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Authors in the current issue:

Ovidiana Bulumac, Mihail Ungheanu, Alin Bulumac
Ioana Drăgoi, Augustin Poenaru, Samira Cîrlig
Roxana Alexe, Narcis Rupe, Cristian Chesaru



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THE ROMANIAN VILLAGE AND ERNEST BERNEA'S SOCIOLOGICAL PERSPECTIVE

Ovidiana Bulumac

ABSTRACT

The article focuses upon the issue of the “Romanian phenomenon” in the light of Ernest Bernea’s theoretical contributions. The description of the concept itself, the suitable method of research and identification, as well as the peasant contributions to the social universe become, in this case, relevant to the hereby discussion. The Romanian phenomenon is part of a much larger theoretical construction, the one of the “peasant civilisation”, also developed by Bernea throughout the years, that contains a complex and complete definition, clear directory lines (in terms of space and time specificities), as well as a selection of the transformations that occurred during the period of modernity, understood as a spiritual, cultural, social and economical crisis.

Keywords: Romanian sociology, rural sociology, Romanian phenomenon, peasant civilisation, crisis

PROLEGOMENA

Ernest Bernea was a member of the interwar generation of sociologists created by Dimitrie Gusti's School. While other colleagues were imprisoned and killed by the communist regime (among which one can name Mircea Vulcănescu, Anton Golopenția, Traian Brăileanu and others), Bernea was part of the few lucky ones (even though he was repeatedly incarcerated) that survived torture and jail time, being able to leave behind valuable yet insufficiently studied manuscripts, which raise serious questions about the world we live in and the one we are heading for. Unfortunately, some

manuscripts could not be recovered till this day after they were confiscated by the Securitate before 1989¹.

Bernea is well known in the Romanian scientific community through his unconditional love for the archaic autochthonous village. This particular social unity was considered by him a proof and part of the Romanian civilization, today found on a path of irremediable change of its frames and manifestations.

Devotee of the Gustian system of integral knowledge of social reality, Bernea made important contributions through its studies of rural sociology, ethnography, and philosophy. In Romanian interwar and post-war sociological literature, he is one of those who worked relentlessly towards defining a the “Romanian phenomenon”, by which he understands to a “complex material and spiritual data, forms, structures and specific activities”² that produced in a time span a social and cultural unit that possesses identity.

In this sense, the main space to which it is connected and in relation to which it can be understood is that of the *archaic village*, fixed in opposition to the urban environment, or even with its contemporary (interwar and post-war) village. Also, the temporality referred to is that of an *archaic time*, which was in a state of obvious dissolution even in the interwar period, ever since Bernea participated at his first field researches as part of the Gustian monographic teams. Moreover, the main character of his analysis is *the peasant*, that member of the national community that is distinguished by a particular type of being, which has the capacity to generate and preserve the organic character of the socio-cultural life within the community.

¹ According to the information provided by his descendants

² Ernest Bernea, *Trilogie sociologică [Sociological trilogy]*, Cluj Napoca, Editura Dacia, 2004, p. 300

HOW CONCRETE REALITY MUST BE RESEARCHED

Ernest Bernea draws attention to the fact that field research, especially if it takes place in a conservative environment, has to be done in a certain way and, of course, not on the expense of the subject to be investigated. The main concern, he says, must be the research of the concrete reality.

“A scientific research of the Romanianhood and nation cannot be done correctly if we do not obey, if we do not take into account this characteristic of the local life. The individual, although part of a unit of life such as the village, without reaching the limits of the region and even less of the country, surpasses this unit and truly lives in a larger collective reality, to which he is organically linked: the group of villages, as we have seen it fulfilled in different [Romanian] countries, valleys or other local organisms. Therefore, the knowledge of our country in what it has more authentic, that is the ancient village civilization, must be made on these units, living communities and village groups. Even if we wanted to restrict the research to a single settlement - and this is possible - we need, for good understanding, to research it in relation to the body of settlements that it is a part of and that represents the local living community. To disregard this means to disregard reality and life. The village is not an abstract, unique and all-encompassing entity. In order to understand what belongs to it, it is necessary to go beyond its limits; but only as much as the concrete reality demands”³.

³ „O cercetare științifică a țării și neamului românesc nu se poate face corect dacă nu ne supunem, dacă nu luăm în seamă această însușire a vieții locale. Omul, deși parte dintr-o unitate de viață cum e satul, fără să atingă limitele regiunii și cu atât mai puțin ale țării, depășește această unitate și trăiește cu adevărat într-o realitate colectivă mai mare, de care este legat organic: grupul de sate, așa cum l-am văzut împlinit în diferitele țări, văi sau alte organisme locale. De aceea, cunoașterea țării noastre în ceea ce are ea mai autentic, adică vechea civilizație sătească, trebuie făcută pe aceste unități, comunități de viață și grupări de sate. Chiar dacă am voi să restrângem cercetarea la o singură așezare – și aceasta este cu puțință –, suntem nevoiți, pentru buna înțelegere, să o cercetăm în legătură cu corpul

In the same register, Bernea specifies that any research of the village must be done by adopting a suitable attitude by the specialist, which must be understood in terms of a “leaning with love” towards the specificities of the archaic type identified in the respective community.

“However, we do not pursue at any price the «specific», but we observe and research concrete, living realities that possess their own characters, which can be similar but also differentiated. Leaning with love (because without love, science is not possible) on ancient phenomena does not come from the need to collect curiosities or from a vague romanticism, but from the need to know a concrete historical reality, sometimes struggling with the difficulties of some deceptive or accidental aspects, placed during the time”⁴.

In his conception, the most important social unit that can provide consistent and relevant data regarding the social history of the Romanian space, in the absence of written documents or conclusive archaeological evidence, is the village that, like any other living entity, possesses *memory* and *identity*.

“The Romanian people with its ancient village civilization, is a being and, like any other being, it has its very own way of being.

de așezări din care face firească parte și care reprezintă comunitatea de viață locală. A nesocoti acest lucru înseamnă a nesocoti realitatea și viața. Satul nu este o entitate abstractă, unică și atotvorbitoare. Pentru a înțelege ceea ce îi aparține este nevoie să treci dincolo de limitele sale; dar numai atât cât cere realitatea concretă” (Ernest Bernea, *Civilizația română sâtească [The Romanian village civilization]*, București, Editura Vremea, 2006, pp. 23-24)

⁴ „Totuși nu urmărim cu orice preț «specificul», ci observăm și cercetăm realități concrete, vii, cu caractere proprii, care pot fi asemănătoare, dar și diferențiate. Aplecarea cu dragoste (căci fără dragoste nici știința nu e cu putință) asupra fenomenelor cu caracter străvechi nu vine din nevoia de a culege curiozități și nici dintr-un vag romantism, ci din nevoia de a cunoaște o realitate istorică concretă, uneori luptând cu greutatea unor aspecte înșelătoare sau întâmplătoare, așezate în decursul vremii” (*Ibidem*, pp. 5-6)

Let's look at it as it is being displayed in the concrete reality. Respect for the nature of things and the love for what is alive give us the ability to read into unexpected depths”⁵.

This is why direct observation becomes the main instrument used in research, together with the interview, precisely because of the wealth of data collected:

“The Romanian village civilization, present today under our eyes, carries us into the depths of millennia and, by direct observation, unravels problems of history where the written document is missing completely... The village is the most expressive and richest document in the history of the Romanian people. This is because often ... the true story begins where the written documents end. In this way, the walk in the past is more real, deeper, and more fruitful”⁶.

Ernest Bernea is aware of the transformations the archaic village is going through in the modern period, processes recorded by him on the ground and understood in terms of an acute spiritual crisis that has cultural, social and economic valences. Therefore, we are reminded that it is important that the analysis should not be done anywhere, but within a social unit that retains as much of the ancient character of the Romanian village civilization:

⁵ „Poporul românesc, cu străvechea lui civilizație satească, este o ființă și, ca orice ființă, are un chip al său propriu de a fi. Să-l cercetăm așa cum se înfățișează în realitatea concretă. Respectul naturii lucrurilor și dragostea pentru ceea ce este viu ne dau putința să pătrundem în adâncimi nebănuite” (*Ibidem*, p. 24).

⁶ „civilizația română satească, prezentă azi sub ochii noștri, ne poartă în adâncimi de milenii și, prin observație directă, ne dezleagă probleme de istorie acolo unde documentul scris lipsește cu desăvârșire ... Satul românesc este cel mai expresiv și mai bogat document al istoriei neamului. Acesta pentru că deseori ... adevărata istorie începe acolo unde sfârșesc documentele scrise. Pe această cale, mersul în trecut este mai real, mai adânc, mai rodnic” (*Ibidem*, p. 12)

“We do not study *any* Romanian village today, but *only the one* that preserves archaic forms, with a particular content of life, concrete and irreducible, in its local ethnic conditions”⁷.

PEASANT CIVILIZATION: A ROMANIAN PHENOMENON AND ITS EXTERNAL INFLUENCES

The Romanian sociologist was aware of the new historical discoveries, which placed South-eastern Europe in a new paradigm, after the discovery of Neolithic cultures, part of the civilization of Old Europe, which is still insufficiently known today.

“Until the arrival of the Slavs, the rural life on these lands was never interrupted. The Thracian-Roman synthesis was already produced. Sometimes, the villages did nothing but continue in a Roman form the Thracian village way of life (N. Iorga). Everything that the external influences, older or newer, brought later on in this life melted with or without traces in this local world, of an ancient origin”⁹.

Thus, Bernea argues that the similarities between the surrounding peoples and the Romanian one can be put not on the account of external influences, but rather on the “common original background of the Thracian-Romanic space”¹⁰.

⁷ „Nu studiem orice sat românesc de azi, ci numai pe acela care păstrează forme arhaice, cu un conținut de viață aparte, concretă și ireductibilă, în condițiile sale locale etnice” (*Ibidem*, p. 5)

⁸ For further information, see the works of Marija Gimbutas, such as *Civilization & Culture: Prehistoric Traces in South-Eastern Europe*, București, Editura Meridiane, 1989

⁹ „Până la venirea slavilor, viața rurală pe aceste locuri nu a fost deloc întreruptă. Sinteza traco-romană era deja efectuată. Uneori, satele nu au făcut decât să continue sub formă romană o viață sătească tracă (N. Iorga). Tot ce influențele din afară, mai vechi sau mai noi, au adus mai târziu peste această viață, s-a topit cu urme sau fără urme în această lume locală, de o străveche origine” (Ernest Bernea, *op.cit.*, 2006, p. 11)

¹⁰ *Ibidem*, p. 11.

“The Romanian village civilization is the rightful keeper of some old local traditions and ..., through its mastery traits, through its full realization, represents a *centre of irradiation* in central and south-eastern Europe, from the Dniester River to the Adriatic, and from the northern Carpathians to the plain of Thessaly”¹¹.

Synthesizing, Bernea adopts the perspective of the historian Nicolae Iorga, who advances the term “Demotic Romanias”¹².

“The Romanian village civilization has its *own genre*, that starts from an ancient background, lost in time, and which can still be shown by the pre-Christian mythology that is still present today in our villages on both sides of the Carpathians, and has a *perfection*, a living experience, of continuous enrichment towards pure forms, as our popular art shows us above all. In this way, the Romanian village civilization, present today under our eyes, carries us into the depths of millennia and, by direct observation, unravels us problems of history where the written document is completely missing”¹³.

The archaic village, as part of the Romanian village civilization, possesses an organic character and is a creator of Romanian civilization. The external influences of this unit of life that bring their significant contribution to the evolution of the

¹¹ „Civilizația română sătească este deplina păstrătoare a unor vechi tradiții locale și..., prin însușirile sale de căpetenie, prin realizarea sa deplină, reprezintă un *centru de iradiere* în centrul și sud-estul Europei, de la Nistru până în Adriatica și din Carpații nordici până în câmpia Tesalici” (*Ibidem*, p. 11)

¹² „romanii populare”

¹³ „Civilizația română sătească are *un gen propriu*, pornit dintr-un fond străvechi, pierdut în negura veacurilor, și pe care încă îl poate arăta strălucit mitologia precreștină aflătoare azi în satele noastre de pe o parte și alta a Carpaților, și are o *perfectiune*, o experiență vie, de continuă îmbogățire către forme pure, așa cum ne-o arată mai ales arta noastră populară. În acest fel, civilizația română sătească, prezentă azi sub ochii noștri, ne poartă în adâncimi de milenii și, prin observație directă, ne dezleagă probleme de istorie acolo unde documentul scris lipsește cu desăvârșire” (Ernest Bernea, *op.cit.*, 2006, p. 11)

village are the geographical, historical factor, as well as the need to adapt “new ideas to the concrete reality of national local life”¹⁴. From this perspective, Bernea is proving to be Gustian once again, because, in his vision, combating the external influences of the village is done through the *social will*:

“But over biology and geography, the national unity was kept more manifest by the way the will reacted and the human activities in the material-economic and spiritual order were organized, maintained by a value system, the product of a way of thinking and experiencing things, of an *attitude* towards the world and life”¹⁵.

For Ernest Bernea, the Romanian civilization was “shaped” with the nation at the same time, which gives it an ancient and indigenous character, compared to the new types of sociability, present in the indigenous urban space.

“The village represents the Romanian civilization. And not only that. Compared to these two civilizations (urban and rural), we can affirm, without failing, the European character, not to mention the international one, of the first, and the Romanian authenticity of the second. This is because the civilization of our cities is of a recent date and, in relation to the data of the one after which it was copied, unfulfilled, *in progress*, whereas the civilization of our villages is ancient, original, and *conceived at the same time with this nation and fully developed*”¹⁶.

¹⁴ „a ideilor noi la realitatea concretă a vieții locale naționale” (Ernest Bernea, *op.cit.*, 2004, p. 304)

¹⁵ „Dar peste biologie și geografie unitatea națională s-a păstrat mai manifest prin felul cum a reacționat voința și s-au organizat activitățile omului în ordinea material-economică și în cea spirituală, întreținută de un sistem de valori, produs al unui mod de a gândi și experimenta lucrurile, a unei *atitudini* în fața lumii și vieții” (*Ibidem*, p. 305)

¹⁶ „Satul reprezintă civilizația românească. Și nu numai atât. Privite comparativ aceste două civilizații (urbană și rurală), putem afirma, fără a cădea în greșală, caracterul european, ca să nu mai spunem internațional, al celei dintâi și autenticitatea românească a celei de-a doua. Aceasta pentru

The external influences that affected the village civilization, up to modernity, says Bernea, did not put their mark as strongly as we may believe.

“Our researchers, especially historians, have often noticed a great resemblance between the civilizations of the different peoples of the Southeast. This finding is not without its basis: some forms of social organization, popular artistic products, especially the song, really raise the question of a larger ethnic unity, which would be the southeast; and even more so, the borders of this unit, going to Ukraine, Poland and Hungary. From here the conclusion of great foreign influences, especially Slavs (Russians, Serbs and Bulgarians) on the life of the Romanian people and therefore on our village civilization was drawn”¹⁷.

“It cannot be about disregarding and removing the presence of such influences, because living together for centuries or at least the passing proximity between several peoples leaves traces, some on others, sometimes so deep that they are assimilated, becoming in this manner their own qualities. What seems to be possible to bring the ethnic civilizations from the south-east of Europe closer

că civilizația orașelor noastre este de dată recentă și, în raport cu datele aceleia după care a fost copiată, neîmplinită, *în curs de realizare*, iar civilizația satelor noastre este străveche, este originară, *plămădită odată cu neamul acesta și deplin realizată*” (*Idem, op.cit.*, 2006, p. 10)

¹⁷ „S-a remarcat adeseori de către cercetătorii noștri, mai ales de către istorici, o mare asemănare între civilizațiile deosebitelor popoare din sud-est. Această constatare nu e lipsită de temei: unele forme de organizare socială, produsele artistice populare, între care mai ales cântecul, ne ridică în adevăr problema unei unități etnice mai mari, care ar fi sud-estul; și chiar mai mult decât atât, hotarele acestei unități, mergând până în Ucraina, Polonia și Ungaria. De aici s-a tras concluzia unor mari influențe străine, mai ales slave (rusești, sârbe și bulgare), asupra vieții poporului român și deci asupra civilizației noastre satești” (*Ibidem*, p. 10)

together is, first of all, the autochthonous background all over this land”¹⁸.

THE ROMANIAN FENOMENON

“The traditional community reality has defined and manifested *its own Romanian way of being*, which is specific and generally human at the same time”¹⁹.

The concept of “Romanian phenomenon”, advanced by Bernea in a writing from 1970, is defined in the following terms:

“complex of material and spiritual data, of specific forms, structures and activities that coordinated its being and made it to last over time”²⁰.

As a result of the researches carried out over the years, the Romanian sociologist concludes that this *process of becoming* in the Romanian space is inevitably linked to the evolution of the traditional Romanian village, which has its own culture, its own way of being, a specific philosophy of life, all influenced by the spatial and temporal coordinates that put their mark on the processes of social change.

¹⁸ „Nu poate fi vorba de-a nesocoti și înlătura prezența unor astfel de influențe, deoarece conviețuirea timp de veacuri sau cel puțin apropierea trecătoare între mai multe popoare lasă urme, unele asupra altora, uneori atât de adânci, încât sunt asimilate, devenind în acest fel însușiri proprii. Ceea ce pare să facă cu puțință o apropiere între civilizațiile etnice din sud-estul Europei este în primul rând fondul autohton pe întreg pământul acesta” (*Ibidem*, pp. 10-11)

¹⁹ „Realitatea tradițională comunitară a definit și manifestat *un mod propriu românesc de a fi*, care e specific și general uman totodată” (Ernest Bernea, *op.cit.*, 2006, p. 164)

²⁰ „complex de date materiale și spirituale, de forme, structuri și activități specifice care i-au coordonat ființa și l-au făcut să dureze în timp” (*Idem*, *op.cit.*, 2004, p. 300)

“We may say that the traditional Romanian village and its popular culture, if not identified with the Romanian phenomenon itself, it can be considered its ethnographic and historical *fundamental given*”²¹.

For Bernea, the process of becoming a Romanian nation necessarily pertains to a component of human nature, namely the attitude “towards the world and life” of both the individual and the community. Although it may seem paradoxical, this has always ensured the national culture a character of universality.

“Of course, the Romanian phenomenon, at the ethnographic level, was constituted by a family of people and geographically conditioned by its own territory. But over biology and geography, the national unity was kept more manifest by the way the will reacted and the human activities in the material-economic and spiritual order were organized, maintained by a value system, the product of a way of thinking and experiencing things, of an *attitude* towards the world and life. Popular spiritual culture expresses, as well as material culture, a human nature, a way of being, a life style of its own, which opens our paths to the act of universal creation”²².

