" is no doubt a real treatise of pedagogy written in a unique essay- like style. "Don't give your student any kind of verbal lesson, he should learn only by experimenting, don't punish him in any way, because he doesn't know what to be mistaken means".

The personality who archives for the first time in history a programmatic solidarity between the productive activity and the educational one is Johan Heinrich Pestalozzi( 1746-1827) born in Zurich. He was driven by the humanist ideals and he starts a kind of social educational establishment, where he gathered a group of poor children, educated through work and intellectual activities (reading, writing, and calculating). He is the author of several pedagogical novel *The Swan Song*, his last work depicts his worries and aspirations; "thus to bring to life my ideas about elementary education, my favorite idea and the goal of my life". He manages to coordinate a primary school in Burdorf and he starts a seminar for training educators.

Pestalozzi wishes a generalized education for all children, no matter his social background. Through his writings, both mothers and teachers found a guide for educating their children. The pedagogical aim of the author was to simplify and to find the easiest ways to educate. When in 1889 in

Abbotsholme, England appears the first boarding school, belonging to the new category of new schools, created by Cecil Reddie, at the same time appears the idea of education of a completely new man, whose intellect is developing as well as the feelings. There still appeared new methods of training, they learned through practice, starting from the children's curiosity and interests. Cecil's ideas such as the organization of the school in a remote place, far from the noise of the society, learning through activity, by contact with nature, starting from sudden impressions aren't quite original, some of them having been expressed by John Locke and Jean Jacques Rousseau.

The beginning of the century is marked from the pedagogical point of view by the focus of school on the child. This led to numerous researches which were done and to the interest of the pedagogues for the psychology of the early stages in the life of the child. The fundamental condition of the evolution on scientific basis of the educational act was obligatory for knowledge the laws of evolution of the child. During this period of time many pedagogues focused on the early stages of childhood trying to identify several stages of psychic evolution of the child.

Pedagogues such as Ed. Claparede, O. Decroly, and Jean Piaget were assigned the task to point out by their writings the content and the methods of education of every stage. They elaborated several theories of learning which were of great interest in the pedagogical theory and practice. The new and important method of education of a completely new man, whose intellect is developing as well as the feelings, is the biggest discover of the writers.

John Locke thus becomes a landmark, and the exercises for developing his children's senses will be later used practiced by Maria Montessori, John Dewey or Jean Piaget. The treasure left by the great pedagogues mentioned above has a major role in the following centuries, their work trying to solve the main problems of infantile pedagogy. The history of pedagogy provides us with material types already accomplished such as is the education and formation of the man.

Locke is first an educator and this is maybe the key of success of understanding the child and his age. He created his own system of education starting from minute observation, from experience and he succeeded in concluding in useful advice in his activity. Though he deals with the education of a whole child, in his most important work, his advice were the same for children belonging to every social category. His pedagogical thinking is large enough and therefore some scientists consider Locke as the foreigner of social pedagogy. Even if there have been 300 years since his most important work was published, it became a classical in pedagogy. C. Narly considers John Locke "one of the most entitled forerunners of the pedagogy of personality."

Locke's writings have been used by Romanian scholars as well and our teachers, by the translations from Greek or French. Especially in Transylvania, many of his ideas were acknowledged by the philanthropist pedagogues. Locke's essence thinking consists in the fact that he carefully observes the spiritual life of the child, his temperamental features of character and one above all the stages of physical and mental growing. To his purposes is why he comes into conflict with those who were supporting the traditional education, Locke states that the child is capable of reason, only he needs to be helped to use it as right as possible. He introduces the game as an aid in teaching lessons and through vivid and interesting conversation between teacher and student, the passion for the studied subject being aroused in the pupil. He is particularly concerned to discover new adequate, efficient methods to educate children. The soul of every man has its own characteristic features, just like his face, features that differentiate him from everyone else. Hardly one can find two children that can be educated by the same method. An important series of Locke's pedagogical ideas are assumed and included in the pedagogical doctrines of the 19th century and in the outlook of some important representatives of various directions of the free education trend. Some representatives of free education value the humanism of Rousseau's ideas, continuing in the same direction of respecting the dignity and freedom of the child, using gentle education methods with which they attract the students, while others go even further, using it excessively and these leading to alteration of Locke's and Rousseau's outlook.

The importance of Rousseau's ideas was materialized in educational doctrines that at the time they were written were trying to reform the educational system. Authors like Basedow, Froebel and Pestalozzi, pointed up the basic idea in Rousseau's writings the humanism, the hatred against conventions and

prejudices, the respect of freedom and the child and especially his education, which in Rousseau's vision, didn't have to consist in preparing the child for the future, it should have been the child's life itself.