UNIT OF (ROMANIAN) LIFE

What should be look for when conducting a field survey?
Ernest Bernea directs us to focus on the *concrete social unit of life*,

²¹ „[P]utem spune că satul românesc tradițional și cultura sa populară, dacă nu poate fi identificat cu însuși fenomenul românesc, el poate fi socotit *datul fundamental* etnografic și istoric al fenomenului românesc” (*Ibidem*, p. 303)

²² „Sigur, fenomenul românesc, la nivel etnografic, a fost constituit dintr-un neam de oameni și condiționat geografic de un teritoriu propriu. Dar peste biologie și geografie unitatea națională s-a păstrat mai manifest prin felul cum a reacționat voința și s-au organizat activitățile omului în ordinea material-economică și în cea spirituală, întreținută de un sistem de valori, produs al unui mod de a gândi și experimenta lucrurile, a unei *atitudini* în fața lumii și vieții. Cultura spirituală populară exprimă, ca și cea materială, o natură umană, un mod de a fi, un stil propriu de viață, care ne deschide căile spre actul de creație universală” (*Ibidem*, p. 305)

which is vectorized on three major axes: geography, ethnicity and social system.

“The real life unit that interests us when we research the old village civilization has a triple appearance: geographical, ethnic and social. In other words, almost all the time, a community of Romanian life has as correspondent well-defined geographical and ethnic unities, which give a certain character and guide it. Therefore, when we speak of community of life, we also understand these physical and human elements”²³.

From this point of view, the Romanian sociologist makes a connection between the geographical component and the cultural one to explain the specificity of the Romanian civilization and its ability to preserve its most intimate data, an analysis similar with the one Lucian Blaga has in its the book “The Mioritic Space” (1936).

“Our mountains give us the most characteristic examples today. And it is not without significance, because these are the areas where the Romanian civilization, at the time being, has its most vivid expressions. The unity of life of our nation has been and still is to a large extent what has been termed with a geographical expression, depression and valley; sometimes both of them together ... In these places were formed in Transylvania «the countries», and in the Old Kingdom the valleys. Good soil and easier to work, easier connection, safer shelter (in ancient times), all made the sub-Carpathian depressions and valleys the first units of Romanian life and also the most - p.19, authentic ethnic expressions”²⁴.

²³ „Unitatea reală de viață care ne interesează atunci când cercetăm vechea civilizație sătească are o întreită înfățișare: geografică, etnică și socială. Cu alte cuvinte, mai întotdeauna unei comunități de viață românească îi corespund o unitate geografică și una etnică, bine determinate, care îi dau un caracter propriu și o îndrumă. De aceea, când vorbim de comunitate de viață, noi subînțelegem și aceste elemente fizice și umane” (*Idem, op.cit.* 2006, p. 18)

²⁴ „Munții noștri ne dau și azi cele mai caracteristice exemple. Și nu e lipsit de însemnătate, deoarece civilizația română sătească, în prezent, aci își are

“... not only in the Carpathians the villages are grouped naturally, but also in the lands around Danube River. Although these settlement units, viewed from a geographical perspective, do not always have a natural delimitation, such as water or a mountain, they are not, however, outside a border that cannot be shown in reality. Ethnically speaking, although they seem to have nothing characteristic, because the national costume with its local variations is gone, yet we can speak of a unit of life, because there are other ethnic elements that can guide us. But even if we did not take into account the geographical and the ethnic elements and we would still see how the villages group themselves only after their present coexistence. The community of local life fixes our border and unravels the problem”²⁵.

THE FRONTIER ISSUE

Bernea uses a particular significance of *the frontier* concept, the one that implies the input of the local communities, significance present also in some of Nicolae Iorga's works:

expresiile cele mai vii. Unitatea de viață a neamului nostru a fost și este încă într-o largă măsură, ceea ce s-a denumit cu o expresie geografică, depresiune și vale; uneori amândouă laolaltă ... Pe aceste locuri s-au format în Ardeal «țările», și în Vechiul Regat, văile. Pământul bun și mai ușor de lucrat, legătura mai lesnicioasă, adăpostul mai sigur (în vremurile străvechi) au făcut din depresiunile subcarpatice și șesurile din văi cele dintâi unități de viață românească și totodată cele mai, autentice expresii etnice” (*Ibidem*, pp. 18-19).

²⁵ „... nu numai în Carpați satele se grupează în chip firesc, ci și în ținuturile Dunării. Cu toate că aceste unități de șes judecate din punct de vedere geografic nu au întotdeauna o limită hotar natural, o apă sau un munte, ele nu sunt totuși în afara unui hotar care să nu poată fi arătat în realitate. Etnic, cu toate că par să nu aibă nimic caracteristic, deoarece costumul național cu variațiile lui locale este dispărut, totuși putem vorbi de o unitate de viață, pentru că sunt alte elemente etnice care ne pot îndruma. Dar chiar de nu am lua în seamă elementul geografic și cel etnic și tot am vedea cum se grupează satele numai după conviețuirea lor prezentă. Comunitatea de viață locală ne fixează hotarul și ne dezleagă problema” (*Ibidem*, p. 22).

“But once upon a time, the frontier was not understood as it is today (only with a strict partition function, a border). Then there were no financial officials, no gendarmes, no guns raised against the border breaker. The frontier had a much broader meaning. It encompassed an entire region ... It was shown what a Roman frontier meant. It stretched - as is now counted by the kilometres -, by many square kilometres and it had a meaning that we cannot imagine now, when two distinct worlds, even two enemy worlds stand in front of each other. It was, as I say, a fruitful frontier, a life-creating and synthesis creator type of frontier. In these parts, a world was created that without this boundary could not have been formed, or would not have formed in this way”²⁶.

Precisely for this reason, Iorga states that the idea of the supreme sacrifice in the name of the national ideal was possible, regardless of the form it has taken over time:

“Thus *country* means, without any other addition, free Romanian land, in all its extent and with all the sacred right which is contained within it. A *country* narrowed by the violence of the stranger, which, today, by itself, has been restored in the old borders through that elasticity of spirit which is one of the great elements of the vitality

²⁶ „Dar odinioară hotarul nu era așa [doar cu funcție despărțitoare strictă]. Nu erau funcționari financiari, nu erau jandarmi, nu erau puști întinse împotriva încălcătorului de hotar. Hotarul avea un sens mult mai larg. Cuprindea o regiune întreagă. ... S-a arătat ce însemna un hotar roman. Hotarul roman se întindea, - cum se face socoteala acum pe kilometri, - pe mulți kilometri pătrați și hotarul acesta avea o însemnătate pe care noi nu ne-o putem închipui acum, când două lumi deosebite și două lumi vrăjmașe își stau una în fața celeilalte. Era, cum am zice, un hotar fecund, un hotar creator de viață, producător de sinteză. Se alcătuia în părțile acestea o lume care fără acest hotar nu s-ar fi putut alcătui, sau nu s-ar fi alcătuit în acest chip” (Nicolae Iorga, *Hotare și spații naționale. Afirmarea vitalității românești [Borders and national spaces. Affirmation of Romanian vitality]*, studiu introductiv de Mihai Ungheanu, postfața de Sever Ardelean, Galați, Editura Porto Franco, 1996, p. 107)

of a people. And that is why *dying for the country* was the highest duty for the generations that closed their eyes before their time”²⁷.

From a methodological point of view, Bernea's hypothesis remains valid even within the spaces of contact, of those border-villages that do not meet all the attributes necessary to demonstrate a local homogeneity, although they are included in a more general social logic, also homogeneous, the *Romanian* one.

“It is necessary to provide a clarification regarding the border of these units of Romanian life. Even where the geographical factor has precise boundaries, as is the case of depressions, it is not always possible to speak of a precise boundary of the community of life. We want to say with this that there are settlements that go beyond the natural boundary of the unit to which they belong naturally in terms of public life, social and economic relations. This is the case of the border villages. ... Like these units of Romanian life cannot be challenged because they can be found in reality, the marginal infiltration, that is the presence of border settlements, cannot be challenged or even disrespected, too. The communities of life are found, in concrete reality, as groups of villages, and their border is interlaced, alive too, as an organic wrist and a glued linear, abstract. The border villages do not prove the non-existence of local life units, but on the contrary, they reinforce this claim. For as long as the internal composition of the units is alive, their limit is also alive; this intertwining means life”²⁸.

²⁷ „Astfel *țară* înseamnă, fără nici un alt adaos, pământ românesc liber, în toată întinderea lui și cu tot sacrul drept care se cuprinde în el. O *țară* îngustată prin violența străinului, care, astăzi, de la sine s-a refăcut în vechile hotare prin acea elasticitate de spirit care e unul din marile elemente ale vitalității unui popor. Și de aceea a *muri pentru țară* a fost cea mai înaltă datorie pentru generațiile care, au închis ochii înainte de vreme” (*Idem, op.cit.* 2006, p. 40)

²⁸ „În legătură cu hotarul acestor unități de viață românească e necesar să aducem o precizare. Chiar acolo unde factorul geografic are hotare precise, așa cum e cazul depresiunilor, nu se poate vorbi întotdeauna și de un hotar

It is very interesting that Bernea argues in his analyzes that one of the most important connections made between the villages separated by natural elements is represented by the shepherds' route, people that became connecting elements and agents of transmission of local characters within distinct social units:

“Only the shepherds cross these mountains from one side to the other. This connection is more of a moral kind, and has the substance of a true custom”²⁹.

SHORT CONCLUSIONS

Ernest Bernea, a defender and fine researcher of the Romanian village, demonstrates through his works that one can talk about *a specific way of being* in the world, the Romanian way, and that, moreover, this type of being led to the creation of an articulated type of civilization, the Romanian one. Being determined by geographical, cultural and social factors, this civilization concentrated on social units of life, which ensured its continuity over time: the *archaic villages*. This is the *Romanian phenomenon* in history, even though, since the interwar period, Bernea identifies

precis delimitat al comunității de viață. Vrem să spunem cu aceasta că sunt așezări care depășesc, ca viață obștească, ca relații sociale și economice, hotarul natural al unității căreia le aparțin în chip firesc. Acestea sunt satele limită. ... După cum aceste unități de viață românească nu pot fi contestate pentru că sunt în realitate, tot astfel nici infiltrația marginală, adică prezența așezărilor limită, nu poate fi contestată și nici măcar nesocotită. Comunitățile de viață se găsesc în concret, în viață, ca grupări de sate, iar hotarul lor este întrepătruns, viu și el, ca o încheietură organică și un linear lipit, abstract. Satele limită nu dovedesc neexistența unităților de viață locală, ci dimpotrivă, întăresc această afirmație. Căci pe cât de vie este alcătuirea internă a unităților, pe atât de vie este limita lor; întrepătrunderea aceasta înseamnă viață” (Ernest Bernea, *op.cit.*, 2006, p. 22)

²⁹ „Doar ciobanii trec acești munți într-o parte sau alta. Această legătură este mai mult de ordin moral, cu un caracter de datină” (*Ibidem*, p. 22)

serious moments of dissolution that the village is facing, which lead to the outline of a crisis of the Romanian civilization as a whole.

“The Romanian village of today, in most cases, is no longer a balanced organic reality, but a reality entered into a powerful process of disintegration ... Sometimes, however, like in the isolated, mountainous regions, the Romanian village can live an unaltered, harmonious and balanced life, rich in traditional values, as a clean product of local soil and history”³⁰.

“At present, however, we are not facing a slow and cursive process, a mild change, which comes with the passage of time, but it is a unique experience in the history of this civilization, at the ethnographic level. It is a sudden, revolutionary change, linked to the transformations of the contemporary world. What is happening at this moment with the traditional Romanian village is not an evolutionary change started from within, but a radical transformation; the very foundations of these old settlements themselves are shaken, until they are replaced”³¹.

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³⁰ „Satul românesc de azi, în majoritatea cazurilor, nu mai este o realitate organică echilibrată, ci o realitate intrată într-un puternic proces de destrămare ... Uneori însă, cu deosebire în regiunile izolate, de munte, satul românesc stăruie să trăiască o viață nealterată, armonioasă și echilibrată, bogată în valori tradiționale, ca un produs curat al pământului și istoriei locale” (*Ibidem*, p. 5)

³¹ „În prezent nu suntem însă în fața unui proces lent și cursiv, a unei schimbări încete, care vine odată cu trecerea vremii, ci e vorba de o experiență unică în istoria acestei civilizații, la nivel etnografic. Este vorba de o schimbare bruscă, revoluționară, legată de prefacerile lumii contemporane. Ceea ce se întâmplă în acest moment cu satul românesc tradițional nu este o schimbare evolutivă pornită din interiorul său, ci o transformare radicală; înseși bazele acestor vechi așezări sunt zdruncinate, până la a fi înlocuite” (*Ibidem*, p. 16)

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THE CUNNING OF EVIL. A VERY SHORT INTRODUCTION TO EUGEN DREWERMANN'S CONCEPTION ON EVIL

Mihail Ungheanu

ABSTRACT

This paper explores and describes the way the German theologian and author Eugen Drewermann, which is also a psychotherapist, understands the problem of evil. His main insights are expressed in his 3 volume work *Strukturen des Bösen*, and cover and synthesize contributions from psychoanalysis, history of religions, structuralism, sartrian existential, social philosophy and theology. The problem of evil is not located only in the individual, but has a collective dimension that is also explored by the author. These dimensions of evil are interrelated, impossible to separate. Evil expresses itself as the repeated endeavour of man to provide himself the ontological principle and justification of its own existence that it is as the attempt to become God, as an unlimited will to power. These attempts can be seen in social engineering programs or in endeavours such as the communist revolution, liberalism, and in the striving to impose the so-called social justice in society, regardless of the consequences. The intention to do good or to undo an evil that has been committed has unforeseen consequences for the doer, the end-result being completely opposed to the intent of the action. Hence the cunning of evil terminology. Keywords: Drewermann, evil, structures of evil, sin, noology, the cunning of evil

INTRODUCTION

Man is a social being, but also a spiritual one. These two dimensions intertwine, but man's existence is defined by his spirituality, his own self-image and *Weltanschauung*. Since he cannot exist like an animal does, he has to build himself an image of existence, of its meaning, of evil, of good, etc. Though one may speak about man, he exists only in particular ways, a fact that modern philosophy and current social and political ideals try to ignore or even hide.

Modernity views man in an abstract generic way, devoid of any real features, as if man can be made a member of a utopian society, where there are no borders, no conflict, and so on. In reality

there is no such thing as a generic human, a human devoid of all characteristics, of language, history, community. Man does not exist in himself, it is not self-subsistence (this is an attribute of God, the only being existing through himself), so it is not substance in the ancient meaning of this term. Man is not given in or as an abstract nature, but only in concrete forms or as henipostasis, as the eastern Fathers of the Church affirm. This peculiar concept seeks to affirm that the common nature of man, in this case, is always expressed in particular and concrete forms, not being accessible otherwise, somehow akin to the Hegelian concept of a universal that is given only through an individual. That is the difference is also not reducible to the abstract universal essence. Difference and multiplicity are real and are not masks for an abstract impersonal nature that shines through them and discards them as mere illusory. The difference does not melt away in universality. That does not imply that man is just an individual, an atomistic *in sich geschlossene Einheit*, so self-closed and auto-referential atomistic monad, as liberal and materialistic points of view do wish to be the case. Human existence is particular, social, personal, and also spiritual. It entails a noological dimension that modernity seeks to eradicate. This noological dimension expresses itself in many things, in literature, myth, symbols, religion, etc. These spiritual creations can confer universality to a human community with a limited and localized existence in space and time. Many of these spiritual products do acquire it. Narratives, myths, etc. The Bible is a paradigmatic example in this sense. One of the foremost problems which spirituality encounters is the problem of evil. The noological dimension is not something that pertains to fancy works of art, or literature or metaphysical speculations, but it pertains to problems that affect human communities every day, sufferance, death, evil, etc. Evil is in a sense the paradigmatic spiritual problem for man,

and is tethered to the everyday life of anyone. It affects both the individual and the common dimension of human existence. The Bible gives insights in this particular troubling question, insights that are universal, although they were expressed by a particular people in a particular and limited corner of the world. The Biblical vision had become common for many people across the world and is the basis of their culture and for a possible or renewed common understanding between them. It still has relevance for the modern world, despite the Enlightenment and the new developments in the former Christian countries.

As already said, evil is a common experience of humanity. The encounter with evil and the attempts to explain it, or at least to make it partially intelligible were for the most part recorded in the symbolic language of myth, fable, allegory, in sacred text and so on. There were also the first philosophical attempts to explain it, which have their root in symbolic and mythical thought, and also more modern ones, who, despite the proffered rationalism and sometime atheism, do still have roots in the ancient thought. Some of these philosophical and systematic attempts to explain evil place it at social level, and tried to offer proposals to remove it. They also have been applied, but they had fostered some types of policies and societies based on those policies, wherein the supposed doing away with evil has furthered evil on and until then unknown scale. Gulags and concentration camps have roots in these modern philosophical attempts to explain evil and in the modern attempts to eliminate evil from society. The problem persisted and still persists, and instead on doing what they set out to do in the first place, they created new escape goats for evil, encompassing social classes or even entire peoples.

The contemporary fight against discrimination and other social justice ideologies/policies do the same thing. They locate evil

also in entire categories of human beings: men, especially white men. These attempts also show that the modern view of man that does not recognize the sinful nature of man is wrong. It also illustrates another feature of evil, which is that evil comes to the fore, or is enacted especially when we think that we found ways to combat it, or we have found the guilty parties and we try to punish them. Such a view of evil is to be found in the Bible. But the biblical vision of evil does not stop here; it also exposes the cause that produced this.

One author that has given an account of the biblical experience of evil, though referring only to some books of the Old Testament, is the German theologian and psychotherapist Eugen Drewermann. An important feature of evil is in this view the fact that, when evil arises, thought not always, it arises against the attempts to repair a previous evil or to do good. It is an unintended consequence that produces an opposite result to the intention of the action that produced it in the first place. One may speak here of the cunning of evil, in the same manner as Hegel spoke of the cunning of reason, by which an intended action produces unintended results, just opposed to the intentions that originated the action. It is like in old pseudo-dualistic legends when, in the beginning of time, there is God and the devil, and the devil tries to drown God in the surrounding waters while God sleeps on a tiny piece of land. But when the devil tries to drown him, something else entirely happens. The tiny piece of lands grows, extends itself in the direction where the devil pushes God towards the water.

BASICS PRESUPPOSITIONS OF BIBLICAL THINKING

The Bible offers a symbolical and realistic view of evil. It shows, with the help of historical and symbolical meanings, the real

situation of man in the world, and his relationship to the Creator of the world, or the ontological principle, and it draws the consequences that come from this situation. The essential narrative for the problem of evil and for the fall of man, which can function as a blueprint for understanding evil in society even today, is comprised of the so-called iahvist books, whereto also the *Book of Genesis* belongs. The fall of man and the exile from Eden are essential for the understanding the matter at hand, but one cannot stop here. The story of Abel und Cain, the act of building the Tower of Babel, the episode of the intercourse between the heavenly Watchers and human females, the Flood and Noah, *The Song of Lamech*. The fall of man seems to be a continuous process, and also the increase of the remoteness between man and God.

This is one strain of thought from Eugen Drewermann thesis on evil that he elaborated in his 3-volume work *The Structures of Evil – Die Strukturen des Bösen*³². The way he attacks this problem is not one-sided, but makes use of many disciplines such as theology, comparative mythology and folklore, psychoanalysis, sartrian existential philosophy, which he uses to show how the personal dimension of sin intertwines with its social dimension in a dialectical way, etc. His starting point is the totality of the iahvist narrative, not limiting himself only to the episodes described by *The Book of Genesis*. What all these narratives describe is the gloomy image of mankind, the darkening and closing of the human mind towards God, and the way man loses his original freedom. In this process humanity becomes the prisoner of necessity, being alienated from God, from nature, from himself and from the fellow human being. What the reader finds in these narratives is the true inhumanity of mankind, inhumanity that results from severing its

³² Eugen Drewermann, *Strukturen des Bösen*, vol. I-III, Ferdinand Schoening, Paderborn, 1988.

ties to God. This inhumanity is contrasted to the loving care of God's actions toward His people. The inhumanity of human history and the gruesome ways people act toward each other are the tragic consequence of the fall and of the attempt to replace God in the scheme of things, that is in trying to become one's own ontological principle. This attitude of man is also the prime mover of mankind's history and one could detect it behind the modern notion of progress (also in the now published ideas of transhumanism).

These narratives are providing the hermeneutical frame for an adequate understanding of man even for the present situation. This mode of being-in-the-world finds its utmost expression in the creation of the city, which entails its further development, and also the increasing and the deepening of the bond-break with God³³.

One further negative development of this ontological situation is epitomized by the city³⁴. The city is foremost a spiritual reality, which affects its anthropological and social dimensions. The city is the product of being exiled from Eden, an exile where man is confronted with a world for which he was not made for. He has no big teeth, no natural armour, no natural weapons, etc. His being and existence will be from that point on characterized by lack, both in an ontological sense and a more mundane one. It is the consequence of Cain's wrong doing and killing³⁵ of his sibling. Cain builds the first city, which is called Enoch, just like Cain's son – meaning beginning or initiation. Some authors have even clearly stated that the city is basically what the Bible betokens as power, so a spiritual power. So, the city is associated with a fallen heavenly power.

³³ Eugen Drewermann, *Strukturen des Bösen*, vol. I, p. 152.

³⁴ Jacques Ellul, *The Meaning of the City*, trad. Dennis Pardee, Wipf and Stock, Eugene, Oregon, 2011

³⁵ *Ibidem*

To lessen the adequate understanding of this vision about evil, the German author explains the difference between Hebraic and Greek/Indo-European thought. They understand and express otherwise such important concepts as beginning, essence, or time. The principle of reality, also in the sense of beginning, is not something that endures behind appearances. The beginning, or the *arhe*, is something to be found in the flux of change itself, it works in it. It is not something that ceases to be, it is not a thing of the past. The story of the Fall of man and his exile is akin to a report that describes the process of erecting a structure, a house. It is a process that happened, it is still happening, and it can continue to do so, though in the case of sin there is hope that this process might be broken. This process, this beginning is the Hebraic counterpart to the old Greek notion of essence or *ousia*/being.

Describing a beginning is the equivalent of describing the essence in old Greek and today's philosophy:

“Die Beschreibung, wie etwas gemacht wurde, ist also zu verstehen als eine Beschreibung dessen, was etwas in seinem Wesen, in seiner Gestalt ist”³⁶.

It is the description of a process which reaches pause, but is still active, and it is not the process of imprinting an archetype onto some inferior matter. What we call being, essence, even reality seem to be something efficient, something that exercises an effect, more akin to the German *Wirklichkeit*. The usual translation of it is reality, but instead of referring to *res*, to things, it relates to *wirken* – cognate of the English to work – which means to act upon, to be efficient and so on.

³⁶ “The description of the way something comes about to be, has to be understand as being the description of what something is in his essence, in his total configuration” (*Ibidem*, p. XIX)

So, according to Drewermann and to the Hebraic and biblical thought, the iahvist narratives are not a description of what happened at the beginning of creation of man, something that is over. What is reported is still going on. The fall repeats itself in each human being, in each society. What those narratives describe is, speaking in the modern idiom of thought, the very essence of man and his behavior. It is not the description of a historical event in the modern sense. Being made of dust is not a description of the way God created man. It is the depiction of man's way of being in himself, which is without God's working to sustain him. It is the very nature of man from his beginning, a nature that perdures³⁷. It is a true description and *zur-Schau-stellen* of the very core of man's being, depiction that uses symbols, myths, metaphors, etc. It describes the real situation of man in the world, of his relationship to God, to himself. The conundrum of evil arises at this joint with God. The events that are presented to belong to the beginning of man's historical existence are depictions of what has always existed and still exists, and will exist.

“Die Mythen der j Urgeschichte sind daher zu verstehen als Urbilder des Menschen, der menschlichen Wirklichkeit in ihren Wesenszügen. Was als Begebenheit der Urzeit erzählt wird, ist Beschreibung dessen, was zu allen Zeiten ist”³⁸.

The Bible expresses here a universal truth about human nature. Adam and Eve, Cain and Abel, Nimrod, etc. are, though singular, universal typical figures. Whatever they do or express depict human existence since it cut off its ties to God. They express

³⁷ Drewermann, *op. cit.*, p. XIX

³⁸ “The myths of the primordial iahvist narratives are hence to be understood as primordial images of man, of human reality in its essential features. Whatever is being narrated as even in primordial times, is the description of the structures that exists anytime.” (*Ibidem*, p. XXVI)

the lack of communion with God. These narratives do not tell what happened in *illo tempore* like a myth does. They describe the essence and universal, permanent meaning of a thing, etc. in the old Hebraic sense. The sin, the fall of man is not a thing of the past. This structure-process still exists, and has its origin in a human error; it is not the original situation. The narrative hence implies hope. Still the universal meaning is there. When Saul calls Jonathan as a whore's son (1 Sam 1-2), the whole point is not to insult but to show that rebel and infidel attitude are exemplified by him. Even genealogies or childhood accounts belong to this type of narrations. The saying "that fearing God is the beginning of all wisdom" is such a statement that clearly designates that fearing God is the essence of wisdom. Another expression that carries the same type of meaning is "Abraham's children", which designates a certain kind of relationship between a determinate human group and the Lord. All these statements designate what we may call essence of something, but not in the mythical sense of a happening or an act done in *illo tempore*. Even when there is an etiological dimension, this dimension is not the main feature thereof. It expresses origin but not as a temporal or etiological event that is gone and closed. As already mentioned, Adam and Eve are not just mere historical persons, but also universal types that apply to all men and women in any time. This, remarks Drewermann, is also valid for many surnames in many cultures, and these names are not different from names that designate categories or species. A person or an individual can appear as a species and vice-versa. A historical reality can appear as a symbolical one and gain universal value for everyone, for many peoples around the globe. Hence the biblical narratives acquire universal meaning. The contents of the Bible pertain to the individual person but also to humanity or larger human communities as such. It is a kind of primordial narrative – *eine Urgeschichte*, but

not in mythical sense³⁹. Mythical images and symbols are used in a non-mythical way, describing the essence of human existence and its main attitudes towards being, God etc. The main import of these statements is theological, not philosophical, because it describes mankind's relationship to God⁴⁰. Each human being can be both Adam or Eve, Cain or Abel, Lamech, Nimrod or Solomon, and so on.

DIALECTICAL BIBLICAL UNDERSTANDING OF EVIL. A VERY SHORT EXEMPLIFICATION

Cain represents a new attitude or aspect of human existence. He and Abel have to make offerings to God, a thing that denotes that human existence dwells already in remoteness from God. The idea of an offering or sacrifice shows the ambiguity and negative side of the new post-*lapsarian* existence. There has been a transgression of the original community with God, and man cannot mend this destroyed relationship. Man can no longer be sure of God's blessings towards him, since he now lives in a world which is not forthcoming but dangerous and deadly. Man is still dependent on God. The fundamental basis of his existence seems to vanish in man's eyes, since he thinks he no longer enjoys any kind of certainty coming from God. Being acknowledged by the Lord is now reassuring man's existence, his own security and possibility to live and maybe flourish. The fact that God refuses Cain's offerings betokens only his increased distance to God, but also that God refuses to acknowledge him. An offering implies that man admits that his own existence depends on God, that man acknowledges God's sovereignty over him, and the acceptance from God means

³⁹ *Ibidem*, p. XXII

⁴⁰ *Ibidem*, p. XXIX

that one's existence has the benevolence of the divinity. But no sacrifice or offering can rebuild the original communion. The fall has negatively affected not only the relationship with God, but the relationships between individuals, between genders, and also the relationship that one has with his own being. Cain is jealous over Abel's acceptance by God, whereby his offering is refused. As a result of his dissatisfaction, he commits murder. Cain feels himself not acknowledged by God in his strivings and existence, and one can wonder why, and one can think God acts arbitrarily against Cain. But Cain's murder of his sibling shows that his own inner disposition and workings were already not as they should be. One can see now that God's benevolence is essential for one's life.

Another meaning that the paradigmatic figure of Cain provides is that henceforth God's blessing will no more be given to anyone or in the same amount⁴¹. From now on God's image will become not unlike a tyrant's image, and as something so remote that can no longer be understood or love, whose actions are deemed being expressions of sheer arbitrariness. Cain fails in getting the long-needed blessings, and the act that was supposed to do good, that is to reaffirm his bond to God, produces evil. God's refusing act toward Cain will transform the two of them into fierce competitors, into enemies. The stake of the conflict is caused by the much-needed blessing of God. God's blessing is everything for man⁴². Cain stands for the human fallen existence, which falls to acknowledge God as the irreplaceable source of being. This spiritual attitude entertains is an ambiguous one. This existence still needs and wants God's blessing. Man, as exemplified by Cain, continues to breed, to exist, etc. and even starts to build cities, that are a substitute of God's order with his own, and to replace God's blessing with his own. God's

⁴¹ *Ibidem*, p. 144.

⁴² *Ibidem*, p. 126.

word is no longer enough to give assurance for one's existence, but instead man becomes master and owner of his own existence, and of creation. Enoch is Cain's son, and he has the name that Cain will give to the first city. Enoch means also initiation and beginning. The city as a spiritual, sociological and anthropological reality is in this sense Cain's son. The gift and the grace of God are freely given, but are not the automatically given answer to human efforts; from a protestant theological vision certainly not, since God's grace and man's efforts are opposed. Not being accepted or acknowledged by God is mostly the case for human existence. Cain, as Adam and Eve's descendant, deepens the breach between man and God, first through the sibling's murder and then by building the city. This activity of building, because men are builders, is intimately connected, as in Jacques Ellul's theological vision, with man's strivings against God, with his efforts to replace him. After the deed is done, the earth becomes bare, much harder to get something living out of it, or even impossible. The lack of harmony and the break with nature that was completed by the fall of the original couple is now deepening. And so, in order to survive, Cain has to build a city.

The story of Cain and Abel is a story of the deepening and multiplication of sin – *Anwachsen der Sünde*. The story tells us that the ontological situation of man worsens, but also that God warns him not to let it happen. Cain refuses to acknowledge that the cause of his being mean and angry resides in himself and not in Abel. He should have rejoiced in the fact that Abel got his blessings from the Lord⁴³. The murder attests only to the fact that there was a deep break between the two siblings, and it was not the product of God's blessing. Justice seems not being able to exist outside Eden, and Cain cannot stand the inequality which now exists between him and

⁴³ *Ibidem*, p. 130.

his brother. The tension that befalls the relationship between Adam and Eve after the fall, and then between Cain and Abel is transposed inside man's inner being. Somehow man – or Cain in this case – has to get a hold on the sin that ravages his inner life, so that he can lead a normal human existence.

Another consequence of the fall is that the relationships between men and women, but between individuals *tout court*, will cease to be egalitarian and become hierarchical. The most important lesson of this story is that evil starts to manifest itself just in the moment then man thinks he takes steps to fight evil, or when he tries to develop better means to prevent/fight it more efficiently. Cain is not presented as being born a murderer as an evil being from the beginning, but only after his offering to God had been refused. Evil results from an act that was intended to help getting a blessing from God, not from an evil act.

“Die Tragik dessen, was er schildert, liegt in Gn3 wie in Gn4 vielmehr darin, daß die Menschen gerade das Böse tun, indem sie auf ihre Art das Gute wollen”⁴⁴.

The fact of not getting God's blessing makes Cain angry, and so he will refuse God from now on, trying to do without him. He thinks that he doesn't need God's blessing or benevolence, but the kind of people who choose this course of action must live without it, because they exclude themselves from receiving the grace. Cain has to run, has to abandon his home, his existence becomes unsafe, etc. This is not the result of a curse of God. The so-called curse of Cain is the result of his own doing. He doesn't live from working the land anymore; he becomes a nomad. His existence is a groundless one - *bodenlose Existenz*.

⁴⁴ “The tragic of what is described consist in, as Gn3 and Gn4 show, in the fact that people do evil, while they try to accomplish the good in their own way” (*Ibidem*, p. 131)

Cain leaves the place where he once lived and belonged, wanders, takes a wife, and then he builds a city, to make up for this wandering, groundless existence. Cain is constrained by his own actions to build a kind of ground for his own sake, and for the sake of his children and descendants. But this new creation is opposed to the divine act of creation. Cain doesn't believe God when He promises him to punish or to curse anyone who takes on Cain. Once again, this first city is called Enoch – meaning beginning, and/or initiation. Partially the building of the city has its roots in the memory of paradise, but its main thrust lies in the attempt to repeat, to imitate the divine act of creation. The motive stems not so much from piety or from the wish to repair the bond with God⁴⁵. He tries to build himself the creation from which he was exiled.

Even if the building of the city can be construed as being a progress, that is from a certain point of view, nevertheless this technical progress is the result of an act that takes place in the existential remoteness from God. It also deepens this remoteness, though there is no intent to do so. Cain is trying to build himself a *Heimat*, a home. The city is being the first place where Cain – and humankind – thinks it can be itself, autonomous, protected from dangers. The city is the material sign of man's security and purported wealth and freedom. Building civilizations or creating cultures are the product of man's own efforts, their purpose being the recreation of a home, that is lost and can be found again only in God. Cultural efforts or arrangements are not redemptive; the only redemptive force is God, *ihr heil ist allein Gott*⁴⁶.

For the heathen mythologies the cities are the product of the heroes or of some god, a view that is not endorsed by the Bible. Cities are man-made, and are made without taking God

⁴⁵ *Ibidem*, p. 153

⁴⁶ *Ibidem*, p. 154

into account, being an attempt to steal from Him his creative power, attempts to create a Garden of Eden, but without its source of life, that is God. They are without or against God⁴⁷.

Since God remains the exclusive source and origin of redemption, the city remains what she really is, namely an environment full of unhappiness, of being lost, of alienation and slavery in many forms – even today. Each one of these is not driven out by progress, but is being increased.

“For God’s Eden he substitutes his own, for the goal given to his life by God, he substitutes a goal chosen by himself – just as he substituted his own security for God’s. Such is the act by which Cain takes his destiny on his own shoulders, refusing the hand of God in his life”⁴⁸.

Cain initiates, begins a world that is opposed to Eden. This is a man’s world. Exclusively so. God’s creation loses its meaning and value in the eyes of man; a new creation has to be built. The city is a start made by man that gives meaning and value to things now. The man, which is now a murderer, has taken possession of the world and bends it to his own will⁴⁹.

The solution to man’s problem lies in God’s hand. But His solution is for Cain, and for man generally speaking, no longer acceptable. Man is completely driven by the idea that the solution to his predicament must come only from himself. He wants to redeem himself through his own efforts without heavenly assistance. Cain wants to become a self-made man. Nevertheless, his own situation depends on God’s grace, like everything else in creation.

⁴⁷ *Idem*

⁴⁸ Jacques Ellul, *The Meaning of the City*, trad. Dennis Pardee, Wipf and Sock, Eugene, Oregon, 2011, p. 5.

⁴⁹ *Ibidem*, pp. 6-7.

But this attempt to repair his situation does not produce what Cain wants. Each remedy is followed by a new disobedience, and Cain sinks deeper, gets himself trapped in a situation which is governed by the dialectal mechanism of evil, by the cunning of evil. By taking control of creation, man forces creation to take on his own destiny, that is sin, slavery and evil, exploitation, conquest. Some of those will become means by which man tries to assure his own existence, or to assert and extend his dominion. Dominion, conquest, self-boasting are all figures of evil and are meant to try to replace the creative and redemptive action of God. They express the fear that now has dominion over man. They make up an important part of man's wisdom utility toolbox. Cain represents human wisdom as opposed to God's wisdom, and here lies the beginning of modernity, of utopia, and of every plan or project that seeks to gain dominion over other people, over creation, and over man itself (sex changes come to mind, but also genetic modified plants or animals are expression of this will-to-power).

CONCLUSION

As one can see the problem of evil has a dialectical dimension, and the origin of evil in the world is in many cases an action or intention that was supposed to be good. Evil is the product of two actions: the replacement of God's will and goals in creation with man's will and goals, also in the overreaching of man to things that are not really in his power to solve, and also in the man's attempt to undo the evil he has done without God's help.

Man tries to substitute God both times. Both of these are expression of man's will to substitute God, so that he can gain again

a solid ground for his life, to gain acknowledgement. But each of these becomes in the end its own negation.

Man can never take God's place as the principle of life, and man's supposed dominion and conquest of nature - which the city embodies - will end in creating further monstrosities and disasters. One should really think of the attempt to eliminate injustice and inequality in the communist lands, and to the terror and misery that it has produced, and then the truth of aforementioned statements might come to light.

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DIOȘTI VILLAGE: A SOCIOLOGICAL MODEL TO FOLLOW

Ioan-Alin Bulumac

ABSTRACT

The model village represents an innovative idea and project of the Bucharest School of Sociology, which was brought to life in the interwar timeframe as part of the continuous efforts to improve the quality of life in the rural areas of Great Romania. Thus, thousands of work hours were synthesized and applied at Dioști village, a small village that was rapidly transforming into a living model-to-follow. The transformation was a holistic one: the architectural specificity was saved and promoted, the cultural and moral values were promoted, the administrative, economic, and social life was upgrading. The entire process was supervised by Gheorghe Focșa, one of Dimitrie Gusti's assistants that also managed to create a brief presentation of what had been done in Dioști in only two years of intensive work.

Keywords: Bucharest School of Sociology, model village, Gheorghe Focșa, social role, peasant civilization and spirituality

THE BUCHAREST SCHOOL OF SOCIOLOGY

The very existence of the cities is entirely dependent upon the production and success of the rural areas, and every

imbalance in the city-village interdependence can put in jeopardy the entire national system (economic, political, social and cultural). This is a reality that was very well understood by the members of the Bucharest School of Sociology, an institution created by Dimitrie Gusti that gained the respect of similar theoretical movements across the globe (Europe and America especially) due to its advanced research methods and analysis in the field of sociology. The “nation’s science”, the holistic approach through monography and interdisciplinary teams, the law of sociological parallelism, the ethical and political systems created, the relationship between social will - model/ideal - cultural personality - national development, all were original innovations that put the Bucharest School on the map of sociological science.