The year 1749 is the year that in Rousseau's thinking it takes place a sudden change which reveals his brilliant resources. His fundamental work, in which he structures his pedagogical ideas "Emil" or „*De l'éducation*” is a pedagogical work that is made up of five parts, according to the age stages of the child.

Either we think of Aristotle, Plato or Socrates or of the aim of their writings and of their spiritual creed, their work influenced Rousseau.

He didn't approve many of his predecessors. If Aristotle conceived the education as improving by carving the character, Rousseau thinks of it as being an action of assisting the educated one, this having a total freedom of movement.

- Is there a relationship between the writings of Jean Jacques Rousseau and that of John Lock one's? And the constructs of youth's political behavior

- What is the significant impact of Pestalozzi's work and the time of the epoch that he lived?

This study can help teachers of our times to understand the point of view of the authors by identifying the extent to which youth's pupils find art as a solution and a guide for their future. The relationship between these remarkable writings and the nowadays possibilities and human development can bring us and our children a treasure of human and psychological support.

From the point of view of the methods of teaching specific to the methods of the 18th century, learning is accomplished traditionally, by listening and imitating models, which for Jean Jacques Rousseau seems to be wrong. In the opinion learning starts with the idea that the human being possesses within it wisdom itself, education enabling the developing of the complete man.

Unlike Rousseau, Pestalozzi finds in the family the real moral formation source of the individual. The man works in his job, profession and bears the task of civil organization, to be able then to enjoy peacefully the pure blessed home family happiness. His major contribution is represented by the theory of elementary education brought to the development of universal pedagogical thinking. His education rules have become real didactic principles nowadays. The principle of intuition, the principle of harmonious education that is the developing of all sides of personality is done accordingly to the laws of nature and the principle of gradual evolution that requires respecting the age and individual particularities. His theory refers to elementary education and consists of free important formation domain the intellectual, the moral and the physical education.

In 1801 Pestalozzi publishes his work "How Gertrude teaches her children" translated for the first time in our country by Emil Balteanu. His outstanding work is full of psychological meanings and is surprising by the simplicity and easiness of the ideas. First of all, must be respected the nature of the child, the education must have a quality importance, the systematic intuition is very important, combining the learning with the practical activity and productive work, paying most importance to the primary education. Pestalozzi granted the mother the important role in educating and harmonizing the relationships with the others when the child is concerned and wants to achieve a harmonious personality involving the whole personality of the child. In 1883 in England is set up the association "Art for School Education", in Germany are published books in which the idea of artistic education is asserted and in 1897 the Czech, Franz Cizek opened an Infantile Art School in Vienna, where the idea of freedom and spontaneity of the child as a condition of developing the creating capacity. In Cizek's school the drawing with a model was replaced by the drawing out of the imagination, with creative activity.

The research done mainly by Jean Piaget made this century to be one of the psychological stages but one of the Pestalozzi's methods of intuition as well. This method was based on psychological and empiric epistemology and made the image the fundamental element of the process of knowledge. It was then the idea of didactic activity developed most. John Dewey's opinion is that significance of things is given by using them. The child's activity was reduced to concrete actions. In 1922 Dewey stated the hypothesis of the nature of operational thinking "thinking, outlooks and our ideas are the names of certain operations to be done or which have been done" Jean Piaget, a biologist by formation aimed at explain the mental functions by the way they are made, by their evolution with the children. This way he studied the language and thinking, the representation of the world, by building of the reality and especially the evolution of the intellect. He was helped by the theory of Ed. Claparede and the action acting psychology

of P. Janet. According to Piaget, the adaptation requires a moment of assimilation and one of accommodation. It's just the tension created by the difference of level by assimilation and accommodation that becomes the motivational factor in the intellectual evolution.