To this list another idea that was put into practice was being added: the *model village*, a solution found by the Bucharest’s School of Sociology for the rural crisis. However, in order to better understand the concept of the model village, one must comprehend the scientific basis from where all started: the law of sociological parallelism.

THE LAW OF SOCIOLOGICAL PARALLELISM

The law of sociological parallelism was presented for the first time at an international conference, held in Paris (1st-6th of September 1937), at the International Sociology Congress no. XIII. There, Dimitrie Gusti referred to it as “a true law of social equilibrium”⁵⁰.

⁵⁰ „o adevărată lege de echilibru social” (Dimitrie Gusti, *Legea paralelismului sociologic [The law of sociological parallelism]*, Sociologie Românească, 1937, an II, nr. 9 - 10, p. 379, available at

Dimitrie Gusti stated that the social reality consists of *frames and manifestations*, which are in a permanent and functional threefold connection: between frames (cosmic, biologic, psychic, and historic); between manifestations (economic, spiritual, ethical-legally, political-administrative); and between frames and manifestations.

“...a parallelism between manifestations, a parallelism between frames, and a parallelism between frames and manifestations. This parallelism concerns at the same time the existence and functioning of the society ...”⁵¹

To synthesize the social parallelism law, one can state that social reality is a complex of manifestations conditioned by the frames, which is found in a relation of equilibrium. Thus, social disequilibrium is very easy to come by, due to the fact that any small imbalance in any type of the four types of frames or the other four kinds of manifestations can automatically lead to it. And this is why knowledge of social reality and good governance are vital in a state.

“But when social manifestations are alienated from their frames, or when the frames that are changing or wasting no longer support social manifestations, a social imbalance occurs with consequences of varying severity. Thus, the import through imitation of geographically and historically foreign economic and spiritual manifestations produces maladjustment from the very beginning, a social disequilibrium.”⁵²

https://sas.unibuc.ro/storage/downloads/Teorii%20sociologice%20generale-8/DG37c.PARALELIS_SOCIOL.pdf

⁵¹ „...un paralelism între manifestări, un paralelism între cadre și un paralelism între cadre și manifestări. Paralelismul acesta privește în același timp existența și funcționarea societății ...” (*Ibidem*, p. 382)

⁵² „Când însă manifestările sociale sunt străine de cadrele lor sau când cadrele schimbându-se, sau epuizându-se, nu mai sprijină manifestările sociale, se ivește un dezechilibru social cu urmări de o gravitate variabilă

THE MODEL VILLAGE FOUND ITS WAY TOWARDS DIOȘTI

The idea of the model village brought to light by Gusti's school of thought is, actually, an older one. It all started from Bogdan Petriceicu Hașdeu who considered⁵³ that there should be villages created and seen as "models-to-follow" for the other social units close by (but not necessarily), in order to improve the quality of life in the rural areas⁵⁴.

The idea was revived by Dimitrie Gusti and his collaborators. In a country with more than 80% of the population living (then) in the rural environment, the purpose was to develop a strategy from which the rural areas will develop in a manner that will raise the general quality of life. And that meant eliminating all the issues that could block the development of potentiality into manifestation (according to the law of sociological parallelism).

de la caz la caz. Astfel importul prin imitație al unor manifestări economice și spirituale străine de mediul geografic și trecutul istoric al unei țări, provoacă la început o dezadaptare, un dezechilibru social." (*Ibidem*, p. 386)

⁵³ Gheorghe Focșa, *Satul Model [Model Village]*, București, Ed. Fundației Culturale Regale „Regele Mihai I”, 1941, p. 28

⁵⁴ „There should be at least a hospital, a doctor, a surgeon, a small pharmacy - a model farm - if not everywhere, at least in every model village" for each administrative district, as the only effective means to stimulate the prosperity of social life of the villages and the remedy of life's shortcomings.”

„Câte un spital, un medic, un chirurg, o mică farmacie, - o fermă model-, dacă nu pretutindeni, măcar în fiecare sat model” preconizat de el pentru fiecare circumscripție administrativă, ca singurul mijloc eficace pentru stimularea spre propășire a vieții sociale sătești și remedierea lipsurilor acestei vieți.” (*Ibidem*, p. 15)

The solution of the model village that was thought to stop the process which creates disequilibrium, in Romania's case, was very well documented and presented. The plan was to preserve the very best found in the peasant civilization and, in the same time, to modernize the life conditions of the people and the state institutions in order to create an independent social unit, with its own and proper instruments and resources, that can evolve into a self-regenerating system that can be, in the end, an inspiration to other localities. In other words, the stake was to transform the village from a weak chain that is being consumed by city into an equal partner.

The model village was set to be applied in Dioști village, a locality which was set on fire, accidentally, by a couple of children in 1938. The unfortunate event was seen as an opportunity to transform the village into a living model and maximize its potential, along with its rebirth.

The assistant of Dimitrie Gusti that supervised the reconstruction of the Dioști village and that succeeded to make a presentation of what had been done there is Gheorghe Focșa. One can say that the reconstruction of this particular village represents one of the most important realizations of the Bucharest's School of Sociology, as a concrete manifestation of all the ideas, conclusions and principles discovered and developed after thousands of hours of monographies in approx. 60 villages. All the monographies had the purpose to bring a solution at hand, and the work done in Dioști was the first of its kind and, unfortunately, one of the last (due to the coming of the Second World War and the communist occupation of Romania, which created a cultural and social fracture from which we never recovered⁵⁵).

⁵⁵ See Baltasiu Radu, Bulumac Ovidiana (eds.), *Fractured Modernities: Elites, Romania and Europe*, Ed. Universității din București, 2015

Gheorghe Focșa described this process as:

“... a harmonious synthesis of thoughts whose high dynamic triggered and sustained the most important and concrete creative act meant for the cultural rise of the Romanian villages.”⁵⁶

This dynamic process was the best opportunity to let the most refined principles and ideals become reality, guiding all those implicated in this elaborate process the entire period of time in order to accomplish what a model village was meant to represent:

“all the settlements, installations, means and elements of material, technical, economic, biological, administrative and spiritual elements, which refer both to the field of civilization and traditional spirituality, and to the field of modern civilization and culture, whose rational and balanced use in society will guide the complete social life of the village for its economic, biological and spiritual regeneration”⁵⁷.

In order to accomplish such a resourceful task, there were some rules to follow:

“[1] All the works must be designed and executed in order to be a necessary complement for the increase of civilization demanded by the life of this village, [2] The architecture, the sculpture, the tools, the traditional costume, the interior design, etc. that local art and civilization have acquired from the lives of past generations must be utilized, [3] Stimulating the creative energy of the village and its

⁵⁶ „o sinteză armonioasă de gânduri a căror dinamică înaltă a declanșat și susținut cel mai important și concret act de creație pentru ridicarea culturală a satelor din România.” (*Ibidem*, p. 15)

⁵⁷ „toate așezările, instalațiile, elementele și mijloacele materiale, tehnice, economice, biologice, administrative și spirituale, care se referă atât la domeniul civilizației și spiritualității tradiționale, cât și la domeniul civilizației și culturii moderne, a căror utilizare rațională și echilibrată în societate vor ghida întreaga viață socială a satului pentru regenerarea sa economică, biologică și spirituală integrală.” (*Ibidem*, p. 17)

work in its own interests, [must lead to] committing the actual participation of the villagers in the full work program.”⁵⁸.

Using the “internal” resources of a social unit in order to transform it into a model-to-follow was one of the principles that guided the entire process. This strategy had the purpose to revive and develop all the dynamic and creative forces that the village had, getting the people used to their potential, capabilities, but also the sacrifices and the work needed to be done in order to achieve such a state.

[The way to accomplish the project had to be] “understood as an effective opportunity for the revival, the increasing dynamics and development of all creative forces of the village jointly associated with work and sacrifices for the accomplishment everything needed to bring it [the village] back to life”⁵⁹.

THE INTENDED EFFECTS OF THE MODEL VILLAGE PROJECT

A spiritual outcome

However, the goal could not be accomplished using only local resources (especially financial ones). Thus, the project needed an „external” boost which came along with the (contested among

⁵⁸ „(1) Toate lucrările să fie proiectate și executate să fie un complement necesar pentru sporul de civilizație pe care-l cere viața acestui sat; (2) Să fie folosite arhitectura, sculptura, uneltele, portul, găteala interioarelor etc pe care arta și civilizația locală a dobândit din viața generațiilor trecute; (3) Stimularea energiei creatoare a satului și a muncii lui în interese proprii, angajând participarea efectivă a sătenilor la întregul program de lucru.” (*Ibidem*, p. 17)

⁵⁹ „Înțelegă ca o oportunitate eficientă pentru reînvierea, sporirea dinamicii și dezvoltarea tuturor forțelor creative ale satului, deodată cu munca și sacrificiile pentru realizarea lucrărilor menite să-l aducă la viață.” (*Ibidem*, p. 19)

politicians) decision of King Carol the 2nd to finance the model village implementation by offering the necessary money and all the materials needed. The idea was to create something that had a self-didactic function upon social life, using first and foremost the local resources and, only by exception, the “external help” from the state. In this way, by implicating local energies, the outcome is not only a material one, but also spiritual and moral, because the peasants learn what they are capable of, how to become specialists, and thus regain a sense of local pride.

[The possibility of generalizing the idea of the model village was] “... to generalize not only standardized material forms, but also the conception, faith, and creative impetus through extensive professional and social knowledge”⁶⁰.

Having these principles at the core of the entire project, it was possible to enrich the people that lived in the village with higher spiritual manifestations and moral references such as:

[A] “Enhancing people's diligence and enriching the mind with all the aspects of working in the household and preserving the body's health. [B] the spiritual orientation towards the ennobling of inner human desires and the improvement of human relations. [C] the return of man towards God, without which moral ennobling cannot be possible”⁶¹.

⁶⁰ „de a generaliza nu numai formele materiale standardizate, ci și concepția, credința și imboldul creator prin cunoștințe profesionale și sociale extinse.” (*Ibidem*, p. 48)

⁶¹ „[A] stimularea hărniciei oamenilor și îmbogățirea minții cu toate aspectele muncii în gospodărie și păstrării sănătății corporale. [B] transformarea spirituală înspre înnobilarea năzuințelor umane interioare și îmbunătățirea raporturilor dintre semeni. [C] reîntoarcerea omului cu fața către Dumnezeu fără de care înnobilarea morală nu este posibilă.” (*Ibidem*, p. 32)

A new dynamic heading towards affirmation

In this way, a new dynamic can be created in the village, one that is based upon:

“[1] the enthusiasm for renewing works, through concrete participation in the working process, [2] those who have the initiative of the creative work in their soul, triggering a process that leads not only to new settlements and material manifestations but also to a new superior content of spiritual accomplishments.”⁶²

This is a method through which the village used to a life of shortages can outlive labels such as “poor”, “underdeveloped” or “backward”, heading towards affirmation, development, and modernization.

[The objective was to] “cover the shortcomings of our rural life with a vivid example of Romanian architectural affirmation, of social, material and spiritual endowment, of rational organization in households, indicating the way forward in the activity of future generations”⁶³.

Social solidarity

The concept of model village was planned as a project developed on the long run, not just because of the outcome, but also due to what was required:

“... processes and technical equipment, scientific methods and rational guidance for the multiplication of the practical knowledge

⁶² [1] Entuziasmul pentru reînnoirea lucrărilor, prin participarea concretă la procesul de lucru, [2] cei ce au inițiativa operei creatoare în suflet, declanșând un proces care duce nu numai la noi așezări și manifestări materiale, ci și la un nou conținut superior, de realizări spirituale.” (*Ibidem*, p. 31)

⁶³ „de a acoperi deficiențele vieții noastre rurale, cu un exemplu viu de afirmare arhitecturală românească, de dotare socială, materială și spirituală, de organizare rațională a gospodăriilor, astfel indicând calea de urmat în activitatea generațiilor viitoare.” (*Ibidem*, p. 52)

required to perform the work of moral enlightenment and development of social solidarity”⁶⁴.

In this way, through collective effort, the village would obtain social solidarity that would also generate intensifying spiritual manifestations.

Social renewal through the youth`s work

To replace something old that does not function in a proper way represents a universal need of humankind. In this sense, another important principle set at the heart of the model village initiative referred to the young people and their social role in the rebirth of the community. By definition, youth is prepared to be given such a role because they are the ones that have a high potential, desire and amounts of energy to spend on the social commonwealth, they have the necessary time to act and no strings attached that can hold them back (for example important family responsibilities). In this way, one can expect a double effect: [1] change created for the entire community, and [2] youth`s self-development.

[The young can] “enrich their own soul and that of their peers through the heroic austerity of creative social efforts, transforming themselves into a soul-uplifting example of physical and spiritual work, a progress which has its energy source springing out of the deepest love for their nation”⁶⁵.

⁶⁴ „procese și echipamente tehnice, metode științifice și îndrumări raționale pentru înmulțirea cunoștințelor practice necesare îndeplinirii activității de ridicare morală și de dezvoltare a solidarității sociale” (*Ibidem*, p. 33)

⁶⁵ „de a-și îmbogăți propriul suflet și cel al semenilor săi, prin austeritatea eroică a eforturilor sociale creatoare, transformându-se într-un exemplu sufletesc înălțător de muncă fizică și spirituală, progres ce are ca sursă de energie izvorâtă din cea mai profundă iubire pentru națiunea lor.” (*Ibidem*, p. 34)

INSTEAD OF CONCLUSION

The conclusion was written by Gheorghe Focșa himself. As a sign of respect for the work and efforts made by all implicated, and as a symbol of moral nobility, it is better for us to allow his words to reach the reader:

“The model village was conceived as a didactic element with principles and objectives that are related to a system of social regeneration of aspirations and of orienting all the villages towards a higher living condition, which is also useful for preparing the youth in the national reconstruction work that must start from the most realistic reality of our nation, the one of the village. The model village had an educational social function, of an ideal type, for the harmonious union of the material and spiritual elements, within a high but dynamic limit of social life evolution, as a permanent imperative for the actions of growth and social renewal.”⁶⁶.

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⁶⁶ „Satul model a fost conceput ca un element didactic cu principii și obiective care sunt legate de un sistem de regenerare socială a aspirațiilor și de orientare a tuturor satelor către o condiție de viață superioară, care este utilă și pentru pregătirea tineretului în opera de reconstrucție națională care trebuie să pornească de la cea mai realistă realitate a națiunii noastre, adică cea a satului. Satul model a avut o funcție socială educațională, de ideal tip, pentru unirea armonioasă a elementelor materiale și spirituale, într-o limită înaltă, dar dinamică, a evoluției vieții sociale, ca imperativ permanent pentru acțiunile de creștere și reînnoire socială.” (*Ibidem*, p. 40)

Gheorghe Focșă, *Satul Model* [*Model Village*], București, Ed. Fundației Culturale Regale „Regele Mihai I”, 1941.

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THE SPECIALIZATION OF THE YOUNG GENERATION

Ioana Drăgoi

“Students who are conceived as «social workers», to whom the nation has entrusted them, have their important interests, will have to give their warm and lively contest through their county bodies, besides each university or through the Law of Higher Education, submit to the University Senates through reports on their work. University teachers will have to give the students all the guidance for the development of cultural activities in the villages”⁶⁷.

⁶⁷„Studentii concepuți ca «funcționari sociali», cărora Națiunea le-a încredințat cele mai importante interese ale ei, vor trebui să dea concursul lor cald și luminat prin organizațiile lor județene, de pe lângă fiecare universitate... Aceste cercuri vor trebui să fie obligate, prin Legea învățământului superior, a depune Senatelor universitare rapoarte amănunțite despre activitatea lor. Profesorii universitari vor trebui să dea studenților toate îndrumările în vederea desfășurării activității culturale la sate” (Dimitrie Gusti, *Un an de activitate la Ministerul Instrucțiunii, Cultelor și Artelor* [*A year of activity at the Ministry of Instruction, Cults and the Art*], București, Editura Tip Bucovina, 1934, p. 522)

ABSTRACT

The aim of the present paper is to compare the way in which the interwar students were trained and how the ones from today are doing the training. I will address the importance of the social service law for the young people who worked in rural areas, and then I will continue with the training of today's students who have a few hours of training, and in most cases it is not in the field. What I want to bring to your attention through this material is the growing number of Romanian students who finish a faculty and are being called specialists in the field relying only on statistical data. The state invests in their training by offering free education and granting scholarships, but after the students' graduation, does not get anything in return. To analyze this issue I will use the report on the state of higher education in Romania 2017-2018 and media data releases.

Keywords: Social Service Law, training, students, specialization, labour market

THE SOCIAL SERVICE LAW

The Law on the Establishment of the Social Service was published in the Official Gazette no. 242 of October 18, 1938. According to art. 1, the autonomous institution called the Social Service was meant to prepare and enforce both girls and boys, graduates from all classes of schools in the reorganization of villages. Other objectives of the institution were: knowing the country with the help of monograph research, creating a Cultural House that was meant to help and strengthen the work of the Church, the School and the State Authorities; organization of schools for the education of the villagers⁶⁸.

Under the Social Service Law, young graduates were enrolled for a period of three to six months to work in rural areas. At the end, each graduate was going to receive a certificate

⁶⁸ "Regele Culturii Românești" ["The king of Romanian culture"] in *Revista Foaia Diecezană*, (Caransebeș), 1968, nr. 43, pp. 1-2

without which both the designation in a public job position and the granting of free practice were not possible. According to sociologist Dimitrie Gusti, this work that the young people did in the country was useful firstly for them, but also for the peasants. They had the opportunity to show what they could do while spending their time in the Romanian villages, but also to learn new things because the teams were multidisciplinary and thus they could learn from each other.

“The new organization of the teams gives the opportunity to the young scholars, who will have later at the maturity the responsibility for our country’s well-being, to go through the regenerative fire of the work for the villages. In the village, these young scholars of all specialties, sociologists, doctors, vets, theologians, agronomists, forest engineers, business masters, benefit from a wide open field in order to show their active and constructive patriotism, practical and benevolent action. They rarely have the opportunity to show their power of work and the creative energy.... The organization of the cultural work teams in the villages, comprised of students and technicians, becomes a new method, the practical and real method for the new organization of the Romanian life”⁶⁹.

⁶⁹ „Organizarea nouă a Echipelor dă prilej tinerimii la cărturare, care va avea mai târziu, la maturitate, răspunderea bunului mers al țării noastre, să treacă prin focul regenerativ al muncii pentru sate. În sat, acești tineri cărturari, din toate specialitățile, sociologi, medici umani și veterinari, teologi, agronomi, ingineri silvici, maestre de gospodărie, au câmp larg și măreț deschis ca să-și arate patriotismul lor activ și constructiv de acțiune concretă, practică și binefăcătoare, ei au prilejul rar să-și poată arăta puterea de muncă și energia creatoare de suflet nou și de stări românești. Organizarea Echipelor de muncă culturală la sate, alcătuite din studenți și tehnicieni, devine astfel o nouă metodă, metoda practică și adevărată, pentru noua organizare a vieții românești” (Dimitrie Gusti, *Sociologia Militans*, București, Institutul Social Român, 1946, p. 250).