To know an object, in the first year of evolution of a child is to act upon it to transform it in order to discover the mechanisms of this transformation in relationship with the transforming actions. In Piaget's outlook the "class" means the operation of classification by which we obtain the concepts of particular classes. In the theory of the psychologist, there exists a genetic side and a structural one. Following and watching the evolution of these stages, Piaget states four stages or levels. From birth, to the age of two, the child knows by movements and perceptions. The intelligence is of a practical level and allows the building of some plans of action according to which the further structures will be built. From two up to eight years of age, the symbolic and semiotic function is formed. Now becomes possible the representation through symbol and sign. The author considers that there exists a relationship between the development of intelligence and social life. In his opinion after the age of eight, it is possible the formation of certain relationships of cooperation. This happens when the child possesses the intellectual instruments which enable the differentiation of the points of view. The operational organization of the children's thinking is a condition of their cooperation. The operational theory of the intelligence is offering the pedagogical science an elaboration with a psychological basis for the active system of studying. Nowadays there are some other psychological theories that lead to other pedagogical solutions, others than the ones offered by Piaget, many of experiments being repeated to be checked under the actual conditions. All great psychologists of the epoch refer to him and observe an emphasis of the importance of the inner factors. Of course, there were psychologists who starting from the ideas of Piaget's theories have come to other conclusions, such as P.I. Galperin, who claims that "the psychic process are nothing else but actions, objectively sublimated, and the images, from the primitive sensations up to the abstract notions, are the products of actions with the represented objects". Unlike Piaget, Galperin considers that the psychic activities of the child can be guided. Unlike Piaget who thought that the evolution is directly dependent on the action of education and therefore we can thus hasten the moment of the appearance of the capacity of assimilation of certain information.

He states three systems of analyzing and representation of the information. One refers to the manipulation and action, another one refers to the perceptive and image and the third one refers to the symbolic mechanism. In his opinion these systems are actually "rather distinct accents which occur during the evolution".

Bruner introduced in the theory the concept of structure of the object, which involves the being or the phenomenon and the relationships between their behaviors. To learn structurally means to get to understand the relationships between things. He considers that the first form of representation with the child is the active one, which is based on the theory stimulus-response, the second form is the iconic one, through gestualism and the third way is the symbolic one.

Piaget's theory was valued in the attempts of research of the above mentioned psychologist but of others as well, who took over some of his ideas and materialized them in their own systems of thinking. Of course these built their own concepts which even if they started from Piaget's ideas were upgraded and improved. Piaget thinks that to elaborate such operational structures, one must expect the appearance of a certain stage. He appreciates that the evolution unfolds according to certain legality, to which the learning must be subordinated.

In our country Piaget's writings were received with increased receptivity back before 1930 but a better knowledge is to be noted after 1950, by larger studies of Tatiana Cazacu.

The book "The moral reason of the child" clearly investigates the complex aspects of mentality and moral reason of the child between six and twelve years of age. The work is written by Piaget and by other seven collaborators, therefore it is a team work, the result of the school the author founded. 'The child's moral reason' appeared in Romania at the Didactica Publishing House in 1980, translated by Dan Rautu, it has four chapters, three of them being written on the basis of research done as a result of answers given by children, and the last chapter being elaborated as a theoretical comment.

Jean Piaget structured his work "The child's Moral Reason", in four chapters. The first one uses the method of modeling. He elaborated an original theory of the genesis and of the mechanisms of



thinking named the operational theory. Structured on stages and series of operations of intelligence, the intellect, from birth to the age of two, the sensory- motion stage, when the child is concerned with gaining the motional control and discover and learn the physical objects, between two and seven, when the child is concerned with verbal qualification and by the preoperational stage, between seven and twelve , when the child starts to handle the abstract concepts, such as members and relationships, similarities, comes the concrete operational stage, between twelve and fifteen, stage in which the child begin to rationalize logically and systematically, the formal operational stage. In Piaget's opinion, the intellectual capacity is different from the point of view of quality with different ages and children need to interact with the environment to gain intellectual competence. In the second part of his work, "The child's Moral Reason", called egocentric, the child receives the example of codified ruled from the outside and it appears between two and five years old. The child still plays for himself at this age.

The age between seven and eight belongs to the phase of "born cooperation" in which the idea of competition is present, and appears the concern for the mutual control and for the unification of rules.

Piaget thought to characterize the role of intelligence and to show by an exam of psychology of thinking, that the action of the intelligence consists in arranging the operation according to some definite structures.

Conceived as equilibrium toward which all process of knowledge leads, the intelligence brings the issue of its relationships with the perception, skills and the issue of evolution and socialization as well.

Piaget says that even if we talk of an exterior action or of an interior one, it appears as an adjustment or even as a readjustment. There is a distinction between the primary action and the relationship between the subject and the object and the secondary action or the reaction of the subject to his own action. Although they are distinct, the affective life and the cognitive life are inseparable. Each behavior requires an energetic or affective aspect and a structural cognitive one. The intelligence according to Piaget is not a category which can be isolated, discontinuous of cognitive processes. It is the form of equilibrium to which all structures tend and this must be accomplished beginning with perception, skills and motion sensorial- motion mechanisms.

Intelligence, according to Piaget is an assimilation of the surrounding things by the body. The human being more exactly the child assimilates and modifies the environment and not the reverse.

In its turn, the environment acts upon the body and we can call this an adaptation by this understanding that the human being doesn't suffer reactions to the surrounding voices, but it changes in the process of assimilation. If we analyze the intelligence from the biological point of view, it appears as one of the activities of the organism and the things to which it adapts represent a particular section of the environment.

When he studied the formation of the operations of the child, Piaget understood that the logic in the mirror of thinking and not vice versa. The issue of the relationship between formal logic and the psychology of the intelligence can have a solution comparable to one which ended the conflict between the deductive geometry and the real one.

The mood of perception represents the consciousness we acquire about objects or about their movements by direct and actual contact. The intelligence represents the knowledge that appears the moment when the space time distances between subject and object occur and grow.

All the pedagogues studied in this text are very important for their time and for the actual time. All the information that we received from their work is a treasure for the actual school desire.

Locke is considered the founder of modern education in England. His most important work "Some thoughts concerning education" was many times published and was used in writing several studies and writings on this topic. It was translated in many languages, this fact leading to the spread and getting known even in America. In our country its translation belongs to George Coşbuc and it was published in Bucharest between 1907- 1910 by the *Casa Şcoalelor* Publishing House.

The author analyses and gives advice and makes suggestions on the harmonious evolution of the child s body tightly connected to his moral growing.

It says about physical education, and here it deals with enforcing of health, playing in the open air, healthy food, swimming, resting, sleeping, taking medicine, therefore it covers many problems by finding solutions to certain major events in children's lives. In the second part it deals with the moral education,

and it gives methods and means of moral education, about discipline, it describes pleasant appealing methods of teaching.

It deals with the understanding of temperament and vocation of children. In the third part, Locke deals with the issues of intellectual education and especially with writing, drawing. He thinks that the students can accomplish their style of writing through the art of drawing “once he gets to write so quickly and well, I think it’s appropriate, not only to continue the writing practice, but to try to lead this ability to perfection, learning to draw. “When we talk about the subjects whom children should study, he says that none of those should be imposed as an obligation”. No subject children have to study has to see a burden. Essentially, the defining role in Locke’s vision is the importance of leader who is the person who should motivate, speculate and arouse the wish and interest of the child. He considers the game, as being a suitable method to link the steps of the lesson and learning every subject would become a reaction to the game, just like the game is a recreation after learning.

We can call it a small encyclopedia of the study of child and his needs. Depicted so thoroughly and with so much positive interest, the words written by Locke are full of parent feelings, and the way he addresses just like Rousseau is quite friendly and affectionate towards readers. Many of the pedagogical ideas of the illuminist thinkers from the west of Europe were known by the Romanian scholar as well. In the three Romanian Kingdoms there were still problems concerning the independence, the struggle for social freedom and for national unity.

The importance of the studies of these brilliant writers is like a big library of information. Their correct, sincerity and intelligence words bring us a joy and a precious support in the new education. At the time when they lived, the society not any time understands their precious information and that is why they were in a conflict with the others. During the time, people, professors and a lot of parents understand the beautiful work they done.

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## **MCDSARE: 2018**

### **International Multidisciplinary Scientific Conference on the Dialogue between Sciences & Arts, Religion & Education**

#### **THE DEVELOPMENT AND TRAINING OF THE OPERA SINGER - A COMBINATION BETWEEN VOCAL TECHNIQUE ELEMENTS AND MEDICAL AND PSYCHOLOGICAL KNOWLEDGES**

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#### ***Abstract***

The present study aims to bring together all the elements underlying the development and training of an opera singer, from the knowledge of his own body and of the phonation, breathing and resonant components, to the understanding of the mysteries of the human intellect and the application of psychological knowledges in learning and performing an opera role. In the first part of the study, there will be presented the stages of the formation of an opera singer and the learning of a score, applied on different musical parts of the belcanto repertoire. Also, the elements of the human body that serve the opera singer to perform his vocal activity will be presented: the phonation component - the larynx, the respiratory - the lungs and the diaphragm, and the resonators - the oral cavity and the sinuses. In the second part, it will be presented how the opera singer assumes a role of opera, using actor's art techniques based on elements of psychology and also, by observing human behavior in various situations. Finally, the author's conclusions will be presented.