THE LAW ON STUDENT PRACTICE, TODAY

Law 258/2007 on the practice of pupils and students was adopted by the Romanian Parliament in compliance with the provisions of art. 75 and art. 76 par.(1) of the Constitution of Romania. According to art. 1, training is defined as “the activity of pupils and students, in accordance with the curriculum, which aims at verifying the applicability of the theoretical knowledge acquired by them in the training program”⁷⁰. This training is based on a collaboration agreement or a convention, as the case may be, and it may be realised through a weekly program or all together at the end of the semester or year of study. This activity is mandatory and represents a promotion condition.

STUDENT PRACTICE TODAY⁷¹

If in the interwar period everything was very well organized and the work done by the young people in the rural environment was understood “as a civic and national obligation”⁷² of preservation and development of the village, nowadays, the training classes that students have to accomplish are no longer intended to enrich both the soul and the information they possess. Thus, the young people no longer have the notion of Romanian village, being disillusioned with national values and

⁷⁰ „activitatea desfășurată de elevi și studenți, în conformitate cu planul de învățământ, care are drept scop verificarea aplicabilității cunoștințelor teoretice însușite de aceștia în cadrul programului de instruire”. (Law no. 258 of 19 June 2007, available at: <http://legislatie.just.ro/Public/DetaliiDocument/83810>)

⁷¹ ANOSR, *Prima platformă de stagii de practică din România pentru studenți* [The first practice strategy platform for students in Romania], 2014, available at: <http://anosr.ro/prima-platforma-de-stagii-de-practica-pentru-studenti/>

⁷² „ca o obligație cetățenească și națională” - “*Regele Culturii Românești*” [„The king of Romanian culture”] in *Revista Foaia Diecezană*, (Caransebeș), 1968, nr. 43, pp. 1-2.

lost in the desire to have more and more (from a material point of view).

Nowadays, the students who are doing the training can choose where to do these hours, the number of worked hours being insufficient (a few days a year), and without an explicit link to the national interest. For example, the “Multi-regional Integrated Internship Program for Students to Increase their Employability Degree” project, developed by Adecco Human Resources, created the first site in Romania where pupils, students or graduates can choose from the training offers or stints of internship. This project aims at creating a link between: student, university, company. The student benefits from a range of internships stints in the field of interest; the company makes available to those interested internship stints that can help companies integrate students into the work environment and prepare them for a future career and the university analyzes the number of graduates who were able to integrate into the labour market. In theory, everything sounds good, but what is the situation in practice?

“THEORY AS THEORY, BUT PRACTICE IS WHAT KILLS US”⁷³

According to an article in *Adevărul Newspaper* (May 3rd, 2010), Romanian students that wish to get a job, due to their lack of experience, found a solution: to follow the practical classes during the 3 years of study. If the faculty does not have a training offer for students, they need to find a company where they can train in the field of their study. Even if a student benefits from a

⁷³Ziarul Adevărul, “Practica în facultate: unii fac, alții se prefac” [Practice in college: some do, others pretend], 3.10.2010, available at: https://adevarul.ro/educatie/scoala/practica-facultate--unii-fac-altii-prefac_1_50ad44da7c42d5a66391ee69/index.html

training offer or not, they also face the situation where the practice they perform is not often the desired opportunity. Below is a conclusive example from *Adevarul (Ibidem)*:

“Maria Tănase, a student at the Faculty of Business Administration in Constanta, during the training period at the Police and the Romanian Naval Authority, shared the flyers. «All we did was to share flyers on the beach»⁷⁴. This is confirmed by Cristina Fit, the vice-president of the National Association of Students' Organizations in Romania, who says that «the internship is about marvellous things: students observe what employees do, helping with secretarial work and sometimes even making coffee»⁷⁵. Thus, some students get disappointed.

As practice classes are mandatory and students do not want to fail, they decide to take advantage of this opportunity: some to put into practice what they have learned at the university, and others to get only the necessary documents that will provide them a passing grade.

STUDENTS AND THE LABOUR MARKET

Statistics on the number of graduates

The report on the state of higher education in Romania shows that in 2017/2018 the system comprised 93 higher education institutions, and 508 faculties. The state education represents 59% higher education institutions and 73% of all faculties⁷⁶. According to these data, we can state that the state

⁷⁴ „Tot ce am făcut a fost să împărțim pliante pe plajă”. (*Ibidem*)

⁷⁵ „Stagiul se rezumă la lucruri mărunte: studenții asistă la ceea ce fac angajații, ajută la munca de secretariat și, uneori, chiar la făcutul cafelei”. (*Ibidem*)

⁷⁶ Minister of National Education, *Report on the state of higher education in Romania 2017-2018*, available at: www.edu.ro/sites/default/files/Raport%20privind%20starea%20%C3%A

supports through the numerous of higher education institutions the professional training of young people in Romania. Only in the academic year 2017-2018, 538.9 thousand undergraduate students were enrolled, out of which 408.2 thousands in the public system⁷⁷. Both the number of enrolled students and the number of institutions is high, but do these state institutions prepare students who, after their specialization, will serve the national interest or, in fact, create an inflation of university degrees?

According to the report of the Ministry of National Education, in the academic year 2015-2016, there were 80,815 graduates with a diploma of undergraduate education, out of which 58,2% represent the female graduates (47,050 students) and 41,8% the male graduates (33,765 students)⁷⁸. Thus, it can be noticed that the number of female students who finish their BA program is higher compared to the number of male graduates.

In the academic year 2015-2016, most of them specialized in the field of Business Administration and Law (26.8%), in Engineering, Processing and Construction (17.5%), and Health and social assistance (13.79%)⁷⁹. Thus, young people tend to specialize in areas where wages are simply higher; meanwhile, the students ignore areas such as Agriculture, Forestry, Fisheries and Veterinary Sciences, Education Sciences and Services, Army etc (the ones that serve the public interest and where the need for experts is high).

[Env%C4%83%C8%9B%C4%83m%C3%A2ntului%20superior%20din%20Rom%C3%A2nia_%202017%20-2018.pdf](#)

⁷⁷ *Ibidem*, p. 18

⁷⁸ *Ibidem*, p.18

⁷⁹ *Ibidem*, p. 21

College graduates and the labour force

After completing their studies, young graduates want to engage in the field in which they specialized, but this is unlikely because the demand of the labour market varies from year to year. Thus, students decide from the admission period to focus on areas with a high employment rate⁸⁰. According to the report on the state of higher education in Romania, the number of students who decide to specialize in technical, economic or legal domains are increasing annually⁸¹.

According to INS data, in Romania there are on average 60,000 vacancies. In 2017, most employees were those specializing in various fields, and fewer were skilled workers in agriculture, forestry and fishing⁸².

Also, the graduates of Romanian faculties find it difficult to integrate into the labour market after graduation. An example of this is the case of Radu, who graduated the Faculty of International Economic Relations of the Academy of Economic

⁸⁰ România Liberă, “Piața muncii se schimbă de la an la an. Ce opțiuni au studenții care termină facultatea în 2018” [“The force market is changing from year to year. What are the options for graduating students in 2018”, 18.05.2018, available at: <https://romanialibera.ro/aldine/piata-muncii-se-schimba-de-la-an-la-an-ce-optiuni-au-studentii-care-termina-facultatea-in-2018-729290>

⁸¹ Minister of National Education, *Report on the state of higher education in Romania 2016*, available at: www.edu.ro/sites/default/files/_fi%C8%99iere/Minister/2017/transparenta/Stare_sup%20%202016.pdf

⁸² România Liberă, “Piața muncii se schimbă de la an la an. Ce opțiuni au studenții care termină facultatea în 2018” [“The force market is changing from year to year. What are the options for graduating students in 2018”, 18.05.2018, available at: <https://romanialibera.ro/aldine/piata-muncii-se-schimba-de-la-an-la-an-ce-optiuni-au-studentii-care-termina-facultatea-in-2018-729290>

Studies (ASE) and has been looking for a job in the field without success:

“I have been trying to find a job for five months. I've been to more than ten interviews, but I have not been able to get a job up to this moment. Most companies do not call me anymore after the interview, although they tell me they will let me know the result via email, no matter if it is positive or negative. I do not get an answer via email, at least. I think am not appropriate”⁸³.

An advantage in hiring after graduation is the working hours during the faculty. For situations where young students do not want to work during the faculty, they can get involved in extracurricular activities that are often appreciated by companies according to Corina Diaconu, the general manager of ABC Human Capital recruitment and selection firm.

“There are a lot of voluntary-type actions that are being organized, they are true trade unions of the students who deal with such activities. They can serve as a recommendation for a job when the students decide to have a full-time paid job, working contract and all legal forms. This is a first step that they could make to somehow hinder their employment”⁸⁴.

⁸³ „Încerc să îmi găsesc un job de aproape cinci luni. Am fost la mai mult de zece interviuri, însă nu am reușit să mă angajez până acum. Cele mai multe companii nu mă mai sună după ce merg la interviu, deși îmi spun că vor face acest lucru, indiferent de rezultat. Nici măcar un răspuns pe e-mail nu primesc. Cred ca nu sunt potrivit” (Ziarul Zinanciar, „Cine mai angajează absolvenți de facultate?”[„Who is employing college graduates”], available at: www.zf.ro/profesii/cine-mai-angajeaza-absolventi-de-facultate-3767078)

⁸⁴ „Sunt o grămadă de acțiuni tip voluntariat care se organizează, sunt adevărate 'sindicate' ale studenților care se ocupa de astfel de activități. Acelea pot servi ca o recomandare în vederea obținerii unui job în momentul în care studenții se hotărăsc să aibă un loc de munca full-time plătit, cu contract de munca și cu toate formele legale. Acesta este un prim pas pe care ei l-ar putea face ca să-și înlesnească cumva angajarea” (*Ibidem*)

Companies encourage student engagement from college due to the fact that this is a long-term benefit. For example, West Cats developers Studios, Liviu Tudor argues that using the right student hostels (as recruitment nursery for multinationals)⁸⁵, there are few cases where the students engage in the field, being attracted by a steady and accumulated income and the accumulation of work experience which will be an advantage for a future job.

INSTEAD OF CONCLUSIONS

Comparing the process of specialization of the younger generation from the interwar period to that of today's young people, we can say that in the interwar period the specialization served national interests. The state supported their training, and the young people through their practice in the rural environment helped to build and preserve the village, but also learn quite a lot from the experience, from an interdisciplinary point of view. Nowadays, the number of training hours that students have to do is very low and they are no longer meant to enrich both the soul and the information they hold.

Another problem identified is that the number of college graduates is growing, and this leads to a large number of graduates who are specialized only theoretically, but they do not have the necessary skills to have an actual expertise. This leads to employment in other fields, looking for a job outside the country, or simply increasing the unemployment rate.

⁸⁵ România Liberă, “Piața muncii se schimbă de la an la an. Ce opțiuni au studenții care termină facultatea în 2018” [“The force market is changing from year to year. What are the options for graduating students in 2018”, 18.05.2018, available at: <https://romanialibera.ro/aldine/piata-muncii-se-schimba-de-la-an-la-an-ce-optiuni-au-studentii-care-termina-facultatea-in-2018-729290>

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ÉMILE DURKHEIM, PRECURSOR OF FAMILY SOCIOLOGY

Augustin Poenaru

ABSTRACT

Émile Durkheim is considered one of the founding fathers of sociology, being the one who succeeded in creating the sub-field of family sociology in a rigorous and scientific way. His research lies in a context in which individualism and social solidarity had to be reconciled, being concerned with the resolution of the divisions and problems faced by the end of the nineteenth century, when a modern society began to emerge. Émile Durkheim considers the family as a school of devotion and abnegation and classifies it as the nucleus of morality. He believes that, besides the corporation, the family is the second factor that played a significant role in the moral history of the community. One of the major aspects of modernity understood in Durkheimian terms is the relationship between the family system and other social systems. This article aims to analyze his theoretical framework regarding the family sociology and to highlight its innovation

in order to try to explain the role of the family in society as a generator of morality.

Keywords: Émile Durkheim, family sociology, morality, solidarity

THE WORK OF ÉMILE DURKHEIM

The work of Émile Durkheim continues the one of August Comte, another precursor of general sociology, in the sense that it develops a rigorous scientific base for the new outlined science. For Durkheim, sociology, to become truly scientific, it must study the actions of individuals that are in relation to other external factors such as the economy or the influence of religion. This is why Émile Durkheim is rightly seen as one of the “fathers” of sociology. The French sociologist considered that the social life of individuals should be studied as objective, as scientists analyse natural phenomena. For this reason, his principle in sociology was: “Study social facts as things”⁸⁶.

Similar to other major sociologists in the field, Durkheim was particularly concerned about the changes that appear in the society in which he lived. In this regard, he believes that, in fact, common values and habits that are shared by members of that society are what sustain a society. In order to analyse this and to determine the causes of societal change, Durkheim promotes the *division of labour*, a theory he defines as “the moral rule of human conduct”⁸⁷. These ideas were at the core of his book entitled *The Division of Labour in Society* (1893). Other relevant publications include

⁸⁶ „Studiază faptele sociale ca pe niște lucruri.” (Anthony Giddens, *Sociologie [Sociology]*; trad.: Radu Săndulescu, Vivia Săndulescu, București, Editura ALL, 2001, p. 16)

⁸⁷ „regula morală a conduitei umane” (Émile Durkheim, *Diviziunea muncii sociale [The Division of Labour in Society]*; trad.: Cristinel Pantelimon, București, Editura Antet, 2007, p. 38)

Suicide (1897); *Rules of the Sociological Method* (1895); *The Elemental Forms of Religious Life* (1912).

ÉMILE DURKHEIM AND FAMILY SOCIOLOGY

Among the research interests of the French sociologist we find his studies of family sociology, which are related to the issue of the divisions and crisis the society of the end of the twentieth century faces, when a modern society was just beginning, a world “in which individualism and social solidarity had to be reconciled”⁸⁸.

The family - the core of morality

In *The Division of Labour in Society*, Durkheim considers family as a school of devotion and abnegation, “the core par excellence of morality”⁸⁹, which is possible because of its particular characters “which they have the privilege of having and which they no longer meet elsewhere”⁹⁰. If we are talking about sociability and the causes of human rapprochement, the community of ideas, feelings and interests, they must be sought, and necessarily, in the family. For Durkheim, family is a key factor that played a considerable role in the “moral history of the community”⁹¹, in a

⁸⁸ „în care trebuiau reconciliate individualismul și solidaritatea socială.” (Martin Segalen, *Sociologia familiei [Family Sociology]*; trad.: Mihai Dos, Alexandra-Maria Cheșcu, Giuliano Sfichi, Iași, Editura Polirom, 2011, p. 27)

⁸⁹ „nucleul prin excelență al moralității” (Émile Durkheim, *Diviziunea muncii sociale [The Division of Labour in Society]*; trad.: Cristinel Pantelimon, București, Editura Antet, 2007, p. 26)

⁹⁰ „pe care are privilegiul de a le avea și care nu se mai întâlnesc în altă parte” (*Ibidem*)

⁹¹ „istoria morală a comunității” (Ilie Bădescu, *Istoria sociologiei. Perioada marilor sisteme, [The history of sociology. The period of great theoretical systems]*, vol. I, București, Editura Economică, 2002, p. 246.)

similar manner as the corporation did (another relevant subject found in *The Division of Labour in Society*).

What makes the French sociologist's view more interesting is the separation between the moral proximity of individuals and their consanguinity. In his vision, this consanguinity does not have this tremendous effectiveness attributed to it at all. And the proof is, according to Durkheim, that:

“in a multitude of societies, those who are not of the same blood are found in large numbers within the same family: the so-called artificial kinship then acts with great ease and has all the effects of natural kinship. Conversely, it often happens that close relatives are morally and legally strangers to each other”⁹².

Certainly Durkheim does not deny the importance of the direct relationship of consanguinity between members of a family, but it does not consider it the only factor of solidarity and, as a result, of morality. The consanguinity, says Durkheim, “has been able to facilitate this concentration [of the group of individuals who have come close to each other within the society because of a very close community of ideas, feelings and interests] because it naturally has to bring one's consciousness closer together”⁹³. Actually, the basis of the approach of individuals consists in other factors such as: the

⁹² „într-o multitudine de societăți, cei ce nu sunt de același sânge se găsesc în număr mare în sânul aceleiași familii: așa-zisa rudenie artificială acționează atunci cu o mare ușurință și are toate efectele rudeniei naturale. Invers, se întâmplă deseori ca niște consanguini foarte apropiați să fie, moral și juridic, ca și străini unii față de ceilalți.” (Émile Durkheim, *Diviziunea muncii sociale [The Division of Labour in Society]*; trad.: Cristinel Pantelimon, București, Ed. Antet, 2007, p. 26)

⁹³ „a putut facilita această concentrare [a grupului de indivizi care s-au apropiat unii de alții, în sânul societății politice, datorită unei comunități foarte strânse de idei, sentimente și interese] căci ea are în mod natural ca efect apropierea conștiințelor unele de altele.” (*Ibidem*)

neighbourhood, the solidarity of interests, the need for union in order to fight against common danger, or simply the need for unity⁹⁴.

In the *Introduction to Family Sociology* (1888), which is actually the inaugural course of Émile Durkheim of the University of Bordeaux, we find the principles of methodology that it will develop in other social areas such as: the problem of division of labour, the religious forms and the influence of religion, the problem of suicide, themes that consecrated the work of the French sociologist. But the most important aspect of the Durkheimian innovation in the field of family sociology is the link highlighted between the family system and the other ones.

Thus, in order to research different types of family and to understand the relationships between the constitutive characteristics and the determinants, Durkheim “based on the work *The Ancient City* by Fustel de Coulanges (1864), on the work of German, English and American historians, *Histoire de la famille* of Lippert (1864), *Le droit maternel* of Bachofen (1861), *Studies in Ancient History* of McLennan (1866) and *Ancient Society* of Morgan (1887)⁹⁵. Based on these studies, Durkheim describes, arranges, classifies, establishes causal relationships between facts and group behaviours, and constantly seeks using the comparative method:

“In modern sociological language, we could say that it is about identifying the patterns and conditions of building these models”⁹⁶.

⁹⁴ *Ibidem*

⁹⁵ „se bazează pe lucrarea *La Cité antique* a lui Fustel de Coulanges (1864), pe lucrările istoricilor germani, englezi și americani, *Histoire de la famille* a lui Lippert (1864), *Le droit maternel* a lui Bachofen (1861), *Studies in Ancient History* a lui McLennan (1866) și *Ancient Society* a lui Morgan (1887). (Martin Segalen, *op. cit.*, p. 27)

⁹⁶ „în limbaj sociologic modern, am putea spune că este vorba despre identificarea modelelor și condițiilor de constituire a acestor modele.” (*Ibidem*)

From the beginning of his paper, *Introduction to Family Sociology*, Émile Durkheim introduces the concept of *solidarity*, which he analyses according to the type of society: traditional societies are characterized by a *mechanical solidarity*, due to the identity of the consciousness, the communion of ideas and feelings; while the modern, more organized societies are characterized by an *organic solidarity*, which derives from functional differentiation and from the division of labour⁹⁷. The analysis of the concrete forms of sociality and sociability naturally starts with “the simplest and oldest group of humanity - the family”⁹⁸.