**Keywords:** music; vocal technique; medicine; psychology; opera singer;

#### **1. INTRODUCTION**

The approach to an opera role requires an artist, in addition to vocal and acting skills, to work diligently to research and acquire many knowledges about everything that means author, source of inspiration, musical analysis, style, stage directing concepts, interpretations, ecc., aiming at the perfect interpretation of the role and, at the same time, in the printing of a note of originality, without which, the artistic act would have no meaning and perennality over time.

The singer must therefore, in addition to "putting the role in voice" and vocal perfection of the role, form his empathic ability to transpose himself into the personality of the character and to make his

own the feelings, even the gestures and mimics of the character, all these being dominated by a "self control" well established.

Often, the world of the opera is superficially treated by students of universities or music faculties because they either do not have enough general and musical culture, or they think they can easily approach to this field and finish their studies without too much involvement on their part. In this study, however, we will not refer to "the majority," but to the ideal, passionate, talented, aspiring student, who will become the future successful international opera singer.

## **2. PROBLEM STATEMENT**

First of all, it is necessary to review the most important studies on the formation of operatic voices in order to be able to follow the different opinions and points of interest of the teachers-researchers throughout history, from the appearance of the genre of opera until the present days.

The opera, as a genre with roots in ancient Greek theater, was created in the 16th century, within an artistic circle of poets, composers, singers and singing teachers, called *Camerata Fiorentina*. Giulio Caccini (1545-1618), eminent singer and composer, the soul of *Camerata Fiorentina*, publishes *Nuove musiche (New music)* in 1602, which is a kind of musical manifesto, but also deals with singing pedagogy. His opinions have played an important role in the development of the artistic singing. The principles of the new vocal style are defending the ideas of the text, giving great importance to the elasticity of the voice, to the breathing in singing process and to the text.

In the eighteenth century, dramatic action and text gradually moved to the second place, giving way to trills, vocal runs and ornamented singing. The singing tends to develop for bravery. In Italy there are famous singing schools in Bologna, Naples, Rome and Venice. Until the middle of the eighteenth century, the castrated singers will develop. The feminine ambitus and the masculine breath strength of castrati's voices gave them the opportunity to offer stunning performances: the renowned Ferri castrated singer made across a two-octave chromatic scale a trill on each note, from one breath, and others performed 18 times vocalizations on two octaves only from one breath. The singer and professor Pietro Tosi writes a special work on the anatomy and physiology of the vocal apparatus, *Opinioni (Opinions)* in 1723. He pays much attention to the intonation. He also enters into the details of the pupil's private life and recommends: "*Learning foreign languages, harpsichord and composition. He has to listen to as many singers as possible, learn in the morning, to become accustomed to learn silently, to become his own teacher to be independent and to accustom his voice with the place where he sings. The pupil must begin to have a correct position while singing. The learning of the ornaments must be done in the head voice register and begins with the learning of the trill, the grace notes and finally the filato on open voice. It will be practiced in forte, because it is easier to sing in piano when you master well the forte. People who sing a lot in piano risk to lose their voice.*"<sup>1</sup>

In 1775, 50 years after the appearance of Tosi's work, another great treatise on the preparation of the voice appeared, written by Gianbattista Mancini in 1774, namely *Pensieri e riflessioni pratiche sopra il canto figurato (Thoughts and practical reflections on figurative singing)*. This representative of the school in Naples and of the school in Bologna, made reference to the study of the human voice, insisting on correct intonation, on the singer's good mood, on small-scale exercises, and on studies that must be done in full voice.

At the end of the eighteenth century appeared in France, the most important writing about the pedagogy of the singing: *Méthode du chant du Conservatoire de Musique à Paris (Method of singing in the Conservatory of Paris)*. In France, in the eighteenth century, professional singing goes through a crisis caused by the French singers' inability to compete with the performances of Italian singers and the strong influence of the Italian opera. The French singing style, edited by a committee of musicians, singers and pedagogues (composer Cherubini, French singer and pedagogue Carat and Italian singing teacher Mengozzi) aims at removing this situation: "*It is good for the head sounds to be directed to the frontal sinus without receiving a nasal character. When passing from the chest register to the middle register, the*

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<sup>1</sup> [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Pier\\_Francesco\\_Tosi](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Pier_Francesco_Tosi)

*last note of the middle and first note of the head register will be moderated. It is also valid for tenors. In the style of the Paris Conservatory it is recommended:*

- *Staccato - is done with larynx strokes supported on diaphragm and abdominal muscles*
- *the recitative - is performed without the introduction of the ornaments*
- *The correct breathing is used in phrasing*
- *the legato singing - the voice increases in climb and decreases in the descent; in the case of different musical intervals, from the first to the second note the passing is made with anticipation "* (<https://gallica.bnf.fr/ark:/12148/bpt6k991280n/f11.image>).