Durkheim lists the main dimensions to be considered when studying the family, these being: 1) the relationship between people and goods; 2) kinship structures, ties resulting from marriage and descent; 3) the relationship with the state, with the global society⁹⁹. In his study, to understand the three types of structures listed above, Durkheim analyses **the customs, the morals, the law**, “distinguishing in these regular and constant practices in the normative system in general what is common and steady in all

⁹⁷ Émile Durkheim, *Introduction in family sociology*; Extracted from *Annales Journal* of Bordeaux Faculty of Letters, 1888, p. 1, French version available in electronic form at the Internet address: www.cras31.info/IMG/pdf/durkheim_-_introduction_a_la_sociologie_de_la_famille.pdf

⁹⁸ „în limbaj sociologic modern, am putea spune că este vorba despre identificarea modelelor și condițiilor de constituire a acestor modele.” (Corina Bistriceanu, *Sociologia familiei [Family sociology]*, București, Editura România de Măine, 2006, p. 25)

⁹⁹ Émile Durkheim, *Introduction in family sociology*; Extracted from *Annales Journal* of Bordeaux Faculty of Letters, 1888, p. 2, French version available in electronic form at the Internet address: www.cras31.info/IMG/pdf/durkheim_-_introduction_a_la_sociologie_de_la_famille.pdf)

individual conduct”¹⁰⁰. What characterizes the common sense in Durkheim's sociology is precisely its binding nature for all members of society. This is more than just a habit, rather than an ordinary mode of action, and “what distinguishes it is not its greater or lesser frequency, but it is precisely its imperative virtue. It is not just what is done most often, but what needs to be done. It is a rule that everyone is compelled to obey and is subject to sanctions”¹⁰¹. Besides custom and morality, Durkheim also analyses the law, which he characterizes as a clear system of norms, which has associated a concrete and stable system of material sanctions, precisely stipulated.

For Émile Durkheim, the useful sources of knowledge for family sociology are ethnography, history and demography. Of these, the French sociologist prefers the method of historical study of family forms because:

“The forms of domestic life, even the oldest and most distant from our customs, have not completely ceased to exist; some of them still remain in the contemporary family”¹⁰².

¹⁰⁰ „distingând în aceste practici regulate și constante, în sistemul normativ în general ceea ce este comun și statornic în toate conduitele individuale.” (Corina Bistriceanu, *op. cit.*, p. 25)

¹⁰¹ „ceea ce îl deosebește nu este frecvența sa mai mare sau mai mică, ci este tocmai virtutea sa imperativă. Nu reprezintă doar ceea ce se face cel mai des, ci ceea ce trebuie făcut. Este o regulă la care toată lumea este obligată să se supună și care stă sub autoritatea unor sancțiuni.” (Émile Durkheim, *Introduction in family sociology*; Extracted from *Annales Journal of Bordeaux Faculty of Letters*, 1888, p. 8, French version available in electronic form at the Internet address: www.cras31.info/IMG/pdf/durkheim_-_introduction_a_la_sociologie_de_la_famille.pdf)

¹⁰² „Formele vieții domestice, chiar și cele mai vechi și mai îndepărtate de obiceiurile noastre, nu au încetat complet de a exista; ceva din ele se mai păstrează în familia contemporană” (*Ibidem*, p. 5)

And for this reason, Durkheim sees in the contemporary family the product of the old forms, a final point of this evolution:

“The modern family contains itself, as a summary, the entire historical evolution of the family”¹⁰³.

Another concept that Durkheim introduces is called *the law of progressive concentration* by which he demonstrates that the form of the modern family is dependent on the fundamental conditions of historical evolution. Under this law, with the modernization of society, urbanization and the increasing importance of the means of communication, individuals are freed from physical dependence on one another and from other constraints. In this way, the family community loses ground. The causes of this evolution can be found in the general adoption of a system of values that promotes individual autonomy.

Concerning the legal framework that defines the modern family, Émile Durkheim notes a rather paradoxal evolution of the norms that regulate and protect the space of family intimacy, the boundary between it and the public space, but also those that allow or condition the family of careful supervision and the possibility of state intervention in family matters:

„The modern family, increasingly private but, still, more and more public, is being tracked by the laws that, since the twentieth century, seek to limit the manifestation of traditional and family authority forms and their substitution by forms of public control (children's courts, women's organizations, governmental or nongovernmental services for helping older people, extra-familial social institutions, etc.). In general, the interest for the child, which has become a slogan of the social imperialism of the state since the French Revolution, and the new feminist emancipation movements, are the ones that justify the state's family interventions. Individuals take note of their capacity for autonomy, emancipation by traditional

¹⁰³ „Familia modernă conține în sine, ca un rezumat, întreaga evoluție istorică a familiei.” (*Ibidem*, p. 15)

structures, and reacting to the nuclear family by refusing marriage and by criticizing the division of labour between genders”¹⁰⁴.

All this *democratization*, concludes Durkheim, has consequences in the family's *instability* (due to the perpetuation of status disputes and the alternation of authority exercises, the decrease of solidarity and family cohesion), *inefficiency* (the cause being the inaccuracy of role definitions and the inability to determine tasks and specific responsibilities), *vulnerability* (in the absence of a proper system of norms and values, the family becomes exposed to external influences) and, ultimately, the *dissolution* of the family group¹⁰⁵.

CONCLUSIONS

Émile Durkheim remains one of the founding fathers of sociology today, to whom we owe the success of setting rigorous scientific bases in the field of family sociology, his studies being in a context in which individualism and social solidarity have to be reconciled. Émile Durkheim considers the family as the environment where devotion and the sense of morality are created. One of the innovations that Durkheim introduces into the study of

¹⁰⁴ „Familia modernă, tot mai privată, și, totodată, tot mai publică, este pusă sub urmărire de legile care, din secolul al XX-lea, urmăresc limitarea manifestării formelor de autoritate familială tradițională și substituirea lor cu forme de control public (tribunale ale copiilor, organizații ale femeilor, serviciile guvernamentale sau neguvernamentale de asistare a persoanelor vârstnice, instituțiile de socializare extrafamilială etc.). În general, interesul pentru copil, devenit slogan al imperialismului social al statului încă din timpul Revoluției Franceze, și noile mișcări de emancipare feministă, sunt cele care servesc de justificare intervențiilor statului în familie. Indivizii iau act de capacitatea lor de autonomizare, de emancipare de structurile tradiționale și reacționează față de familia nucleară prin refuzul căsătoriei și prin critica adusă diviziunii muncii între sexe.” (*Ibidem*, pp. 8-9)

¹⁰⁵ According to Corina Bistriceanu, *op. cit.*, p. 28.

family life and which makes the French sociologist's view more interesting is the separation that he makes between the moral approximation of individuals and their consanguinity, introducing the concept of solidarity into the discussion. Another Durkheim's addition is *the law of progressive concentration* by which he demonstrates that the form of the modern family is dependent on the fundamental conditions of its historical evolution. This is why, in his view, family democratization and excessive state intervention in family matters create instability, inefficiency, vulnerability and, ultimately, dissolution of the family group.

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THE DIVISION OF LABOR IN SOCIETY, BY ÉMILE DURKHEIM

Samira Cîrlig

ABSTRACT

Through this study I will try to present the crisis of the modern world starting from Émile Durkheim's famous work „The Division of Labour in Society”. Here, one discovers that the subject is, in fact, the departure of man from morality. Thus, the paper starts with the concept of anomy, which is the real manifestation of the crisis that the modernity goes through. The second part refers to the solution that Émile Durkheim proposes in order to successfully exit the crisis: the corporation as a factor of moral cohesion. I will also try to highlight the link between the two central concepts, anomy and corporation, with the help of other concepts such as dynamic density, solidarity and specialization, division of labour. Keywords: anomy, specialization, morality, corporation, solidarity

ANOMY - A MODERN WORLD CRISIS

The development of technology implies for humans new challenges that show their departure from morality. Out of the sphere of influence of family, the individual was no longer able to find the resources of solidarity to cope with this crisis. Concerned about the crisis of the modern world, Émile Durkheim named this phenomenon as “anomy”. For Durkheim anomy represents an evil that affects the whole society, which becomes unable to live without cohesion and regularity. In other words, anomy is the:

“Inability of the governmental organ to regulate the details of economic life; of the philosophy of sciences to assure the unity of science. If, in these cases, functions do not concur, it is because their relations are not regulated; the division of labour is anomic. Necessity of regulation. How, normally, it comes from the division of labour (...). This anomy arises from the solidarity organs not being in sufficient contact or sufficiently prolonged”¹⁰⁶.

The economical sector trains people to compete against each other in order to survive individually, a fact that would have been impossible if the individual had remained under the umbrella of morality:

“It is this anomic state that is the cause, as we shall show, of the incessantly recurrent conflicts, and the multifarious disorders of which the economic world exhibits so sad a spectacle”¹⁰⁷.

The division of labour in society, according to Durkheim, has the distinctive role of producing the necessary solidarity which

¹⁰⁶ Émile Durkheim, *The Division of Labor In Society*, Translated by George Simpson, The free press of Glencoe, Illinois, The Macmillan Company Fourth Printing, September, 1960, p. 353, available at: <http://fs2.american.edu/dfagel/www/Class%20Readings/Durkheim/Division%20Of%20Labor%20Final%20Version.pdf>

¹⁰⁷ *Ibidem*, p. 2

brings people together, in other words the only manner to deal with the crisis. If, however, the division of labour does not lead to solidarity, one can initiate the talk about the emergence of anomic societies:

“If the division of labour does not produce solidarity in all these cases, it is because the relations of the organs are not regulated, because they are in a state of anomy”¹⁰⁸.

Thus, in other words, anomy consists in the impossibility of the society to control the ambitions of individuals. And when the emergence of anomic situations is inevitable, the trajectory is clear: the society becomes unable to maintain social order.

“The weakening of social control over the individual is expressed by the weakening of the power of social norms”¹⁰⁹.

The social rule becomes the only reality that confers a permanent character to social life.

The essence of the division of labour in society is the specialization of individuals that brings people together due to the fact that each individual needs the implication of the others in order to live or thrive. Society resembles with an organism in which each individual has a specific function. When the correct fulfilment of that particular function leads to the proper functioning of the organism, respectively of the society, the level of solidarity between individuals increases. Taking into consideration the growing number of people in society, these functions are more and more divided and the differences are less and less marked:

“(…) constituted, not by a repetition of similar, homogeneous segments, but by a system of different organs each of which has a

¹⁰⁸ *Ibidem*, p. 368

¹⁰⁹ „Slăbirea controlului social asupra individului se exprimă prin slăbirea puterii normelor sociale.” (Radu Baltasiu, *Introducere în sociologie [Introduction to sociology]*, București, Editura Beladi, 2007, p. 56)

special role, and which are themselves formed of differentiated parts. Not only are social elements not of the same nature, but they are not arranged in the same manner. They are not juxtaposed linearly as the rings of an earthworm, nor entwined one with another, but coordinated and subordinated one to another around the same central organ which exercises a moderating action over the rest of the organism”¹¹⁰.

So, one can safely say that the main role of the division of labour in society is the increase of solidarity:

“In effect, individuals are here grouped, no longer according to their relations of lineage, but according to the particular nature of the social activity to which they consecrate themselves. Their natural milieu is no longer the natal milieu, but the occupational milieu. It is no longer real or fictitious consanguinity which marks the place of each one, but the function which he fills”¹¹¹.

For Durkheim, social solidarity is a:

“(…) completely moral phenomenon which, taken by itself, does not lend itself to exact observation nor indeed to measurement. To proceed to this classification and this comparison, we must substitute for this internal fact which escapes us an external index which symbolizes it and study the former in the light of the latter. This visible symbol is law”¹¹².

There are two types of solidarity: mechanical and organic. This classification is made by Durkheim in relation to the type of law which corresponds to a certain type of society. The mechanical solidarity is specific for traditional societies, where people are together because of their resemblances:

“There are in us two consciences: one contains states which are personal to each of us and which characterize us, while the states which comprehend the other are common to all society. The first represent only our individual personality and constitute it; the

¹¹⁰ Émile Durkheim, *op.cit.*, p. 181

¹¹¹ *Ibidem*, p. 182

¹¹² *Ibidem*, p. 64

second represent the collective type and, consequently, society, without which it would not exist. When it is one of the elements of this latter which determines our conduct, it is not in view of our personal interest that we act, but we pursue collective ends. Although distinct, these two consciences are linked one to the other, since, in sum, they are only one, having one and the same organic substratum. They are thus solidary. From this results a solidarity sui generis which, born of resemblances, directly links the individual with society”¹¹³.

What is specific to this type of solidarity is the fact that people’s movements are harmonious and the collective actions always produce the same effect. In short, people’s will move in the same sense, so the focus is on collectivity, not on individuality:

“If our ideal is to present a singular and personal appearance, we do not want to resemble everybody else. Moreover, at the moment when this solidarity exercises its force, our personality vanishes, as our definition permits us to say, for we are no longer ourselves, but the collective life. The social molecules which can be coherent in this way can act together only in the measure that they have no actions of their own, as the molecules of inorganic bodies. That is why we propose to call this type of solidarity mechanic”¹¹⁴.

Its main function is to maintain a strong link between people who think and act as others do:

“Its true function is to maintain social cohesion intact, while maintaining all its vitality in the common conscience. Denied categorically, it would necessarily lose its energy if an emotional reaction of the community did not come to compensate its loss, and it would result in a breakdown of social solidarity”¹¹⁵.

There is a correspondence between the mechanical solidarity and the repressive law, which consists in a physical and aggressive

¹¹³ *Ibidem*, pp. 105-106

¹¹⁴ *Ibidem*, p. 130

¹¹⁵ *Ibidem*, p. 108

punishment of those who break the law. Repression is a way through which society defends itself, because it wants to annihilate the criminal tendencies of individuals by using the fear of punishment:

“If it is society alone that employs the repression, that is because it is attacked when individuals are, and the attack directed against it is repressed by punishment”¹¹⁶.

The collective conscience is the most important of them all in the eyes of the community because it represents the main condition for social cohesion. Durkheim offers two definitions to this concept. The first brings into discussion the beliefs that are the same for all people that form a society, while the second one revolves around the idea that people prefer the company of the ones they know (as opposed to strangers). People in a society are accustomed with a particular lifestyle and a belief system, and a stranger disturbs this way of life embraced by all.

“The totality of beliefs and sentiments common to average citizens of the same society forms a determinate system which has its own life; one may call it the collective or common conscience”¹¹⁷.

“It is the psychical type of society, a type which has its properties, its conditions of existence, its mode of development, just as individual types, although in a different way”¹¹⁸.

The second type of solidarity that Durkheim refers to is known as the organic one, which is generated by the division of labour. It is thus specific to the modern societies and it is based on the differences between individuals (that summed up create another type of organism, one in which every social particle has a very well defined function):

¹¹⁶ *Ibidem*, p. 90-91

¹¹⁷ *Ibidem*, p. 79

¹¹⁸ *Ibidem*, p. 80

“Here, then, the individuality of all grows at the same time as that of its parts. Society becomes more capable of collective movement, at the same time that each of its elements has more freedom of movement. This solidarity resembles that which we observe among the higher animals. Each organ, in effect, has its special physiognomy, its autonomy. And, moreover, the unity of the organism is as great as the individuation of the parts is more marked. Because of this analogy, we propose to call the solidarity which is due to the division of labour, organic”¹¹⁹.

To this type of solidarity it corresponds a restitutive law, which does not rely on punishment, but on the reintegration into society of the individual who broke the law. In other words, the action is meant to re-establish the initial social order:

“What distinguishes this sanction is that it is not expiatory, but consists of a simple return in state. Sufferance proportionate to the misdeed is not inflicted on the one who has violated the law or who disregards it; he is simply sentenced to comply with it. If certain things were done, the judge reinstates them as they would have been”¹²⁰.

In short, the individual must restrain something to society for his mistake.

The question of morality is so important for Durkheim that he introduced a new concept, the dynamic density, in order to better argue his thesis. Dynamic density refers, on the one hand, to the frequency of interactions between individuals and, secondly, to the quality of these interactions. For the author, dynamic density is directly proportional to the progress of the division of labour:

”The division of labour develops, therefore, as there are more individuals sufficiently in contact to be able to act and react upon one another. If we agree to call this relation and the active

¹¹⁹ *Ibidem*, p. 131

¹²⁰ *Ibidem*, p. 111

commerce resulting from it dynamic or moral density, we can say that the progress of the division of labour is in direct ratio to the moral or dynamic density of society¹²¹.

The relationship between the individual and the society is explained by Émile Durkheim through the degree of social cohesion. To determine the level of internal cohesion within a society, the French sociologist introduces this concept of dynamic density. Taking into account that the density and the social cohesion are directly proportional to the level of social integration that is realized according to the degree of morality in the society, the dynamic density can be defined as:

“(...) the expression of the intensity of social contacts conforming to the social norm, which is being enrolled in the collective conscience and formally expressed through law”¹²².

The paradox of the society is that people are more evolved as they are more different. In other words, society's paradox (Tönnies) consists in the condition that people can be together only if they are separated¹²³. Therefore, the more developed the society gets, the more heterogeneous it becomes. Ilie Bădescu is the one that stated that society's paradox refers to:

“(...) the association of individuals [that] requires their complete separation and a completely independent existence. Independence of individuals is the frame and the field of manifestation of their association. The association separates the individuals”¹²⁴.

¹²¹ *Ibidem*, p. 257

¹²² „Densitatea dinamică este expresia intensității contactelor sociale conforme cu norma socială fiind înscrisă în conștiința colectivă și exprimată formal în drept.” (Radu Baltasiu, *op.cit*, p. 56)

¹²³ Ion Ungureanu, *Paradigme de cunoaștere a societății [Paradigms of the knowledge of society]*, București, Editura Humanitas, 1990, p. 94

¹²⁴ “(...) asocierea indivizilor reclamă separarea lor completă și un mod de existență reciproc independentă. Independența indivizilor este cadrul și

An additional factor which amplifies the dynamic density is the social volume, which is the actual number of individuals in a society. There is a strong link between the two concepts because:

“(...) societies are generally as voluminous as they are more advanced, and consequently as labour is more divided”¹²⁵.

CORPORATION – THE ONLY WAY TO END THE ANOMY

The individuals exited the sphere of familial moral influence and entered the one dominated by the influence of economic competition. They now spend the majority of their time in this new manner and that is why there is a need to create a new group that has regulatory power over the actions of individuals. In other words, the corporation becomes a system of imperative rules:

“The only one that could answer all these conditions is the one formed by all the agents of the same industry, united and organized into a single body. This is what is called the corporation or occupational group”¹²⁶.