The evolution and improvement of the vocal technique that took place in the nineteenth century was due to the appearance of large orchestras and the movement of the opera shows in theaters and concert halls with a capacity of more than 1000 seats. The most important breakthrough in the field of modern vocal technique was the sound-covering mechanism, around 1820, in Italy, which was later taken over by the French school. An extremely important study on this subject is the *Vowels compensation method* by Albert Labriet, opera singer and vocalist researcher, but also the 1928 Jean Mauran's *Method* is important, which has revealed a very specific resonance point of the voice, which received the name of *Mauran's point*. In 1847 appeared the *Treatise on the Art of Singing*, by Manuel Garcia, a famous study in which, besides the method of singing, appear various vocalizations and exercises for the development of opera voices. In 1900, studies focused on the subjective directives of sound projection, written by famous singers Lily Lehmann and Mado Robin. Several studies have also appeared in Germany, mentioning *Theory of Voice* by Liskovius (1818) or *The Art of Singing* by Bernard Marx (1826).

In the modern period, in the field of vocal physiology, an excellent study is the one made by Raoul Husson - *The sung voice*, in 1950, in which he presents his discoveries concerning the production of human vocal sound. In 1970 was published Mathilde Marchesi's treatise, known as the continuator of the belcanto tradition in the 20th Century: *Bel Canto: A Theoretical and Practical Vocal Method*, and in 2003, the book *Bel canto - the history of vocal pedagogy* by James Stark appeared. Also in Romania appeared important publications: Cernei Elena - *Enigmas of Human Voice*, 1982, Severin Adrian - *The method of singing teaching*, 2000, Piso Ion - *The cybernetics of phonation in singing*, 2000, Pop Ioan - *Singing - way of communication. Singing treatise and method*, 2004 and, perhaps the most elaborate and documented treaty, the study of soprano Silvia Voinea - *Foray in the history of singing and voice aesthetics*, 2002.

### **3. RESEARCH QUESTIONS**

Today, most of the opera works performed around the world come from the 18th-20th century musical legacy. The vocal performance of an opera singer must be on an increasingly high level. Artists are asked to excel in rendering the artistic values of the score, but also in acting part. The issue arises around the 21st century singers and their ability to cope with the demands of modern opera theaters, impresarios, conductors and directors, even the audience, with an extremely varied range of recordings at its disposal, and, thus, which has higher expectations. But the most important challenge comes from the score - is the modern opera artist able to study a lyrical work for a long time so that he can penetrate all its secrets and reach a perfect interpretation? But to resist growing temptation especially among young musicians who want celebrity and money long before the instrument they use - that is, the voice - is totally formed and prepared for performance at the highest levels, not risking, in this manner, to lose forever the voice?

Often, singers are compared to athletes because they have to work and discipline their body and voice permanently to serve them in the artistic act, and the physical and intellectual effort that an artist carries in his work and along a show resembles the effort of an athlete.

The whole problem becomes even more sensitive when we relate it to an instrumentist - while he has the instrument in his hands and can replace parts of it when it deteriorates, the vocal cords cannot be replaced, here intervening the science and art of the opera singer - and care for the "instrument" throughout his life, hence the necessity of knowing the phonatory, respiratory and resonator device to perfection, for a good "use" of the voice.

In addition to the vocal aspects, there are some psychological problems that are encountered, during the formation and even the development of the career, by a singer:

- fear of receiving a negative appreciation from others
- fear of a vocal ailment
- the stage fright
- fear of not being able to reach the level of performance of other colleagues
- fear of being mocked by colleagues because of the own seriousness (especially among students)
- fear of being unable to have a balance in family life
- fear of not being understood by those closest to you
- fear of being mocked by ordinary people
- fear of being unable to progress because of the teacher / lack of money / lack of chances / lack of interest by employers / public orientation towards a certain repertory segment ecc

#### 4. PURPOSE OF THE STUDY

The present study aims to bring together all the elements underlying the development and training of an opera singer, from the knowledge of his own body and of the phonation, breathing and resonant components, to the understanding of the mysteries of the human intellect and the application of psychological knowledges in learning and performing an opera role. The purpose of this study will be to highlight the complexity of forming an opera singer and also to alert today's young performers to the great responsibility they assume approaching this professional field.

#### 5. RESEARCH METHODS

The following pictures explain the parts of the phonatory system and also the correct breathing. It is important for a student to know exactly how does it function each part of the body involved in the singing process and the teacher must explain patiently and correctly all the scientific terms:

Fig.1 - the vocal chords ([https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Vocal\\_cords](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Vocal_cords))

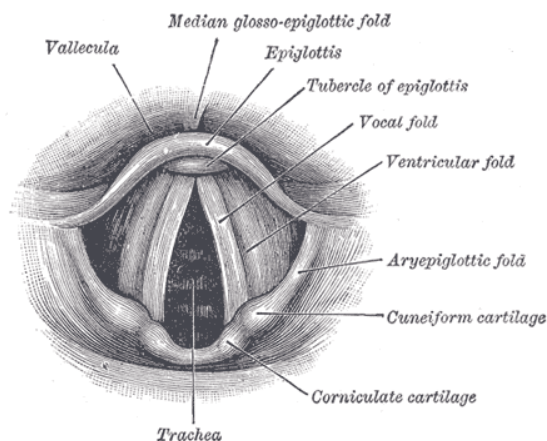
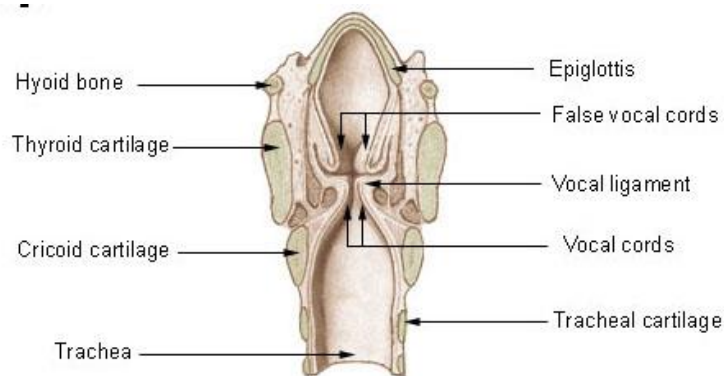


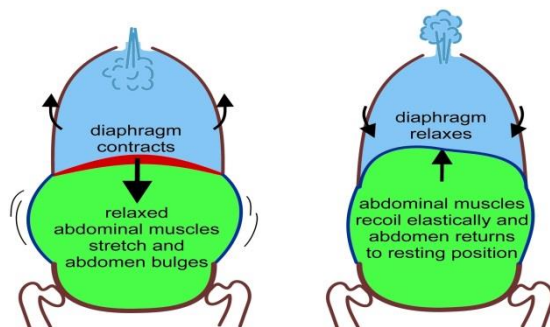
Fig. 2 - The larynx with the vocal ligaments (source: [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Vocal\\_cords](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Vocal_cords))



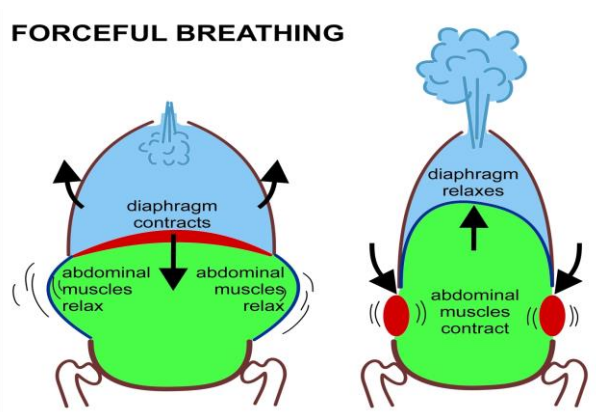
The student must understand that when he sings, he must use a specific type of breath, and not the normal breathing, because in order to amplify naturally the sound, besides directing the voice in the superior resonators, you must use the *costo-diaphragmatic breathing*, the most profound and efficient type of breath, which also oxygenates in the highest proportion the brain and which involves abdominal and chest muscles, engaging in strong action the dorsal, intercostal, abdominal muscles and, naturally, the diaphragm:

Fig. 3 - the normal breathing (quiet) /the singing breathing (forceful) - the movements of the diaphragm (source: [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Respiratory\\_system](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Respiratory_system))

**QUIET BREATHING**



**FORCEFUL BREATHING**



The movements of the abdominal muscles, the pelvis and the abdominal ribs, their slight impulses make the air through the diaphragm to be directed at our own desire, slower or faster, but all the time the air column must be continuous, equal and with a certain pressure. It is said that "the real force of the column of sound with which we sing is equivalent to 0.40 atmospheres at a musical range of 950 Hz for 7-10 seconds" (Silvia Voinea, 2002,80). Therefore, the student must be very carefully with his training, in order not to damage his voice and must be supervised by a maestro in the art of singing, who knows how to take care of his gift. Finally, here are some vocalizations extracted from Manuel Garcia's singing treatise, that are simple and can be used by the students and teachers in order to correct the intonation, to develop the ambit of the voice and also its agility (N.B. Manuel Garcia was also the inventor of the laryngoscope):