Durkheim believes that through corporations the social order can be recovered. In this way, the corporations must become public institutions with a very important attribute: they exercise a moral power over individuals:

“What we especially see in the occupational group is a moral power capable of containing individual egos, of maintaining a spirited sentiment of common solidarity in the consciousness of all the

câmpul de manifestare a asocierii lor. Asocierea separă indivizii. (Ilie Bădescu, *Istoria Sociologiei. Perioada marilor sisteme [History of sociology. The period of the great systems]*, vol. I, București, Editura Economică, 2002, p. 221)

¹²⁵ Émile Durkheim, *op. cit*, p. 260

¹²⁶ *Ibidem*, p. 5

workers, of preventing the law of the strongest from being brutally applied to industrial and commercial relations”¹²⁷.

Thus, a new form of social order emerges: the corporate order that relies upon the functional organization of society in accordance with individual professional skills. Thus, Émile Durkheim proposes a functional division of work whose expression is the profession. From this point of view, one can summarize: the source of morality in modern societies is assured by the professional competence.

Durkheim considers that the corporation is the end of the “law of the strongest”, so that a sort of economic equality is born. Thus, the corporation becomes the main condition for the development and the survival of a society from an economical standpoint. The corporation has a moral influence because it places the public interest above the personal one:

“For it is impossible for men to live together, associating in industry, without acquiring a sentiment of the whole formed by their union, without attaching themselves to that whole, preoccupying themselves with its interests, and taking account of it in their conduct. This attachment has in it something surpassing the individual. This subordination of particular interests to the general interest is, indeed, the source of all moral activity”¹²⁸.

Otherwise, through corporation, appears a new institution which connects the individual to the state, it being a source of occupational ethics and law. Therefore, the corporation could represent a proper way to end the anomy, because it is the only one able to moderate the individual ego, which controls domineering temptations.

¹²⁷ *Ibidem*, p. 10

¹²⁸ *Ibidem*, p. 14

CONCLUSIONS

Émile Durkheim is concerned about the crisis of the modern world that he explains through the development of technology. To exit this crisis of norms, the author proposes that the economical world should rely on a corporative type of organization, which is centred upon the professional competence of individuals. This is why Ilie Bădescu argues that the key of the new economical order is „the organization”, because it always implies moral influences:

“Professionalism, as an economic energy, is not a moral factor. As an organized profession becomes moral factor and authority. The equivalent of the organized profession is the professional body or corporation”¹²⁹.

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¹²⁹ „Profesionalitatea, ca energie economică, nu reprezintă și un factor moral. Ca profesiune organizată, ea devine factor și autoritate morală. Or echivalentul profesiei organizate este corpul profesional sau corporația.” (Ilie Bădescu, *op.cit.*, p. 241)

THE “MEETING” WITH I. UNGUREANU'S BOOK. *PARADIGMS FOR THE KNOWLEDGE OF SOCIETY*

Augustin Poenaru

ABSTRACT

In the series of meetings in which we discussed the book of Ion Ungureanu, *Paradigms for the knowledge of society*, the 15th meeting brought into question *the law of the cybernetic hierarchy* of American sociologist Talcott Parsons. In Parsons' conception, every society is structured into four subsystems: economic, political, community and socializing. According to the cybernetic hierarchy law, “the richest parts in energy have the lowest volume of information and are factors of action conditioning, while the richest parts in information are poor in energy but have the role of action control factors”. This hierarchy between the subsystems of society is cybernetic in the sense that the relationship from the economic subsystem to the political, community and socializing (cultural) subsystems is permanently accompanied by an inverse control relationship, whereby social integration, achievement of goals and adaptation, their exchange instruments (money, power, influence) and the community,

political and economic systems themselves are determined by the socializing subsystem.

Keywords: Ungureanu, paradigm, knowledge, Parsons, cybernetic hierarchy

THE LAW OF CYBERNETIC HIERARCHY - TALCOTT PARSONS

For starters, we will state the paradigm in discussion, a quote selected by Ion Ungureanu as best defining Parsons's theory:

“To meet the functional imperatives of adaptation, achievement of goals, integration and continuity as a social system, any society is structured in four subsystems: economic, political, communitarian and socializing. The relationships between these four subsystems (structures) take place after the law of the cybernetic hierarchy: the richest parts in energy have the lowest volume of information and are factors of action conditioning, while the richest parts in information are poor in energy but have the role of action control factors”¹³⁰.

SOCIETAL ACTIVITY AND FUNCTIONAL IMPERATIVES OF SOCIETY

Starting from the above statement, we will briefly outline the characteristics of the society which, according to Talcott Parsons, is a two-tier system of action: external (to other societies) and internal

¹³⁰ „Pentru a satisface imperativele funcționale ale adaptării, realizării scopurilor, integrării și continuității ei ca sistem social, orice societate se structurează în patru subsisteme: economic, politic, comunitar și socializator. Relațiile dintre aceste patru subsisteme (structuri) se desfășoară după legea ierarhiei cibernetice: părțile cele mai bogate în energie dețin cel mai mic volum de informație și sunt factori de condiționare a acțiunii, în timp ce părțile bogate în informație sunt sărace în energie, având însă rolul de factori de control al acțiunii.” (Ion Ungureanu, *Paradigme ale cunoașterii societății [Paradigms for the knowledge of society]*, Iași, Editura Junimea, 2002, p. 103)

(to meet the needs of its members). A first component of society, according to the American sociologist, is the *societal activity*, which, in turn, is *instrumental* (when pursuing the production of the necessary means of action) and *consuming* (when pursuing the appropriation of the results). The second component, as it can be anticipated from the paradigm statement, is related to the one of society's functional imperatives: 1. *the adaptation imperative* (the interference between the social system and its environment); 2. *the imperative of achieving goals* (refers to the system's need to establish precise relations with the environment and structures and processes that facilitate the process of system adaptation to the environment); 3. *the integration imperative* (creation of mediation mechanisms capable of defusing potential conflicts within the system and leading to its strengthening); 4. *the imperative of continuity* ("latent maintenance of the cultural model"¹³¹, whereby society delimits itself and ensures its continuity as an autonomous system)¹³².

We can better understand Parsons' motivation to name those *imperative functional* ones, if we take into account an author's statement that "the first law of the social process is to maintain the interaction between people"¹³³. In its conception, the failure to accomplish one of these four functions leads to the collapse of the society as a social system. If society consists of interactions aimed at satisfying all functional imperatives, Parsons concludes that society specializes in a subsystem for the fulfilment of each

¹³¹ „menținerea latentă a modelului cultural”

¹³² T. Parsons, G. M. Platt, *The American University*, Cambridge, Harvard University Press, 1975, pp. 13-14 *apud* Ion Ungureanu, *op. cit.*, pp. 103-104

¹³³ „prima lege a procesului social, este menținerea interacțiunii dintre oameni” (T. Parsons, *The Social System*, New York, The Free Press, 1951, p. 205 *apud* Ion Ungureanu, *op. cit.*, pp. 104)

functional imperative: *economic, political, communitarian and socializing*¹³⁴.

THE HIERARCHY OF SOCIETY SUBSYSTEMS

These four subsystems, which are in permanent interaction within the society, have as fundamental characteristics two fundamental properties: 1) are defined by their *borders* and 2) they have *open* borders, which makes Ion Ungureanu conclude that each subsystem is a *result* of the structuring of society (by differentiation), but also an *agent* of structuring (by integration). He also concludes that each subsystem forms the *border* in this way through an exchange system (currency - in the case of the economic subsystem; power and attachments - in the case of political, social and socialist subsystems).

Parsons also believes that these subsystems of society can be hierarchized according to the type of *circulation* (interaction) they generate and/or sustain. In this way, the money determines the largest and most intense social movement, while the cultural-value “attachments” are relatively weak from the point of view of their “motivational-energetic”¹³⁵. After this hierarchy, we may be tempted to believe that Parsons takes over the materialist conception of Marx, but Ion Ungureanu gives us the key to understanding this hierarchy:

“... material possession is a social relationship, which means that it implies legitimacy given by the socializing subsystem, through its moral and cultural attachments, guaranteed by the political

¹³⁴ Ion Ungureanu, *op. cit.*, p. 104

¹³⁵ „motivațional-energetice” (*Ibidem*, p. 105)

subsystem and concretized by the communitarian subsystem through social influence”¹³⁶.

Therefore, the specific role of the economic subsystem is given only by its high “energy” capability, but this subsystem is only the tip of the iceberg because at the bottom one can see that these relationships between systems actually determine the structure of the society. Thus, Parsons embodies *the law of the cybernetic hierarchy*.

THE LAW OF CYBERNETIC HIERARCHY

This *hierarchy* between the subsystems of a society is *cybernetic* in the sense that the relationship between the economic subsystem with the political, communitarian and socializing (cultural) ones is permanently accompanied by an inverse relationship of control. And all through which the social integration, the goal achievement and adaptation, the instruments of their exchange (money, power, influence), and the communitarian, political and economic systems themselves are determined by the socializing subsystem. This is why Ungureanu said it “is possible due to its proximity to the cultural system”¹³⁷.

As we have previously said, the first law of society is *to maintain* human interaction. In this case, if in Parsons' conception interaction is “the activity by which the individual interprets «objects» in his environment by giving them a symbolic

¹³⁶ „posesia materială este o relație socială, ceea ce înseamnă că are nevoie de o legitimare, pe care i-o dă subsistemul socializator, prin atașamentele sale morale și culturale, i-o garantează subsistemul politic și o concretizează subsistemul comunitar prin influență socială.” (*Ibidem*)

¹³⁷ „este posibilă datorită vecinătății lui cu sistemul cultural” (*Ibidem*, p. 106)

significance”¹³⁸, the cultural system becomes *the foundation of the society* through socialization, which applies values and symbols in the given society. Also, in Parsons' view, the dominant role of culture in the social system lies in the fact that the only reality that is structured itself is cultural reality:

“Cultural models provide the systems of action with a very stable structural fixation and quite similar to that given by the genetic matrices to the species’ types; just as genes focus on the inherited elements, cultural models have their centre of gravity in the learned elements of the action. Therefore, the social community can survive and develop only if it maintains the integrity of its common cultural orientation, strongly shared by all its members”¹³⁹.

Moreover, the

“activation of cultural genes requires the development of sources of energy (economic, political and social) of the «body» of society”¹⁴⁰.

We remind that *the cybernetic hierarchy* presupposes a continuous relationship of mutual conditioning and control, which consists of exchanges of elements between all four subsystems of society, that are being conditioned primarily by the economic structures, but *regulated* by the socializing subsystem, thanks to its

¹³⁸ „activitatea prin care individul interpretează «obiectele» din mediul său dându-le o semnificație simbolică” (*Ibidem*)

¹³⁹ „Modelele culturale furnizează sistemelor de acțiune o fixare structurală extrem de stabilă și destul de asemănătoare cu aceea pe care o dau matricele genetice tipurilor de specii; la fel cum genele se focalizează în elementele moștenite, modelele culturale își au centrul lor de greutate în elementele învățate ale acțiunii. Prin urmare, comunitatea socială nu poate să supraviețuiască și să se dezvolte decât dacă menține integritatea orientării ei culturale comune, puternic împărtășite de toți membrii ei.” (T. Parsons, *Societies. Evolutionary and Comparative Perspectives*, New Jersey, Prentice-Hall Inc., 1966, pp. 6-10 *apud* Ion Ungureanu, *op. cit.*, p. 106)

¹⁴⁰ „activizarea genelor culturale presupune dezvoltarea surselor de energie (economică, politică și socială) ale „corpului” societății” (Ion Ungureanu, *op. cit.*, pp. 106-107)

proximity to the cultural system. In conclusion, Ion Ungureanu states that>

“... we cannot talk about economic activity without considering a set of productive techniques. And all the productive techniques are culturally elaborated. In other words, although it is a cultural condition, the economy is a product or a result of it, and any structural element of the economic subsystem can be explained only by reference to a determined structure of the socializing subsystem”¹⁴¹.

Also, to highlight the theoretical importance of Talcott Parsons' cybernetic hierarchy, Professor Radu Baltasiu has brought into discussion a response of the author Ion Ungureanu, professor at that time, who, being asked about the link between culture and the economy, replied “Science selects the technique”.

The hierarchical relationships between the economic and the socializing subsystem (behind the cultural one) are mediated by the political and the communitarian subsystems. If economy is the *dynamic* factor of society, in Parsons' view, it is subordinated to the political apparatus, and the instrument of subordination is *the power*, which is concretized in *influence*.

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¹⁴¹ „nu se poate vorbi de activitate economică fără a lua în considerare un set de tehnici productive. Nu există tehnici productive care să nu fie elaborate cultural. Cu alte cuvinte, deși este condiție a culturii, economia este produs sau rezultat al acesteia și orice element structural al subsistemului economic nu poate fi explicat decât prin raportare la o structură determinată a subsistemului socializator.” (*Ibidem*, p. 107)

EVENT REVIEW: NATIONAL CULTURE DAY AND THE LAUNCH OF THE “MIHAI EMINESCU, THE COMPLETE WORKS” MOBILE APP

Samira Cîrlig, Roxana Alexe, Ioana Drăgoi,
Cristian Chesaru, Narcis Rupe

NATIONAL CULTURE DAY CELEBRATION AT THE ROMANIAN ATHENAEUM

Ever since 2010, Romania celebrates its National Culture Day every year on the 15th of January, a date linked by Mihai Eminescu's birth. The 2019 festive edition was organized by the Romanian Academy at the Athenaeum in Bucharest, and the invited speakers were important representatives of public institutions and prestigious cultural personalities: acad. Ioan-Aurel Pop (President of the Romanian Academy), Patriarch Daniel (Leader of the Romanian Orthodox Church), Klaus Iohannis (Romanian President), Ecaterina Andronescu (Minister of National Education), Valer Daniel Breaz (Minister of Culture and National Identity), acad. Răzvan Teodorescu (Vice-president of the Romanian Academy), acad. Mihai Cimpoi (Academy of Sciences of Moldova), acad. Eugen Simion (Romanian Academy).

The speeches were followed by a poetry recital held by the Dorel Vișan (actor), a Royal Camerata concert, and the launch of the “Mihai Eminescu, the complete works” mobile application. Also, on this occasion, the foyer of the Romanian Athenaeum hosted a photo-documentary exhibition created by the Library of the Romanian Academy, in partnership with the National Museum of Romanian Literature.

Further on, we present a short review of the event and a series of relevant quotes from the speeches recorded.

The President of the Romanian Academy acted as the moderator of the event. After thanking the public for the large presence at the Great Hall of the Athenaeum, acad. Ioan-Aurel Pop drew attention to the “serious attacks”¹⁴² the Romanian language has to face as a consequence of the globalization process:

“Many specialists point out that the Romanian language is now in danger. I do not think we need to be overwhelmed by such signals, but they must not be ignored either. We are witnessing a series of serious attacks on the Romanian language, from its pollution with barbarisms and inappropriate expressions, mechanically reproduced and imported from other languages, to the assaults on its unit.”¹⁴³

He also points out that the study of Romanian language and literature is in real danger due to the school curricula that creates more chaos than order.

“There are some, driven by extra-scientific interests, who today tend to separate the Romanian language from its southern dialects and especially from the Aromanian one, as there are others who want to reduce the number of Romanian language classes in schools

¹⁴² „atentate grave”

¹⁴³ „Mulți specialiști ne atrag atenția că limba română se află acum în pericol. Nu cred că trebuie să ne lăsăm copleșiți de asemenea semnale, dar nu e bine nici să le ignorăm. Asistăm la o serie de atentate grave asupra limbii române, de la poluarea ei cu barbarisme și expresii nepotrivite, calchiate mecanic din alte limbi și până la asalturile asupra unității sale.”

and to organize the study of language and literature according to ahistorical criteria, disrespecting the succession of cultural trends and creating a real chaos in the structure of the curriculum. But today it is important to remember to celebrate.”¹⁴⁴

At the end of his speech, the president of the Romanian Academy emphasized that “the purpose of the Romanian Academy, as well as the Ministries of Education and Culture ... is to watch over the quality of the young people’s education in Romania”¹⁴⁵, an education that must not be anything other than a Romanian one:

“And this education, firmly inscribed in European and universal frameworks, must remain a Romanian one, if we still believe in the destiny of this country called Romania and if we still want to leave to our descendants enough reasons to celebrate The National Culture Day over the decades and centuries that will follow. Gaudeamus Igitur!”¹⁴⁶

Klaus Johannis, the President of Romania, presented a welcome speech and made a tribute to those who in the Centenary of the Great Union’s year made a contribution to the national culture. Also, he pointed out the importance of the place where the festive session took place:

¹⁴⁴ „Sunt unii, mânați de interese extra-științifice, care tind astăzi să despartă limba română de dialectele sale sudice și mai ales de dialectul aromân, așa cum sunt alții care vor să diminueze numărul orelor de română din școli și să organizeze studiul limbii și literaturii după criterii anistorice, nerespectând succesiunea curentelor culturale și creând un adevărat haos în structurarea materiei. Dar astăzi se cuvine să sărbătorim.”

¹⁴⁵ „menirea Academiei Române, ca și a Ministerului Educației, ca și a Ministerului Culturii, devenit, simptomatic, și al Identității Naționale este de a veghea asupra calității educației tinerilor din România”

¹⁴⁶ „Iar această educație, înscrisă ferm în cadre europene și universale, trebuie să rămână una românească, dacă mai credem în menirea acestei țări numite România și dacă mai dorim să lăsăm urmașilor rațiunile de a sărbători, peste decenii și secole, Ziua Culturii Naționale. Gaudeamus Igitur!”

“The Romanian Athenaeum, this true temple of muses tells us, through its history and activity, how important education and culture are for the realization of the aspirations of a people, for the achievement of a democratic nation.”¹⁴⁷

Moreover, the President of Romania also drew attention to the low consumption of literature in our country, which places us in a worrying place on the list of book acquisition:

“In the last years, unfortunately, Romania is well-known as the lowest European rate of book acquisition and reading. Given this situation, I appreciated the declaration by law of the year 2019 as the Year of the Book.”¹⁴⁸

At the same time, President Iohannis underlined the fact that in the future Romania must also carry out more cultural projects through which the values and interests of Romania and Europe can be united:

“Beyond economic and institutional visions, Romania's future projects, as part of the European Union, must also be cultural projections, because only culture defines the common place of values and interests that unite us. The Europe in which I believe must mobilize and motivate those who see European citizenship as an expression and guarantee of human rights and fundamental freedoms. It is the same Europe that inspires and animates those who see the European spirit as an invaluable legacy received from Cervantes and Leonardo Da Vinci, from Lamartine and Chopin, from Beethoven and Enescu. I am convinced that this is also the

¹⁴⁷ „Ateneul Român, acest veritabil templu al muzelor, ne transmite tuturor, prin istoria și activitatea sa, cât de importante sunt educația și cultura pentru materializarea aspirațiilor unui popor, pentru realizarea unei națiuni democratice”.

¹⁴⁸ „În ultimii ani, din păcate, România se distinge prin cea mai redusă rată europeană de achiziție și lectură de carte. Pe fondul acestei situații, am apreciat declararea prin lege a anului 2019 drept Anul Cărții.”