Fig. 4 - Different scales used for vocalization (source: Manuel Garcia - *New treatise on the art on singing. A compendious method of instruction, with examples and exercises for the cultivation of the voice, revised edition, Oliver Ditson Company, Boston, 1847, page 17*)

The image displays a musical score for vocalization exercises, numbered 20 through 27. Exercises 20, 21, 22, and 23 are presented as pairs of staves, with the upper staff in treble clef and the lower staff in bass clef. Exercise 20 includes a 'trc.' marking. Exercise 24 is a single staff in treble clef. Exercises 25 and 26 are presented as piano accompaniment, with a grand staff (treble and bass clefs) and a 'pp' dynamic marking. Exercise 27 is a single staff in treble clef, featuring a complex melodic line with many slurs and a '23867.' marking at the end.

Once we exposed shortly some technical aspects in singing, let say also a few things about the musical training of the student and about the acting part. First of all, a singer must be equipped with intelligence, will, perseverance and of course, talent. All the musical aspects must be well known and applied in the most optimal way, in order to perform a role, to present a musical score to the public:



musical theory, harmony, musical forms, counterpoint, polyphony, history of music, stylistics. These are the bases from which the analysis of a score starts and which must be taken into account in the process of learning a score. After this step, the role will be *put in the voice* by the student, under the guidance of the maestro. Here we speak about a process that should not be carried out in haste, but with care and patience on both sides. This part could be very nice and should stimulate the student's creativity to look for a variety of shades in voice, expression and intensity. Here comes another side of the interpretative process, which completes and finishes the work of acquiring a role: the shades in the voice, expression and intensity should not be mechanically built by the singer, but should be based on a thorough research of the features and feelings of the character he is playing. The singer must read the original play, must know the origin of the character, the social context in which the character carries out his actions, as well as his motivations. Of course, here comes psychology knowledges that helps in analyzing the character's behavior.

When you get to know your character and you understand his feelings, appears the danger of entering too much in the character's skin, to get too much emotionally involved. There are few opera singers who have the ability to *master* a role with intelligence, making the public to believe in the character seen on stage and to be very excited of the entire performance, entering in some kind of magic world. The public forgets that the people on stage are actors, because those actors are very credible. Here we must mention another dimension of the singer's job - acting. We speak here about gesture, mimic, body posture, glance, body movements. The singers must investigate all the important books in the field of acting, and here we mention the most famous: *The actor's work with himself* by Konstantin Stanislavski. Stanislavski's system focuses on the realistic development of the characters. The actors were trained to use *emotional memory* to portray naturally the emotions of the interpreted characters, and in order to succeed in this attempt, the actors were asked to think for a moment of their lives in which they felt the emotion they wanted and try to present it on stage, all in the desire to ensure an interpretation as close as possible to reality. Besides this method, a new one has been adopted among actors and singers - that of real closeness to the character's feelings and actions, as evidenced by text and music, without the actor to relate to his own memories and feelings.

Therefore, the student, the future opera singer, must thoroughly investigate all these aspects related to the performing of an opera role on stage, he must understand and love his *job* and his voice, in order to obtain great results and to arrive in the point where "*the technique ends and begins the art*", as the great Italian maestro Nicola Porpora was saying (Silvia Voinea, 2002, 196).

## **6. CONCLUSION**

In conclusion, we can say that the musicians who embrace the career of an opera singer have a great responsibility in their lives: to develop the gift that they have in a proper way and to serve the public, to make ART at the highest level. I would finish this study with the words of the one who formed me as an artist and opera singer, the great soprano and singing teacher Silvia Voinea:

*" No other vocal genre brings together all the arts in a whole like the opera. The lyric artist is the one who builds worlds, characters, styles, epochs ... he is the one who gives life to musical notes, filtering them by his own reason and feeling, rewriting them.(...) He is the one who rewrites the work of the composer with his instrument - the voice - which he has to master, beyond the vocal difficulties of the score, in order to transform it into the glimpse of life he submits to his own self. (...) The road of forming a singer, actor, is long, hard, difficult, demanding many sacrifices, labor, patience, and everything grafted on an invincible argument, a natural grace - the voice"* (Silvia Voinea, 2002, 15-16).

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