European project in which the Romanian culture is legally and honestly found.”¹⁴⁹

The President of Romania concluded his speech:

“National unity was achieved through language. For books and language great teachers, historians, poets and Romanian writers, but a remarkable fact, even scholars of other ethnic groups, have worked and sacrificed.”¹⁵⁰

After this communication, Acad. Ioan-Aurel Pop invited Patriarch Daniel of Romania, the leader of the Romanian Orthodox Church, to speak. His Beatitude presented the contribution of the Romanian Orthodox Church in the process of Romanian culture formation. Patriarch Daniel recalled emblematic metropolises from the history of the Romanian Orthodox Church, the typographies set up by them that made it possible to preserve the national culture over time, the remarkable works done by them, but also the churches and historical monuments that have remained as testimony of the cultural manifestations of the past:

“Representative for the Romanian culture and art are the monasteries and churches, a business card for other countries. In all

¹⁴⁹ „Dincolo de viziuni economice și instituționale, proiectele de viitor ale României, ca parte a Uniunii Europene, trebuie să fie și proiecții culturale, pentru că doar cultura definește locul comun al valorilor și intereselor care ne unesc. Europa în care cred trebuie să îi mobilizeze și să îi motiveze pe cei care văd cetățenia europeană ca o expresie și garanție a drepturilor și libertăților fundamentale ale omului. Este aceeași Europă care îi inspiră și îi însuflețește pe cei care văd spiritul european ca o neprețuită moștenire primită de la Cervantes și Leonardo Da Vinci, de la Lamartine și Chopin, de la Beethoven și Enescu. Sunt convins că acesta este și proiectul european în care se regăsește, pe drept și cu cinste, cultura română.”

¹⁵⁰ „unitatea națională s-a înfăptuit prin limbă. Pentru carte și limbă, au trudit și s-au jertfit dascăli, istorici, poeți și scriitori români, dar fapt remarcabil, chiar și cărturari de alte etnii”

these monasteries there was an intense cultural activity, an act of Romanian feeling.”¹⁵¹

Acad. Eugen Simion, President of the Philology and Literature Section, presented in his speech a comparison between culture and weaponry, which gives the one who owns it the power to overcome the vicissitudes of history:

“This seems to me to be the true power of culture: a weapon that gives a people the power to survive in history. A silent weapon manifested on large historical series to ensure the future of the identity of a nation, in a history full of unknowns.”¹⁵²

In other words, he warns with regret that:

“in the contemporary world, however, culture is a marginalized power, always put to the test, sometimes challenged in its identity and in its symbols, a phenomenon found in struggle with the laws of the market economy.”¹⁵³

At the same time, the academician urged the public to read Eminescu’s works, highlighting that this is a sign of respect given to the national figure, but also a relevant way to combat those who, maliciously but unsuccessfully try to tarnish the memory of the great man of Romanian culture:

“Eminescu is a European humanist. He is not xenophobic, he is not a nationalist in today’s sense, a sense that I do not like, to be honest. Because the 19th century in which Eminescu lived is a century of

¹⁵¹ „reprezentative pentru cultura și arta românească sunt mănăstirile și bisericile, o carte de vizită pentru celelalte țări. În toate aceste mănăstiri s-a înregistrat o intensă activitate culturală, un act de simțire românească.”

¹⁵² „Aceasta mi se pare a fi adevărata putere a culturii: o armă care îi dă unui popor forța de a supraviețui în istorie. O armă tăcută, manifestată pe mari serii istorice, pentru a asigura viitorul identității unei națiuni, într-o istorie plină de necunoscute”

¹⁵³ „în lumea contemporană cultura este totuși o putere marginalizată, pusă mereu la încercare, contestată uneori în identitatea ei și în simbolurile ei, un fenomen în luptă cu legile economiei de piață”

nations and nationalism. And if Eminescu has tougher articles in his writings, he does so at a time when Romania - not to forget - had not become an independent state, at a time when Romanians wanted to enter the stage of history. This is Eminescu, a poet who represents us, a poet who presents the very best of us. Alongside with our grief, our resignation, our fears. Noica said it was our best part. I would say that we must respect him by starting to read him”.¹⁵⁴

Acad. Eugen Simion concludes his intervention by expressing his conviction that reading Mihai Eminescu, Lucian Blaga, or Tudor Arghezi, is the way in which the Romanian culture will last for centuries:

“Will the Romanian culture, which has gone through so much, survive? As long as the Romanian language will exist and poets like Eminescu, Arghezi, Blaga and, with your permission, Nichita Stănescu will be read, as long as historians like Nicolae Iorga, literary critics and historians like Lovinescu and George Călinescu will exist and will be read, Romanian culture will continue to be a great silent power, it will be - I say with all conviction - our finest and most penetrating diplomacy. Ultimately, this will remain our best defense force in history.”¹⁵⁵

¹⁵⁴ „Eminescu este un umanist european. El nu este un xenofob, nu este un naționalist în sensul de astăzi, un sens care mie nu-mi place, să spun drept. Pentru că tot secolul al XIX-lea în care a trăit Eminescu este un secol al națiunilor și al naționalismului. Iar Eminescu dacă are articole mai aspre în publicistica lui o face într-un moment în care România - să nu uităm - nu devenise un stat independent, într-un moment în care românii voiau să intre pe scena istoriei. Acesta este Eminescu, un poet care ne reprezintă, un poet care ne prezintă în ceea ce avem noi mai bun. Cu jalea noastră, cu resemnarea noastră, cu furiile noastre. Noica spunea că este partea noastră cea mai bună. Eu aş spune că trebuie să-l respectăm prin a începe să îl citim”

¹⁵⁵ „Va rezista, va supraviețui, va învinge cultura română, care a trecut prin atâtea? Câtă vreme va exista limba română și se vor ivi sau vor fi citiți poți ca Eminescu, Arghezi, Blaga și, cu voia dumneavoastră, Nichita Stănescu, câtă vreme vor exista și vor fi citiți istorici ca Nicolae Iorga, critici și

The Minister of National Education, Ecaterina Andronescu, was next in line. She underlined the importance of actively involving teachers, family and institutions in the process of educating youngsters and in forming their culture, which is imperative:

“It is possible to return to Eminescu when the young people are instructed towards professions that pressantly produce instant money? The optimistic answer is „Yes”. We have to try, even though recent studies show that only 28% of young people are interested in education and professional careers. How? Through culture and education, which are, in my opinion, inseparable. Together with the family responsible for those first six years of life, the school and teachers must guide the youngsters to culture. Together, parents, teachers, institutions, with skill, with patience, with perseverance. The child, the adolescent or the young man/woman must learn to live in the spiritual substance of their nation, because the spirit of a people is a link in the chain of universal spirit development.”¹⁵⁶

istorici literari ca Lovinescu și George Călinescu, cultura română va fi în continuare o mare putere tăcută secretă, va fi – spun cu toată convingerea – diplomația noastră cea mai fină și cea mai penetrantă. În fine, va rămâne forța noastră de apărare cea mai bună în istorie.”

¹⁵⁶„Este posibilă întoarcerea la Eminescu, când tinerii sunt îndemnați către profesii care să producă insistent și instant bani? Răspunsul optimistului din mine este „Da”. Trebuie să încercăm, chiar dacă recentele studii arată că doar 28% dintre tineri sunt interesați de educație și de carieră profesională. Cum? Prin cultură și educație, care sunt, după opinia mea, inseparabile. Cu familia responsabilă pentru cei acum șase ani de-acasă, școala și profesorii trebuie să-l orienteze pe tânăr spre cultură. Împreună, părinți, profesori, instituții, cu pricepere, cu răbdare, cu perseverență. Copilul, adolescentul sau tânărul trebuie să învețe să trăiască în substanța spirituală a neamului său, iar spiritul unui popor este o verigă din lanțul dezvoltării spiritului universal.”

Next, the floor was given to the Minister of Culture and National Identity, Valer Daniel Breaz, who argued that our country abounds in cultural models, which we have a duty to preserve:

“Romania has an extremely profitable cultural geography: from traditions and customs, to cultural heritage objects, scholars and artists who have made Romania famous all over the world, high-profile cultural products, but insufficiently internationally valued.”¹⁵⁷

However, the Minister pointed out that we must not strictly limit ourselves to the preservation of this valuable heritage, but we have a duty to make it known throughout the world:

“As long as Europe and the whole world admire and respect our cultural identity, personalities and works of art, considering them universal landmarks, it is compulsory to promote from within and with real vocation the cultural values as a national brand. Culture will always be the core identity of any people. The Romanian culture has this fundamental dignity, built up by generations and undisturbed in any historical era, no matter how great a step it was. Romanians believe in their culture and respect their spirituality, history, national language, local traditions, type of mentality, ethnic diversity and multiculturalism, respectively. Romanians know that their own culture is their business card valid at any time and space and that we should be its own ambassadors all over the world.”¹⁵⁸

¹⁵⁷ „România are o geografie culturală extrem de ofertantă: de la tradiții și obiceiuri, la obiectivele culturale de patrimoniu, oameni de cultură și artiști iluștri care au dus faima României pretutindeni în lume, produse culturale de înaltă ținută, dar insuficient valorificate internațional”

¹⁵⁸ „Atâta vreme cât Europa și o întreagă lume ne admiră și ne respectă identitatea culturală, personalitățile și operele de artă, socotindu-le repere universale, este obligatoriu să ne promovăm din interior și cu reală vocație valorile culturale ca brand de țară. Cultura va fi, întotdeauna, nucleul identitar al oricărui popor. Cultura română are această demnitate fundamentală, construită de generații și neștirbită în nici o epocă istorică, oricât de vitregă ar fi fost aceasta. Românii cred în cultura lor și își respectă spiritualitatea, istoria, limba națională, tradițiile autohtone, tipul de

Valeriu Daniel Breaz defined culture by quoting philosopher Constantin Noica, and referring to it as the way through which a nation is measuring up against itself:

“The culture of a nation is, in essence, the extent to which it can define itself in relation to the others without loss of identity, strictly under the sign of the virtues and infinite possibilities of dialogue and growth within and toward value and beauty.”¹⁵⁹

Acad. Răzvan Theodorescu, Vice-President of the Romanian Academy, opened his speech by highlighting the cause of Romanians' perenity in South-East Europe:

“Writing and talking lately more about statehood and Latin origin, as defining elements of national history, about the fact that here, in South-East Europe, only Romanians were able to keep their state organized in the century of plutocracy, I have tried to bring an essential feature of this structure: the medieval and pre-modern resistance of the Romanian dynasties.”¹⁶⁰

Thus, he makes a reference to the voivodal era in order to show the strong connection of the Romanians with the land, that has a link with the divinity:

mentalitate, diversitatea etnică, respectiv multiculturalitatea. Românii știu că propria lor cultură este cartea lor de vizită valabilă în orice timp și spațiu și că se cuvine să fim noi înșine ambasadorii ei de pretutindeni în lume.”

¹⁵⁹ „Cultura unui neam este, în fond, măsura în care acesta se poate defini pe sine în raport cu ceilalți, fără pierderi identitare, strict sub semnul virtuților și al infinitelor posibilități de dialog și de creștere întru valoare și întru frumos.”

¹⁶⁰ „Scriind și vorbind în ultima vreme mai mult despre statalitate, ca un element definitoriu al istoriei naționale, alături de latinitate, despre împrejurarea că aici, în Europa de Sud-Est, doar românii și-au putut păstra neîntrerupt un stat organizat în secolul plutocrației, am încercat să aduc o trăsătură esențială a acestei statalități: este rezistența medievală și premodernă a dinastiilor românești.”

“A closer look at the royal foundations, the voivodes of Muntenia and Moldova, shows us their clear tendency to overlap the place of obedience with the place of worship.”¹⁶¹

Academician Mihai Cimpoi, from the Academy of Sciences of Moldova, began his speech by reciting some well-known lyrics:

“Hear how the weak and humble cry out to us / It's the voice of gentle Bessarabia that reached the Judgement Day.”¹⁶²

“From Tisa to the Nistru's tide
All Romania's people cried
That they could no longer stir
For the rabbled foreigner.”¹⁶³

“The roads of Bessarabia towards Romania are blocked by nature less often than by politicians.”¹⁶⁴

In other words, the academician Mihai Cimpoi reminded the public and spoke admirably about the fact that Mihai Eminescu, the first complete personality of the Romanian culture, as Constantin Noica called him, “was constantly concerned about the problems of Bessarabia, but also of other Romanian provinces, Dobrogea, Bucovina, in its entire lifework, and not just on occasional articles.”¹⁶⁵

¹⁶¹ „O privire atentă asupra ctitoriilor princiare, ale voievozilor munteni și moldoveni, ne arată tendința limpede a acestora de a avea locul de ascultare în locul de închinăciune.”

¹⁶² „Auziți cum strigă slabii și umiliții către noi/ E glasul blândeii Basarabiei, ajunsă-n ziua de apoi”.

¹⁶³ „De la Nistru pân-la Tisa/ Tot românul plânsu-mi-s-a/ Că nu mai poate străbate/ De-atâta singurătate”

¹⁶⁴ „Drumurile Basarabiei către țară sunt blocate de natură mai rar, de politicieni mai des.”

¹⁶⁵ „a fost preocupat de problemele Basarabiei, dar și de ale altor provincii românești, Dobrogea, Bucovina, în întreaga sa publicistică, nu doar în referințe ocazionale.”

The guest highlighted the importance of language preservation, which assures the inalienable right of the Romanian to be himself and to keep his customs:

“Romanians and Dacians, regardless, we are Romanians and punctum. Nobody is going to teach us what we were, or what we should be. We want to be what we are: Romanians. All the arguments converge towards two logical findings: Bessarabia is a fire in the Romanian fireplace, in Eminescu’s words, it is a half, or to quote exactly, it is the clean half of Moldova. The second argument, the issue of Bessarabia ultimately becomes a matter of existence for the Romanian people.”¹⁶⁶

Academician Cimpoi emphasizes that Bessarabia is a Romanian land taken by force by a foreign power, and not a foreign land occupied by Romanians:

“(…) that land we did not conquer, we did not expel anyone from it, it is a piece of our homeland, it is the dowry of the old and the unfortunate Romanian land.”¹⁶⁷

Moreover, he highlighted that the link between Romania and Bessarabia will always be the luminous figure of Mihai Eminescu:

“Eminescu was and is for us our fighting Bible. This is why January the 15th was declared by the Parliament of Chișinău as a “Day of national culture” and as a national holiday. ... For us Eminescu is the incense that hundreds of Bessarabians brought home from

¹⁶⁶ „Români și daci, indiferent, suntem români și punct. Nimeni n-are să ne învețe ce-am fost, sau ce-ar trebui să fim. Voim să fim ceea ce suntem: români. Toate argumentele converg spre două constatări logice: Basarabia e vatră în vatra românească, spune Eminescu, e jumătatea, ca să citez exact, e jumătatea curată a Moldovei. Al doilea argument, cestiunea Basarabiei ajunge în ultimă instanță a fi o cestiune de existență pentru poporul român.”

¹⁶⁷ „(...) acel pământ nu l-am cucerit, n-am alungat pe nimenea de pe el, e bucată din patria noastră, este zestrea îmbătrânitului și nenorocitului pământ românesc.”

Siberia, where they were taken and where they often recited from Eminescu when they were sentenced to death.”¹⁶⁸

Mr. Cimpoi finished his speech by saying that “Bessarabia wants to be European, but especially Romanian.”¹⁶⁹ As a reply, the president of the Romanian Academy, acad. Pop, stated that “in the Romanian culture, Bessarabia is not a part, but a nucleus.”¹⁷⁰

THE LAUNCH OF THE “MIHAI EMINESCU, THE COMPLETE WORKS” MOBILE APP

In the Athenaeum’s lobby, near the bust of George Enescu and in front of a large audience, the application “Mihai Eminescu, the complete works” was launched. The presentation was made by Prof. PhD. Radu Baltasiu, Director of the European Centre for Ethnic Studies (Romanian Academy), in the presence of the Romania President Klaus Iohannis, the President Ioan-Aurel Pop and Vice-President Răzvan Theodorescu (Romanian Academy), the management of the Romanian Cultural Institute (President Liliana Țuroiu and Vice-President Mirel Taloș) and other important guests.

All the members of the team that created the app were present at the event, including the project coordinator PhD Ovidiana Bulumac (also the President of the Romanian Association of Geopolitics, Geoeconomics, and Geoculture), and “the Maecenas of the project”, Aureliu Surulescu (President of Neamunit Association).

¹⁶⁸ „Eminescu a fost și este pentru noi, biblia noastră luptătoare. De aceea, ziua de 15 ianuarie a fost decretată de Parlamentul de la Chișinău ca „Zi a culturii naționale” și ca sărbătoare națională. ... Pentru noi Eminescu este tămâia pe care sutele de basarabeni au adus-o din Siberia, unde au fost duși și unde adesea au recitat din Eminescu când au fost condamnați la moarte.”

¹⁶⁹ „Basarabia își dorește să fie europeană, dar mai ales românească.”

¹⁷⁰ „În cultura românească, Basarabia nu este parte, ci este nucleu.”

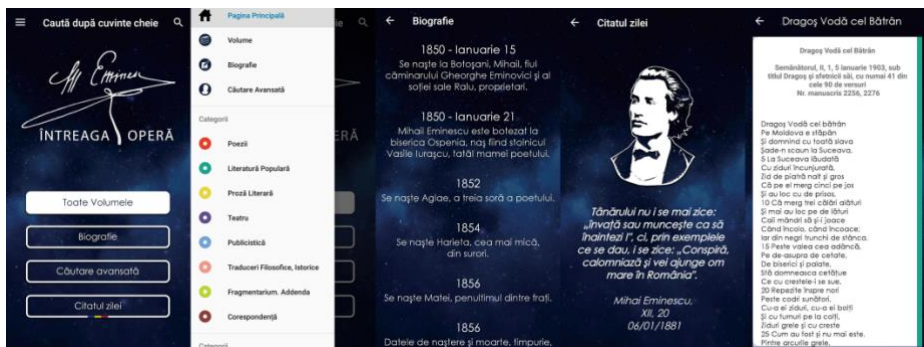
The application now contains more than 80% of all Eminescu's works, while the rest will be made public through subsequent updates. This was possible also due to the fact that the copyright for the digital publication was offered free of charge by the Romanian Academy, which agreed to promote the project under the aegis of the most prestigious scientific and cultural forum in Romania.

The purpose of the project was to facilitate the instant access to the works of Eminescu, both for specialists and people who simply wish to read and discover the articles, poetry, theatrical pieces, folklore etc embodied within the app.

Among the useful functions of the application we name the real-time search engine, the intelligent labelling of the complete works (according to criteria such as location and date of publication, but also type of writing) and the swipe function that works in an intuitive manner. Also, a unique and original function is the “daily quote” that offers the user excerpts that correspond to the date of the app access (for example, if today were the 16th of January, the section will show at first text that Eminescu published on the 16th of January in various years). If no document is available for the current day, another quote is chosen randomly.

The launch benefited from a lot of attention from the media (written, radio and TV) and can be downloaded free of charge from the AppStore and Google Play Store.

In the future, the project is set to be presented in other relevant institutions, but also in important high-schools throughout the country, as well as in Romanian communities abroad.





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